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## Navy Yard Shooting: SWAT Team Ordered to 'Stand Down'

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Elite tactical team responsible for defending DC Capitol complex were reportedly ordered to leave the scene

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[According to a BBC report](#), one of the most heavily armed police teams, assigned with the task of protecting the Capitol complex and responsible for responding to threats of terrorism, was ordered to stand down in response to Monday's shooting at the Naval Sea Systems Command Headquarters building in D.C.

The Containment and Emergency Response Team (CERT), is highly trained and equipped with the best gear on the market. The team consists of four men and is responsible for safeguarding the Capitol complex.

The specialty unit is the department's elite tactical team assigned with the task of "dealing with the rise in terrorist activities being directed at the US and its citizens," according to the SpecWarNet.net.

"Since there won't be time to call for assistance in the event a terrorist is ever able to execute an attack against the Capitol, their [CERT] primary mission consists of rescuing Congressional members, their staff, and visitors who have been taken hostage by terrorists."

"Secondary missions include, countering threats made against dignitaries, responding to critical incidents and providing security for major events, such as the Presidential Inauguration," says the website.

Reports confirm that although the team arrived on the scene shortly after news spread of an active shooter situation at the Navy Yard, several Capitol Police team members say they were told by a watch commander to leave the scene.

The sources spoke anonymously to BBC in fear of repercussions.

The leader of the officers' union, Jim Konczos, said the whole purpose of the CERT team is to respond to and handle active shooter situations. The officers, who are specifically trained to be expert marksmen, arrived fully dressed in their tactical gear and armed with HK-416 assault weapons around 9:00 a.m. Monday morning.

BBC's report reveals that an officer with the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) told the CERT team they were the "only police on the site equipped with long guns and requested their help stopping the gunman."

However, shortly after the CERT team arrived, they were reportedly told to leave.

"I don't think it's a far stretch to say that some lives may have been saved if we were allowed to intervene," said one Capitol Police source.



Photo: Via Flickr  
Transit Conference SWAT exercise

"Odds are it might have had a different outcome," said Konczos. "It probably could have been neutralized."

One Capitol Police officer who supposedly overheard the request for CERT to stand down felt frustrated by the command.

Spokeswoman for the MPD responded to the allegations saying they were "not true." The Capitol Police announced Wednesday they are investigating the allegations and plan to pull radio logs from Monday's incident.

Senate Sergeant-at-Arms Terry Gainer, overseer of the [US Capitol Police Department](#), had the following response: "It's a very serious allegation and inference to indicate that we were on scene and could have helped and were told to leave. It crushes me if that's the case."

The shooting left 13 people dead, including the suspect, Aaron Alexis.

Alexis, 34, was employed by a defense contractor for the Navy [and had been issued](#) a "secret" clearance and a common access card (CAC) that enabled him to get into the building.

Officials say they are reexamining the measures used to decide who can be granted such clearances. [According to the Washington Post](#), 4.9 million federal government workers and contractors held such clearances last year.

US Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel has ordered the Pentagon to "...conduct a wide-ranging review of the physical security at all US defense installations across the world and of the security clearance process," reported the BBC.

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