

GENERAL ORDER XIX

SUBJECT: BOMB PROCEDURES

EFFECTIVE DATE: 10-31-02

REVIEW DATE: 01-13-12

NOTE: This rule or regulation is for internal use only, and does not enlarge an officer's civil or criminal liability in any way. It should not be construed as the creation of a higher standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense, with respect to third party claims. Violations of this directive, if proven, can only form the basis of a complaint by this department, and then only in a non-judicial administrative setting.

I. POLICY

To enhance public safety by the safe locating and disposal of explosive devices.

II. PURPOSE

To establish a plan containing specific procedures and policies for the safe handling of bomb threats and bomb emergencies.

III. BOMB THREATS AND BOMB EMERGENCIES

A. Overview

A bomb threat is any report of a bomb in a location likely to cause injury, death, or property damage. A bomb threat will be treated as real until a thorough search and investigation of the threatened location proves otherwise.

B. Actions Upon Receiving a Bomb Threat

Employees receiving a bomb threat should:

1. Keep the caller talking as long as possible. Ask the caller to repeat the message.
2. Record, in writing, every word that is spoken.
3. Tape record the call, if possible.
4. Ask for the specific location of the bomb and time of detonation.

5. Advise the caller the building is occupied and the detonation of the bomb may result in death or serious injury to innocent people.
6. Listen for specific background noises which might indicate the place from which the call is being made.
7. Listen closely to unique characteristics of the caller's voice, e.g., accents, speech impediments, sex and other distinguishing features.
8. Ask specific questions regarding the bomb, i.e., size, detonator type, construction, type of explosive, appearance, time of detonation, etc.

C. Bomb Threats Against Police Facilities

If a bomb threat is received indicating a bomb has been placed at a Police building or facility, the Chief of Police, Assistant Chief of Police and on duty supervisor will be notified immediately.

IV. PRECAUTIONS AND SECURITY PROVISIONS

A. No Radio Transmissions

To reduce the likelihood of accidental detonation, officers responding to a bomb emergency will not use two-way radios, cellular telephones, or other transmitters within a 300-foot radius of the facility.

B. Basic Perimeter

When feasible, members should maintain a perimeter of at least 300 feet from the site, limiting access to those personnel necessary to properly investigate the incident. Always consider secondary devices.

C. Other Emergency Services Personnel

Fire Department and medical personnel may be requested and placed on standby near the bomb threat site. Emergency services personnel should be briefed on the situation as necessary to facilitate their duties.

V. EVACUATION POLICY

A. Responsibility for Action to be Taken

The official or person in charge of the building or facility will determine what course of action will be taken, e.g., the superintendent of a school or president of a bank. Action may include, but is not limited to:

1. Taking no action
2. Searching without evacuation
3. Evacuating and then searching

B. Evacuation Procedures

If a decision is made to evacuate the site, officers will render all necessary assistance and request whatever manpower is needed to complete the task in a timely and safe manner. Normally, preplanned fire drill procedures or similar measures should be used to insure an organized systematic evacuation of schools and other facilities. Minor deviations from such procedures may be necessary to avoid a portion of the facility reported to contain a bomb.

VI. SEARCH TEAM PROCEDURES

A. Duties of the Officer in Charge of the Scene

The officer in charge of the bomb emergency site will:

1. Assemble a search team consisting of only enough officers or employees to effectively and efficiently handle the assignment. Responsible maintenance employees and civilian personnel may also be utilized if they are willing to participate. With proper instructions, persons who routinely occupy a given area are the most efficient searchers, as they can recognize items which are out of place or unfamiliar.
2. Establish a command post and brief the search teams on where and what to look for.
3. Consider requesting assistance of a specially trained canine to search for the bomb, if one is available.

4. Divide available personnel into small teams of two or three persons. Each team should be assigned specific areas to search. Search teams should be instructed to look for any object or package that is foreign to the area. A team member familiar with a given area will be most helpful in identifying suspect objects.
5. Instruct searchers to mark areas that have been searched and ensure they have flashlights, mirrors and other appropriate equipment to conduct a proper search.

B. Duties of Search Team Members

1. Turn off all two-way radios and use couriers or other nonelectrical devices for communication.
2. Immediately search the most accessible areas and along the outside of the building or facility. Common public access areas in buildings include lobbies, restrooms, stairwells, elevators, elevator shafts and meeting rooms.
3. Mark areas that have been searched to prevent overlooking areas or duplicating search efforts.
4. When searching a room, divide it in half and make four sweeps through the room:
 - 1st sweep: Floor to hip
 - 2nd sweep: Hip to head
 - 3rd sweep: Head to ceiling
 - 4th sweep: Above ceiling (false ceilings, suspended ceilings, etc.)
5. When searching the exterior of buildings or other facilities, begin at ground level, paying special attention to piles of leaves, refuse, shrubbery, access points, manholes, trash cans, porches, parked vehicles, and other areas in which a bomb could be placed. Once the ground-level search is complete, a search should be conducted to whatever exterior heights could be reached by the bomber, e.g., window ledges, air conditioning units, signs, building ornaments and fire escapes.

C. When Time of Detonation Has Been Given

1. If the caller provided a specific time of detonation, the search should be halted thirty minutes prior to that time and resumed no sooner than one hour after.
2. If less than thirty minutes remain to detonation when the call is received, an extensive search should not be conducted and immediate consideration should be given to evacuation.

D. Action Upon Locating a Suspected Device

1. A member locating a suspected bomb will immediately report its location to the officer in charge without the use of any type of radio, telephone or other electrical device.
2. Suspected explosive devices should not be touched.
3. The officer in charge will immediately notify the Explosives Disposal Unit.
4. If not already done, evacuate personnel to a minimum of 300 feet from the building.
5. All persons who observed the suspected explosives device should be kept available for interview by the investigating officer.
6. Explosives Disposal Unit personnel will take charge of the scene upon arrival.

E. Criminal Investigation

The investigating officer will interview witnesses and gather evidence which might lead to the apprehension of the person(s) making the bomb threat.

VII. BLAST INVESTIGATIONS

A. First Officer on Scene

The first officer(s) at the scene of a bomb blast should secure and protect the scene and surrounding area. Absent emergency circumstances, officers will avoid entering the scene and restrict others from entering the area so as to minimize exposure to hazards and to preserve the integrity of evidence.

B. Precautions for Additional Dangers

Officers should consider the possibility of additional bombs or hazardous structural damage, and take reasonable action to keep the public away from the scene. When possible, the outermost perimeter should be extended to approximately double the distance from the blast scene to the furthest piece of evidence found.

C. Notification Procedures

1. An Explosives Disposal Unit should be notified, whereupon they will, if necessary, assist with processing the scene.
2. Appropriate emergency services personnel should also be notified, e.g., fire, rescue, ambulance, utility companies, etc., and given information needed to ensure an adequate and safe response.

AUTHORITY

- A. This policy is issued by the authority of the Chief of Police. Any policy additions, deviations or revisions shall be made only at the direction of the Chief of Police.

By Authority of:

Charles Brotherton, Jr., Chief of Police