

Atlanta Police Department Policy Manual		Standard Operating Procedure
Effective Date September 7, 2021		APD.SOP.3182 Bomb Squad and Explosive Detection Units
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1. PURPOSE

To establish the procedures, guidelines, and composition of the Atlanta Police Department's Bomb Squad and the Explosives Detection Canine Unit.

2. POLICY

The Atlanta Police Department Bomb Squad is responsible for the safe removal and disposal of suspected explosive devices, including the investigation of post-blast incidents. The Special Operations Section (SOS) Bomb Unit shall have primary responsibility throughout the City of Atlanta. The Airport Bomb Unit shall have primary responsibility at the Atlanta Hartsfield Jackson International Airport (HJIA).

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 The Bomb Squad Commander or Senior Bomb Technician shall report to the section commander, or their respective designee, on matters related to administrative functions. This does not infer that the Bomb Squad Commander or Senior Bomb Technician must report to the section commander, or their respective designee, as explosives ordnance disposal (EOD) duties are carried out; recognizing that EOD is technical and dynamic, the Bomb Squad Commander and Bomb Squad members shall have the autonomy to make decisions that positively impact the overall command and control of the situation at the incident scene.

3.1.1 The Bomb Squad Commander or Senior Bomb Technician will have control of the scene once they arrive, even if higher ranking personnel are present.

3.1.2 The Bomb Squad Commander is responsible for overseeing both SOS/Airport units and ensuring that all directives, policies and procedures from the Department, Hazardous Device School and



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- The National Bomb Squad Commanders Advisory Board are adhered to and will report deficiencies to the respective section commander.
- 3.2 The Airport Section Commander is responsible for monitoring the implementation of this directive as it concerns the Airport Bomb Unit.
- 3.3 The Special Operations Section (SOS) Commander is responsible for monitoring the implementation of this directive as it concerns the SOS Bomb Unit.
- 3.4 The Airport Section Bomb Unit has primary responsibility at HJIA.
- 3.5 The SOS Bomb Unit has primary responsibility within the city limits of Atlanta and with assisting other agencies with mutual aid assistance.
- 3.5.1 Bomb technicians shall be trained and display proficiency performing the following duties and responsibilities:
1. Investigate, render safe and/or dispose of suspected hazardous device(s), explosive material (as currently defined by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and firearms (ATF)), pyrotechnics and ammunition;
 2. In coordination with other local, state and federal partners investigate; perform diagnostics and potential render safe procedures in Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and Explosives (CBRNE) events;
 3. Conduct post-blast crime scene investigations in addition to collecting and preserving evidence;
 4. Prepare and provide courtroom testimony;
 5. Store, maintain, and perform routine inventory of Bomb Squad equipment;
 6. Provide technical and tactical support to SOS;
 7. Provide dignitary protection;
 8. Prepare and participate in explosives related training programs;
 9. Maintain and be familiar with the Technical Library of Bomb Data Center Publications and other explosives related academic materials;
 10. Maintain professional training relationships with other state and local bomb squads, Explosive Detection Canine Units, Military EOD Units, federal agencies, and professional associations;
 11. Compile and report technical data on explosive devices and explosives related incidents to the ATF Bomb and Arson Tracking System (BATS);
 12. Develop departmental emergency response plans for bomb threats, improvised explosive devices (IED), weapons of mass destruction (WMD), and bomb incident crime scenes;



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13. Promote bomb threat awareness and emphasize safety programs for public and private organizations; and
 14. Report found or recovered military ordnance to military EOD units.
4. ACTION
- 4.1 Qualifications and Selection
- 4.1.1 The appointment and selection of employees to the Bomb Squad Unit shall be voluntary and in accordance with APD.SOP.2101 "Specialized and Temporary Assignments."
- 4.1.2 The following minimum qualifications must be met by bomb technicians:
1. Have five years' experience as a sworn police officer;
 2. Maintain satisfactory or better performance evaluations for the previous three full years before assignment as a bomb technician;
 3. Be in good standing with the police department with no history of discipline problems or sustained complaints for the previous three full years;
 4. Current and past job performance reviews must not show any indications of impulsive or rebellious behavior patterns;
 5. Job performance reviews must show the applicant to be responsible and mature in his/her performance duties and character;
 6. Show an interest in technological endeavors;
 7. Successfully complete a physical examination;
 8. Successfully complete a background investigation;
 9. Successfully complete a physical tasks assessment while wearing a bomb suit;
 10. Successfully complete a panel interview with members of the Bomb Squad; and
 11. Shall be willing to commit to the Bomb Tech Program for a minimum of five years.
- 4.1.3 Additionally, applicants must meet the following FBI criteria for acceptance into the Hazardous Devices School (HDS);
1. Must be a US Citizen or naturalized U.S. Citizen;
 2. Full-time sworn employee of a law enforcement or public safety agency;
 3. Assigned to an accredited Bomb Squad Unit;
 4. Have three years' experience as a sworn police officer;
 5. Must be nominated by the department and recommended by the Bomb Squad Commander;



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6. Be willing to commit to your public safety agency for a minimum of five years; and
7. Volunteer and engage in basic bomb technician training.

4.1.4 The following minimum qualifications must be met for canine handlers:

1. Have five years' experience as a sworn police officer;
2. Maintain satisfactory or better performance evaluations for the previous three full years;
3. Be in good standing with the police department with no history of discipline problems or sustained complaints for the previous three full years;
4. Current and past job performance reviews must not show any indications of impulsive or rebellious behavior patterns;
5. Job performance reviews must show the applicant to be responsible and mature in his/her performance duties and character;
6. Successfully complete a panel interview;
7. Shall be willing to commit to the program for a minimum of five years; and
8. Adhere to any other requirements as defined by the cooperative agreements between the Department of Transportation (DOT), Transportation Security Administration (TSA), and the Airport Section.

4.2 Training

4.2.1 After being selected for the position of bomb technician, the officer shall complete all department approved and required courses of instruction at the FBI Hazardous Devices School (HDS). In addition, bomb technicians shall maintain and complete all required training and certifications.

4.2.2 Initial training shall include, but is not limited to:

1. Hazardous Materials Technician Course as outlined by the FBI HDS requirements; and
2. Basic bomb technician training at HDS.

4.2.3 Bomb technicians shall serve as apprentices for one year after graduating from HDS. Senior Bomb Technicians shall monitor apprentice bomb technicians' performance. During this time frame, apprentice bomb technicians shall not handle bomb related calls by themselves. Apprentice bomb technicians must have a Senior Bomb Technician with them during calls.

4.2.4 Unit training shall consist of a minimum of 16 hours of IED related training per month.

1. Training will be documented in The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) Bomb Arson Tracking System (BATS) data base.
2. Additional monthly training should be conducted as needed for more complex equipment and advance capability levels taken on by the unit.



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3. All training records shall be entered into the BATS within 40 hours from the completion of training or as soon as reasonably possible.
- 4.2.5 Bomb technicians are required to complete a minimum of 40 hours explosive related training annually, to include seminars, exercises, symposiums or conferences.
- 4.2.6 Bomb technicians are required to maintain proficiency in Render Safe Procedures (RSP) and the use of all Bomb Squad equipment.
- 4.2.7 Bomb technicians are required to maintain certification by completing HDS refresher courses every three years.
- 4.3 Dismissal from the Bomb Squad Unit
 - 4.3.1 The authority to dismiss team members from the Bomb Squad shall be at the discretion of the Bomb Squad Commander and/or the Chief of Police, or their designee.
 - 4.3.2 Bomb technicians who do not maintain the required qualifications or training standards shall be dismissed from the unit. The Bomb Squad Commander shall make the necessary recommendation to the appropriate section commander regarding dismissal.
- 4.4 Equipment
 - 4.4.1 Explosives Response Truck (CALEA 6th ed. Standards 41.1.3 a-d)
 1. The Explosive Response Truck is the primary vehicle used by bomb technicians on their calls for service. The Atlanta Police Department shall make every effort to ensure the safety of citizens and police employees by deploying the Explosive Response Truck to assist in the safe removal and disposal of suspected explosive devices and post-blast incident investigations. (CALEA 6th ed. Standard 41.1.3 a)
 2. Only employees authorized by the Airport or SOS Commanders may operate the Explosives Response Truck in compliance with APD.SOP.3150 "Vehicle Management." (CALEA 6th ed. Standard 41.1.3 b)
 3. All operators of the Explosive Response Truck shall be in possession of a valid Georgia driver's license and their department issued employee identification card. (CALEA 6th ed. Standard 41.1.3 b)
 4. The Airport and SOS Commanders are responsible for the maintenance and inventory of the Explosive Response Truck for each deployment. (CALEA 6th ed. Standard 41.1.3 c)
 5. The operator of the vehicle should complete a Daily Activity Sheet (Form APD-607) and note on the back any mechanical problems with the vehicle. (CALEA 6th ed. Standard 41.1.3 c)
 6. The Airport and SOS Commanders, or their respective designees, shall develop and maintain an inventory of the equipment to be kept in the Explosive Response Truck. The inventory shall be documented on the Maintenance and Inventory Check List (Form APD-686). (CALEA 6th ed. Standard 41.1.5 e)



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4.4.2 Bomb Squad Required Safety Equipment:

1. A bomb response vehicle;
2. Two full coverage bomb suits;
3. Two bomb suits compatible or integrated with a Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) and chemical protective suits;
4. At least one portable bomb x-ray unit system;
5. Two Percussion Actuated Non-electric (PAN) disruptors;
6. Radiation detector;
7. General service bomb response robot;
8. Demolition kit;
9. Rigging equipment;
10. Hand tools;
11. Access to an approved explosive storage magazine;
12. Radio and cell phone;
13. Reference library;
14. Ballistic vest; and
15. Ballistic helmet.

4.4.3 The Bomb Squad shall also maintain any additional specialized equipment as deemed necessary and appropriate.

4.4.4 The explosives detection canine handler shall maintain the following equipment at a minimum: (CALEA 6th ed. Standard 41.1.5 d)

1. Vehicle equipment for canine use;
2. Vehicle kennel with padding;
3. Hot dog system (fan, door release, auto window controller, and remote);
4. Tinted windows;
5. Power windows and locks;
6. First aid kit;
7. Water and water bowl for canine;



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8. Leashes;
9. Training collar;
10. Training reward;
11. Muzzle; and
12. Grooming brush.

4.5 Physical Examinations

4.5.1 All Bomb Squad members must undergo a routine physical examination to determine if he/she has been exposed to toxic and hazardous chemicals or materials. This is to determine any health problems or risks associated with wearing the bomb suit.

4.5.2 A file shall be maintained on each Bomb Squad member's exposure to explosive materials, chemicals, or other hazardous materials; including smoke or gaseous vapors. The form used shall be marked as "Exposure Sheet." The file shall be marked "Priority File" and shall be kept on file with the Bomb Squad indefinitely.

4.6 Bomb Response Principles

4.6.1 All Bomb Squad members shall be subject to on-call, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The Communications Section shall be provided with a list of bomb technicians and contact telephone numbers for each bomb technician. The Bomb Squad Supervisor, or his or her designee, shall be notified immediately of any bomb or explosives related incidents.

4.6.2 Bomb Squad members shall not search for an Improvised Explosive Device during a bomb threat incident unless extenuating circumstances exist.

4.6.3 Throughout the decision-making process, the following considerations listed in order of priority are of vital importance:

1. Public Safety;
2. Safety of officers on the scene, including bomb technicians;
3. Protection and preservation of public and private property;
4. Collection and preservation of evidence; and
5. Convenience to public and timely restoration of services (when applicable).

4.6.4 The response to a bomb scene is the most dramatic and dangerous sequence of events; all standards of acceptable, professional practice will be brought into focus to resolve a serious public safety hazard. When a suspicious item is found and the Bomb Squad responds on scene, the initial course of action should be:

1. Confirm the evacuation perimeter; and



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2. Gather information and evaluate the situation.

4.6.5 Initial Decision Analysis

The situational analysis should immediately determine whether it is life threatening, requiring immediate action, or a non-life-threatening situation.

1. Life threatening situations: clear and present threat to life, including to bomb technicians; and
2. Non-life-threatening situations: threat is only to property; no lives are at risk.

4.6.6 Time generally shall not be a consideration unless it is a life-threatening situation.

4.7 Safety Principles

4.7.1 Preservation of human life shall be of the highest priority to the Atlanta Police Department and members of the Bomb Squad who are responsible for the safe removal and disposal of all explosive hazards at the incident scene. The following safety principles shall be followed:

1. Do not handle, attempt to open, or enter a pipe bomb by hand;
2. Evidence and property gathered from the incident scene shall be secured and preserved in a manner which does not jeopardize human life;
3. Only Bomb Squad personnel, or their respective designees, shall be permitted within the bomb operational area; and
4. Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT) and Emergency Fire Department Personnel (EFDP) shall be present when the Bomb Squad responds to the scene of an IED or for explosives disposal operations at the Bomb Squads Bomb Range.

4.8. Transportation of suspicious items

1. Normally, suspected explosive devices shall be neutralized on site. The decision to transport a suspected explosive device shall be weighed carefully. This will ensure that the act of loading and transporting the suspected device does not unduly increase the hazards to the bomb technician or the public; and
2. The safe removal and disposal of suspected explosives devices on an incident scene shall be given first consideration in all non-life-threatening situations involving abandoned / deteriorated explosives, explosive chemicals, and suspected explosive devices.

4.9 Final Actions

4.9.1 The Bomb Squad will work closely with the department's Homeland Security Unit to ensure they are notified and on scene. The Homeland Security Unit will assist with gathering intelligence, conducting criminal investigations, crime scene investigations, gathering evidence, and assist with post blast investigations.



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- 4.9.2 The Bomb Squad will clear, transport, and dispose of hazardous items/materials. Homeland Security Investigators will be responsible for transporting and disposal of all non-hazardous material/items.
- 4.9.3 All responses for service by the bomb squad will be documented in The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) Bomb Arson Tracking System (BATS) data base within 40 hours from the completion of the call or as soon as reasonably possible.
- 4.10 Post Blast Scene
1. The Bomb Squad shall respond to all post blast incidents;
 2. Check for secondary devices;
 3. Check for residual and/or unconsumed explosives;
 4. The Bomb Squad Unit shall investigate or assist in the investigation; and
 5. Turn the crime scene over to federal agencies if it has been determined to be a terrorist incident.
- 4.11 Explosive Detection Canine Teams
- 4.11.1 The Explosives Detection Canine Team is assigned to the Atlanta Police Airport Section. Supervision shall be the responsibility of the Airport Section Bomb Squad/K-9 Unit Supervisors.
- 4.11.2 The Explosives Detection Canine Team will be utilized for searching buildings, vehicles, baggage, packages, aircraft, and unattended items during threats, protection details, and other routine or general sweeps. They are not to be used to assess, examine, or clear items already identified as a suspected explosives device or possible IED. (CALEA 6th ed. Standard 41.1.5 a)
- 4.11.3 The primary objective of the canine team is to provide support to field operations. This support will be in the form of scent detection in incidents involving a known or suspected explosive device. The explosive detecting canines shall not search or clear a known explosive device, or any package or item deemed suspicious. (CALEA 6th ed. Standard 41.1.5 a)
- 4.11.4 Canine handlers are responsible for the actions of their canines. Handlers should ensure the safety of their canines as well as the safety of others. Petting or feeding of departmental canines by people other than the handler is not allowed.
- 4.11.5 Handlers should be aware of their surroundings and keep their canine on a shorter leash in congested areas, watch out for children, and never encourage their canine to be aggressive. If possible, handlers shall not expose their canine to large groups of people.
- 4.11.6 In the event of an accident or injury to a canine handler, the K9/EOD Sergeant shall be notified immediately to secure the canine.
- 4.11.7 Explosives detection canine handlers shall be responsible for the care and maintenance of canines, and the canine equipment assigned to them.



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- 4.11.8 Utilization of the explosives detection canine will be documented by the canine handler on the TSA explosives canine website and reviewed by the Airport Section Bomb Squad/K-9 Unit Supervisor.
- 4.11.9 All explosives detection canine handlers with assigned TSA explosives detection canines will adhere to all required utilization guidelines outlined in the TSA Explosives Canine Cooperative Agreement (ECCA) executed between the TSA Explosive Canine Program and the Atlanta Police Department. (CALEA 6th ed. Standard 41.1.5 a)
- 4.11.10 The Explosives Detection Canine Unit Supervisor will maintain health/immunization records for explosives detection canine handlers' dogs. (CALEA 6th ed. Standard 41.1.5 d)
- 4.11.11 The Airport Section Bomb Squad/K-9 Unit Supervisors will routinely review all incidents, records, and reports involving Explosives Detection Canine Units.
- 4.11.12 Any medical care, change, or abnormality in the way the canine performs his duties, or any problem that arises with the canine shall be reported to the Airport Section Bomb Squad/K-9 Unit Supervisor as soon as possible.
- 4.11.13 Handlers will be responsible for daily K9 grooming, vaccinations, emergency care and any additional medical needs as they arise. Any incidents requiring medical care shall be reported to the K9/EOD Sergeant as soon as practical following the incident. (CALEA 6th ed. Standard 41.1.5 d)
- 4.11.14 Any change or abnormality in the way the canine performs his duties that could be attributed to health reasons shall be reported to the K9/EOD Sergeant. Handlers shall be responsible for keeping their kennel clean and sanitary. Clean water shall be available to the canine at all times. Handlers shall be responsible for maintaining a canine that presents a clean, neat, well-kept appearance.
- 4.11.15 A department approved veterinarian shall be the only provider of medical services for explosives detection canines except in the event of an emergency. (CALEA 6th ed. Standard 41.1.4 d)
- 4.11.16 Only a TSA approved diet, in cooperation with the department approved veterinarian's recommendations, shall be fed to explosives detection canines.
- 4.11.17 Requests for the services of an explosives detection canine must be by the incident supervisor on scene and approved by the Airport Section Bomb Squad/K-9 Unit Supervisor. (CALEA 6th ed. Standard 41.1.4 a)
- 4.11.18 Handlers responding on a call-back to the Airport on a K9 request must respond within 35-45 minutes once the call has been received.
- 4.11.19 When a handler is on vacation for 30 days or more his/her canine will be housed at the kennels at the K9/EOD office. Additionally, handlers who will be out of town and unavailable for call-back must submit a leave request and it must be approved by their supervisor.
- 4.12 Canine/Handler Qualifications and Training
- 4.12.1 Explosives detection canine handlers shall train to maintain their dogs at the certification level and follow the training requirements in the TSA Explosives Canine Cooperative Agreement (ECCA). Training shall be documented by the explosives detection canine handler, reviewed by



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- the Airport Section Bomb Squad/K-9 Unit Supervisor, and filed for future reference. (CALEA 6th ed. Standard 41.1.5 b)
- 4.12.2 Before being placed into service, explosives detection canines shall have completed approved courses to include those required for yearly certification from the TSA. All TSA certified explosives detection canine handlers shall follow the training requirements outlined in the ECCA between the TSA Explosives Canine Program and the Atlanta Police Department. (CALEA 6th ed. Standard 41.1.5 b)
- 4.12.3 Upon completion of the basic training program, the canine team will exhibit proficiency in all areas of training to include obedience and control, agility, and explosives detection. The handler shall be required to demonstrate control over his canine partner under various street-like conditions to include airports.
- 4.12.4 Handlers and canines shall be tested according to recognized certification agencies, such as the TSA NEDCTP (Transportation Security Administration National Explosives Detection Canine Team Program). (CALEA 6th ed. Standard 41.1.5 b)
- 4.12.5 Handlers shall be responsible for the proper and timely completion of required training exercises. The amount of training required varies and will be determined by the Canine Sergeant, assigned Trainer, and each Handler. These periods of training should be set up under the most realistic conditions possible.
- 4.12.6 Training shall be documented on the proper form in CWS (Canine Website). Training will normally be conducted during regular duty hours of the handler. Adjustments to training times may be made in order to address handler or canine problems or unusual events/occurrences. (CALEA 6th ed. Standard 41.1.5 c)
- 4.12.7 Explosive detection canine handlers shall successfully complete the prescribed Transportation Security Administration (TSA) Canine Training Course and meet any additional requirements for canine handlers. (CALEA 6th ed. Standard 41.1.5 b)
- 4.13 K9 Vehicles
- 4.13.1 Explosives detection canine handlers shall be assigned a transport utility vehicle for the safe transport of the canine. The explosives detection canine handler shall be responsible for the vehicle assigned them and shall take the vehicle home with them after each tour of duty. (CALEA 6th ed. Standard 41.1.3 c)
- 4.13.2 All K9 vehicles shall be equipped with heat sensors and an alarm. Additionally, all K9 vehicles that transport explosives aids will have two fire extinguishers in their vehicle at all times; notify the K9/EOD supervisor for a replacement if one becomes inoperable. (CALEA 6th ed. Standards 41.1.5 e & 41.1.3 d)
- 4.13.3 Handlers shall insure that their canines are properly secured in their vehicles. No handler shall leave his or her canine unattended in a vehicle in excess of one hour. Handlers will check the condition of the canine and vehicle at least hourly, paying particular attention to temperature extremes. (CALEA 6th ed. Standard 41.1.3 a, c)
- 4.13.4 At a minimum, the following equipment will be kept in vehicles used for carrying departmental canines: (CALEA 6th ed. Standards 41.1.5 e & 41.1.3 d)



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1. Leash;
2. Water container;
3. Collar;
4. First Aid Kit; and
5. Muzzle.

4.14 Canine Bite Report

4.14.1 The Chain of Command and Field Canine Coordinator shall be notified immediately of any severe police canine bites.

4.14.2 An incident report will be completed anytime a person has been bitten. In the report, the handler's narrative shall be a complete documentation of all events leading up to and including the incident. The supervisor's narrative shall be a complete documentation of his or her investigation of the incident, to include conversations with the injured party, witnesses, etc.

4.14.3 The following documentation shall be included as a part of the canine bite report package:

1. Incident report;
2. Witness statement;
3. Officer's statement; and
4. Any other pertinent information available.

Upon completion, the original report and all investigation documents will be directed up the Chain of Command.

4.14.4 All persons bitten by a police canine shall be offered medical treatment. Color photographs shall be taken of the injuries inflicted by any police canine.

5. DEFINITIONS

5.1 Explosive Detection Canine (K-9): A dog that undergoes extensive and continuing training in the detection of a standard number of explosive chemical compounds.

5.2 Handler: A specialized officer, chosen through a selection process and trained to handle a narcotics or explosive detection canine.

5.3 EDCT (Explosives Detection Canine Team): A team consisting of an officer and a canine, trained together and meeting requirements for explosive detection certification from the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) National Explosives Detection Canine Team Program (NEDCTP).

5.4 Kennel: Housing with suitable ground cover (concrete or smooth gravel) constructed for the K-9 at the handler's residence. It shall include a roofed shelter, the specifications of which are determined by the handler and the Unit Commander. The kennel is constructed so that it is



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totally enclosed within a security fence to protect the animal from vandalism. The fence will be a minimum of ten feet by ten feet and at least six feet in height. If there is an existing yard fence, the kennel shall be located inside the existing fence. There will be a locking device on the fence gate.

5.5 **K-9 Vehicle:** A vehicle assigned to the canine team, equipped with a cage, designed for the transport of canines. The vehicle will have appropriate markings on the outside.

5.6 **Sweep:** A general search of facilities, areas, schools or vehicles, conducted for suspicious packages. Sweeps are usually performed during special events, dignitary visits, or at the request of a supervisor.

5.7 **Search:** A focused search of facilities, areas or vehicles conducted for suspicious packages, usually performed when a specific threat has been received or after an explosion has occurred. A supervisor may request a search, provided the reasonable suspicion standard has been established.

5.8 **Suspicious Package:** A package that is capable of containing an explosive device and is accompanied by suspicious circumstances, (i.e., unusual location, wires, notes, etc.) or threats.

6. CANCELLATIONS

APD.SOP.3182 "Bomb Squads and Explosive Detection Units", effective March 15, 2013.

7. REFERENCES

Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) 6th ed. Standards; 41.1.3, 41.1.4, and 41.1.5.

APD FORM 607 "Daily Activity Report"

APD FORM 686 "Maintenance and Inventory Checklist"

APD.SOP.2101 "Specialized and Temporary Assignments"

APD.SOP.3150 "Vehicle Management"

8. SIGNIFICANT CHANGES

No changes to content. Only minor formatting changes made.