



SPECIALTY OPERATIONS AND CRITICAL INCIDENTS			910.00	
<div><div></div><div>BOMB THREATS AND HAZARDOUS DEVICE INCIDENTS</div><div></div></div>				
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## PURPOSE

The purpose of this standard operating procedure is to establish guidelines for handling bomb threats and explosive or incendiary device incidents.

## SCOPE

This procedure shall apply to all Punta Gorda Police Department personnel.

## DISCUSSION

The covert and criminal nature of bombing incidents coupled with the potential for severe, possibly life-threatening injuries makes the detection and disarming of explosive devices a highly dangerous operation. Members should exercise extreme caution.

## DEFINITIONS

1. **Bomb Disposal Team:** Personnel designated to assist in an explosive device situation and/or those persons from another law enforcement agency who have been specially trained to handle and dispose of explosives and suspicious items.
2. **Bomb Transport Vehicle:** A vehicle specially designed for the transport of explosive material.
3. **Detonation:** The instantaneous combustion of a fuel and oxidizer creating extreme high heat, loud noise, and possible fragmentation.
4. **Disposal:** The safe decomposition of explosives and/or incendiary materials, chemicals, or chemical fillers and initiating or detonating devices through chemical means or through a controlled detonation at a designated area.
5. **Escort Vehicles:** Vehicles required for an escort of a bomb transport vehicle in which a bomb or suspicious item is transported.
6. **Explosion:** The rapid combustion of a fuel and oxidizer creating heat, loud noise, and possible fragmentation.
7. **Explosive Device:** Any item suspected of or actually containing an explosive or incendiary filler that could be a solid, liquid, or gaseous in nature. This includes, but is not limited to, all homemade bombs, military or civilian ordnance, pyrotechnics, and dangerous chemicals.
8. **Explosive Material:** Explosives, blasting agents, detonators, and dangerous chemicals.
9. **Explosives:** Any chemical compounds, mixture, or device, the primary purpose of which is to function by "explosion." The term explosives, includes, but is not limited to, dynamite, nitroglycerin, trinitrotoluene (TNT), other high explosives (e.g., plastics), black powder, pellet powder, initiating explosives (e.g., RDX and PETN), detonators, safety fuse, squibs, detonating cord, igniter cord, and igniters. This does not include cartridges for firearms or fireworks as defined in Florida State Statute (FS) 791.01(4) - *Sale of fireworks, definitions*.
10. **Suspicious Item:** Material suspected of having explosive or incendiary potential that includes, but is not limited to, homemade bombs, military ordnance, and explosive or incendiary chemical compounds.
11. **Twentieth Judicial Circuit:** Lee, Collier, Charlotte, Hendry, and Glades Counties in the State of Florida.

## PROCEDURE

### I. GENERAL

- A. Bomb threats and improvised explosive and incendiary device incidents will be thoroughly investigated with the details documented on incident reports. Investigators will complete supplement reports as required.
- B. Only bomb disposal personnel will conduct searches of vehicles, vessels, and aircraft for bombs or other explosive devices.

### II. BOMB DISPOSAL TEAM

- A. The Southwest Florida Regional Bomb Disposal Team Division of Investigative & Forensic Services (hereinafter referred to as Bomb Disposal Team) operates as a multi-jurisdictional unit led by the State Fire Marshal's Office, ([See Policy Appendix Section IX\(C\)\(1\)](#)). The Bomb Disposal Team provides 24-hour service for the Twentieth Judicial Circuit.
- B. Members of the Bomb Disposal Team will respond to the following calls for service:
  - 1. Live bombs or improvised explosive devices;
  - 2. Suspicious items or packages;
  - 3. Bombings;
  - 4. Explosions involving property damage or bodily injury;
  - 5. Recovery of explosive materials; and
  - 6. Building, automotive, and aircraft searches, as authorized in response to a specific threat, suspicious circumstances, or VIP protection.
- C. The Bomb Disposal Team will not respond to telephone threats that appear to have no merit.

### III. BOMB THREAT (DEVICE NOT LOCATED): When a bomb threat is reported to the police department but the device has not been located, the following guidelines apply:

- A. Communications Section Responsibilities

1. Public Safety Dispatchers will maintain a line of communication with the caller until it is determined that all necessary information has been obtained. The public safety dispatcher will obtain the following information, when possible:
  - a. The name, address, and phone number of the intended target;
  - b. The location, type, size, and the expected time of device detonation;
  - c. The name, address, and the title or position of the caller;
  - d. The person the officer should contact and his/her location; and
  - e. What action has been taken, or if the person in charge anticipates any action to be taken before officer contact.
2. The public safety dispatcher will dispatch an officer, watch commander, and the Punta Gorda Fire Department immediately.
3. The public safety dispatcher is responsible for the following, as dictated by the situation:
  - a. Notify investigators and other support personnel as directed by field personnel and Communications Section guidelines;
  - b. Notify the Punta Gorda Fire Department, Charlotte County Fire Rescue, and other public safety agencies, as requested; and/or
  - c. Use a landline telephone to establish communications to the scene during periods of radio silence.
4. If the threat is called in directly to the Department, the officer taking the call will obtain as much information as possible. If any other member of the department receives the call they will immediately transfer the call to the communications section.
5. Personnel should review the attached reference page at the end of this policy as a guide for bomb threat procedures.

#### **B. Uniform Patrol Section Responsibilities**

1. Officers responding to the location will proceed safely and as rapidly as possible.
2. The Watch Commander shall notify the Operations Commander of the incident.

3. Responding units will turn off all radio and digital equipment, including cellular phones, within 300 feet of the scene. Communications from the scene will be accomplished by landline telephone, whenever possible.
4. An incident command area shall be established away from the potential target location. Responding officers shall exit their vehicles at that point and walk to the target location.
5. The officer assigned to conduct the investigation will contact the owner or a representative of the affected location and interview the person who received the threat. The officer or supervisor will discuss the details of the threat with the owner/manager and advise of potential hazards.
  - a. The decision whether to search, close businesses, and evacuate personnel will be left to business owners and managers. The decision to evacuate schools, government offices, etc., will be made by the ranking administrator.
  - b. If there is an immediate and obvious threat to life or property, the officer may order an evacuation after consultation with the supervisor or higher authority.
6. If a search is conducted, the officer will secure the scene, establish a security perimeter, and assist with coordinating the search effort. If the location or facility does not have a bomb threat/recognition plan in effect, the officer or supervisor should offer suggestions to assist management in implementing search procedures:
  - a. Supervisory and custodial staff should be solicited to help conduct the search as they are most familiar with the location. The business staff should maintain a supervisory role, unless circumstances dictate more active participation.
  - b. An incident command area should be established in a secure area and equipped with a regular telephone. Search team members must be informed of the location and phone number. The investigating officer should remain at the incident command area.
  - c. Searchers should be deployed in pairs to cover the exterior and interior of the premises. Persons involved in the search should be equipped with flashlights and handheld mirrors, if available. They should be instructed not to disturb objects that appear to be out of place or not belong. If a suspicious object is found, they are to evacuate the area and report the location to the officer or supervisor.
  - d. If the threat included the location of the device, that area should be checked first. If a location was not indicated, the investigating officer should suggest the following order of search:
    - 1) The building exterior;

- 2) Public access areas (e.g. lobby, restrooms, etc.);
- 3) Stairwells; and
- 4) Engineering spaces, including janitors' closets and lockers.
- e. Areas normally occupied by employees, which are the least likely to have been compromised, should be the last areas searched.
- f. If the threat included a detonation time, all personnel (except the Bomb Disposal Team) should evacuate the area at least 30 minutes before the reported time.

**IV. BOMB THREAT (DEVICE LOCATED):** If a bomb or suspicious device is found, the following apply.

**A. Communications Section Responsibilities**

1. The Communications Section should attempt to obtain sufficient information to determine the incident risk potential based on the following criteria:
  - a. No immediate hazard to persons or property (e.g., suspicious item located on vacant property at a safe distance from persons, animals, or structures);
  - b. No immediate hazard to person; however, a potential hazard exists to structures or other personal property (e.g., suspicious item located in or near a structure or vehicle with persons a safe distance away); and
  - c. Potential hazard to human life (e.g. suspicious item located in populated area or in a building that cannot be evacuated).
2. If the threat is called in directly to the Department, the officer taking the call will obtain as much information as possible. If any other member of the department receives the call they will immediately transfer the call to the communications section.
3. The public safety dispatcher should dispatch an officer and Watch Commander immediately and inform the Operations Division Commander of the call.
4. When the officer confirms that a device has been found, the public safety dispatcher will:
  - a. Tone out and dispatch the Punta Gorda Fire Department;
  - b. Dispatch Charlotte County Fire Rescue.

5. Personnel should review the attached reference page at the end of this policy as a guide for bomb threat procedures.

#### B. Uniform Patrol Section Responsibilities

1. The first officer on the scene will:
  - a. Interview person(s) with first-hand knowledge of the explosive device;
  - b. Evaluate the incident risk potential and request additional personnel as needed;
  - c. Evacuate all personnel to a safe area at least 300 feet from the location. (The safe area should be checked for secondary devices.) If equipment in use could cause a life threatening situation if turned off or if the operator is removed from the location, the operator can volunteer to remain. Safety precautions will be taken to protect the operator's life; and
  - d. Cordon off the danger area by barrier tape or other means and establish an incident command area. The scene should be expanded to an explosion boundary of 1,000 feet both horizontally and vertically.
2. The Watch Commander will:
  - a. Assume command of the incident until relieved by higher authority;
  - b. Keep the Communications Section, the Operations Division Commander, and Command Staff informed; and
  - c. Request support personnel and equipment as needed, to include the Bomb Disposal Team.

- C. All personnel, except Bomb Disposal Team members, will avoid physical contact with, close examination of, or any movement of suspicious devices. No one other than Bomb Disposal Team members, and those persons authorized to assist, will be allowed in the danger area.

- D. Device disposal shall be coordinated by the Bomb Disposal Team.

#### V. **EXPLOSION PROCEDURES:** When a device has exploded, the following will apply:

- A. An officer, the Watch Commander, and the Punta Gorda Fire Department will be dispatched to the scene immediately and the response will be appropriate according to reports of damage and injury.
- B. Charlotte County Fire Rescue will be notified.

C. Personnel assigned to the incident must exercise extreme caution in and around the blast site. The area will be secured and access limited to necessary rescue personnel pending the arrival of the Bomb Disposal Team. All members should anticipate and be alert for a secondary device.

D. Secondary Devices

1. First responders should remove victims quickly.
2. Members entering the scene should be alert for a possible secondary device. A secondary device should always be anticipated.
3. Remember that radio frequency energy (radios, cell phones) can trigger explosive devices.
4. Expand the scene explosion boundary to at least 1,000 feet horizontally and vertically.
5. Keep press and onlookers far away.
  - a. Establish media staging area.
6. The scene is to be treated as a Hazardous Material scene.
7. Protect the scene. Recovery of evidence is essential.

E. The incident commander will assign investigative and support personnel to assist the Bomb Disposal Team with a post blast investigation.

F. The incident commander will keep his or her chain of command informed.

**APPROVED**



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**PAMELA R. SMITH, CHIEF OF POLICE**

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# BOMB THREAT PROCEDURES

*This quick reference checklist is designed to help employees and decision makers of commercial facilities, schools, etc. respond to a bomb threat in an orderly and controlled manner with the first responders and other stakeholders.*

Most bomb threats are received by phone. Bomb threats are serious until proven otherwise. Act quickly, but remain calm and obtain information with the checklist on the reverse of this card.

## If a bomb threat is received by phone:

1. Remain calm. Keep the caller on the line for as long as possible. DO NOT HANG UP, even if the caller does.
2. Listen carefully. Be polite and show interest.
3. Try to keep the caller talking to learn more information.
4. If possible, write a note to a colleague to call the authorities or, as soon as the caller hangs up, immediately notify them yourself.
5. If your phone has a display, copy the number and/or letters on the window display.
6. Complete the Bomb Threat Checklist immediately. Write down as much detail as you can remember. Try to get exact words.
7. Immediately upon termination of call, DO NOT HANG UP, but from a different phone, contact authorities immediately with information and await instructions.

## If a bomb threat is received by handwritten note:

- Call \_\_\_\_\_
- Handle note as minimally as possible.

## If a bomb threat is received by e-mail:

- Call \_\_\_\_\_
- Do not delete the message.

## Signs of a suspicious package:

- No return address
- Excessive postage
- Stains
- Strange odor
- Strange sounds
- Unexpected delivery
- Poorly handwritten
- Misspelled words
- Incorrect titles
- Foreign postage
- Restrictive notes

**\* Refer to your local bomb threat emergency response plan for evacuation criteria**

## DO NOT:

- Use two-way radios or cellular phone. Radio signals have the potential to detonate a bomb.
- Touch or move a suspicious package.

## WHO TO CONTACT (Select One)

- 911
- Follow your local guidelines

For more information about this form contact the DHS Office for Bombing Prevention at [OBP@dhs.gov](mailto:OBP@dhs.gov)



# Homeland Security

2014

# BOMB THREAT CHECKLIST

DATE:

TIME:

TIME CALLER  
HUNG UP:

PHONE NUMBER WHERE  
CALL RECEIVED:

## Ask Caller:

- Where is the bomb located?  
(building, floor, room, etc.)
- When will it go off?
- What does it look like?
- What kind of bomb is it?
- What will make it explode?
- Did you place the bomb? Yes No
- Why?
- What is your name?

## Exact Words of Threat:

## Information About Caller:

- Where is the caller located? (background/level of noise)
- Estimated age:
- Is voice familiar? If so, who does it sound like?
- Other points:

Caller's Voice	Background Sounds	Threat Language
<input type="checkbox"/> Female	<input type="checkbox"/> Animal noises	<input type="checkbox"/> Incoherent
<input type="checkbox"/> Male	<input type="checkbox"/> House noises	<input type="checkbox"/> Message read
<input type="checkbox"/> Accent	<input type="checkbox"/> Kitchen noises	<input type="checkbox"/> Taped message
<input type="checkbox"/> Angry	<input type="checkbox"/> Street noises	<input type="checkbox"/> Irrational
<input type="checkbox"/> Calm	<input type="checkbox"/> Booth	<input type="checkbox"/> Profane
<input type="checkbox"/> Clearing throat	<input type="checkbox"/> PA system	<input type="checkbox"/> Well-spoken
<input type="checkbox"/> Coughing	<input type="checkbox"/> Conversation	
<input type="checkbox"/> Cracking voice	<input type="checkbox"/> Music	
<input type="checkbox"/> Crying	<input type="checkbox"/> Motor	
<input type="checkbox"/> Deep	<input type="checkbox"/> Clear	
<input type="checkbox"/> Deep breathing	<input type="checkbox"/> Static	
<input type="checkbox"/> Disguised	<input type="checkbox"/> Office machinery	
<input type="checkbox"/> Distinct	<input type="checkbox"/> Factory machinery	
<input type="checkbox"/> Excited	<input type="checkbox"/> Local	
<input type="checkbox"/> Laughter	<input type="checkbox"/> Long Distance	
<input type="checkbox"/> Lisp		
<input type="checkbox"/> Loud		
<input type="checkbox"/> Nasal		
<input type="checkbox"/> Normal		
<input type="checkbox"/> Ragged		
<input type="checkbox"/> Rapid		
<input type="checkbox"/> Raspy		
<input type="checkbox"/> Slow		
<input type="checkbox"/> Slurred		
<input type="checkbox"/> Soft		
<input type="checkbox"/> Stutter		

Other Information:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_