



Wilmington Police Department

Directive: 5.06 Business, Residential and Hold-Up Alarms

CALEA Standards: 81.2.13



I. Purpose

The purpose of the directive is to establish procedures for Officers of the Wilmington Police Department to utilize when responding to burglar and hold-up alarms.

II. Definitions

Bank: For the purpose of this policy, the term "Bank" will include all major financial institutions such as savings and loan and credit union institutions.

All-Clear Signal: Hands clasped on top of the head will indicate that there is no holdup inside the bank. A bank employee will give the "All Clear" signal upon instruction from the Communication Center. Crime Prevention will be responsible for disseminating training and information in this policy to Financial Institutions on a recurring basis.

Burglar Alarm: Those alarms installed to detect the illegal entry into a building or residence, normally triggered by breaking glass or detection of motion or sound.

Hold-up Alarm: Those alarms that are installed to warn of a hold-up and are usually triggered by an employee via some device.

Risk Assessment: A determination of what kind of a response is needed to answer an alarm. Call prioritization and personnel assignment will consider certain factors:

- A. Time of day
- B. Day of week
- C. Weather
- D. Alarm mode (line trouble, etc.)
- E. Alarm experience (past false alarms, etc.)
- F. Alarm subscriber response

III. Procedures

A. Bank Hold-Up Alarms

1. Communication Center Role

Calls will be received, and police units dispatched in accordance with New Hanover County 911 center policy. A copy of the most current recommended procedure will be forwarded to the 911 center by the Technology, Training, and Recruiting Division Commander or designee. The tele-communicator will dispatch a primary unit and backup unit immediately upon receipt of a holdup alarm.

The tele-communicator will notify the WPD field supervisor of the alarm.

Upon request from the primary unit dispatched, the tele-communicator will contact the bank by telephone and request a bank employee to step outside the bank and give the All-Clear signal, if there is no danger. The employee will also be instructed as to the location of the police officer and advised the direction for the employee to walk from the bank to the officer. Bank employees will not be instructed to cross major traffic routes such as Market Street, Oleander Drive, College Road, etc.

The tele-communicator will contact other agencies for assistance upon notification from the field supervisor.

2. Police Officer Responsibilities

- a.** The primary responding officer will position themselves at an inconspicuous vantage point near the bank where the main entrance can be observed.
- b.** The primary responding officer will direct the backup officers to positions which provide maximum coverage of the bank.
- c.** Officers will attempt to position themselves where they cannot be observed by persons inside the bank.

If it is determined the alarm is false (customers exiting and entering the bank or other indicators), the primary responding officer will notify the Communication Center to telephone the bank and request an employee to step outside and give the All-Clear signal, if clear. Instructions will include the officer's location and direction for the bank employee to follow from the bank to the location of the officer.

- a.** The officer will remain behind cover as bank employee approaches and instruct the employee to move behind cover with him.
- b.** If the officer determines no holdup has occurred, the Officer will escort the employee back to the bank, check the interior of the bank, and attempt to determine the cause of the alarm.
- c.** If the Officer determines there is a hold-up inside the bank, they will notify the field supervisor who will assume command of the operation.
- d.** Safety of persons inside the bank will always be the first consideration of all Officers.
- e.** The Officers will attempt to make apprehension(s) outside the bank.

3. Field Supervisor Responsibilities

The field supervisor will survey the situation and determine if assistance from other agencies is needed. If so, the field supervisor will contact the Communication Center to notify those agencies. The supervisor shall also assure that investigative needs are met.

4. Crime Prevention Unit

Crime Prevention personnel will familiarize bank employees with actions to take in the event of a holdup alarm per bank policy.

B. Business and Residential Alarms

1. Communication Center Responsibilities

- a.** The tele-communicator will determine the origin, business name, street address, and other pertinent information when an alarm is activated.
- b.** Once determined where the alarm is, the tele-communicator will make an assessment of the validity of the alarm (risk assessment) and initiate the police response.
- c.** The tele-communicator will dispatch a primary unit and backup units, if needed, following established procedures.
 - i.** The primary unit will be the district unit where the alarm originates, if available.
 - ii.** Other district units will not be used for backup if other unassigned units in the same district are available and can respond in a timely manner based on the risk assessment.

The tele-communicator will use the emergency listing to contact persons responsible for the source of the alarm.

2. Police Officer Responsibilities

- a.** The responding Officer(s) will respond to the scene of the alarm as quickly and as safely as possible, following established procedures.
- b.** The Officer will position themselves to observe the source of the alarm.
- c.** The primary Officer will direct backup units if backup units are assigned.
- d.** The Officer will inspect the premises of the source of the alarm to see if it is secure; if it is not secure, they will advise the tele-communicator that more assistance may be needed. Officers will never search a suspected burglarized building alone.
- e.** If it appears the building is not secure and may have been burglarized, the Communication Center and the field supervisor will be notified immediately.

- f.** The officer will clear the building (with the assistance of canine in commercial establishments) established procedures of securing the building, taking the necessary reports, and inspecting the building with the person on the emergency listing if said person so desires.

3. Field Supervisor Responsibilities

The field supervisor will take charge of the scene if it is determined a crime has been committed at the scene of the alarm, make the necessary plans for affecting arrests, investigating the crime scene, and securing the building, etc.