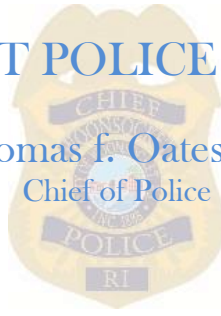


# WOONSOCKET POLICE DEPARTMENT

Thomas J. Oates, III  
Chief of Police



TYPE OF ORDER	NUMBER/SERIES	ISSUE DATE	EFFECTIVE DATE
General Order	320.19	12/14/2020	12/14/2020
SUBJECT		PREVIOUSLY ISSUED DATES	
Explosive Devices & Bomb Threats		7/31/2014, undated version	
ACCREDITATION		RE-EVALUATION DATE	
CALEA Standards: RIPAC Standards: 7.13; 10.2		11/13/2020, 2/13/2023	
INDEX		DISTRIBUTION	
Patrol Functions		Sworn & Communications Personnel	

## EXPLOSIVE DEVICES AND BOMB THREATS

### I. PURPOSE

It is the purpose of this policy to provide officers with a protocol for dealing with threatened bombings and explosive devices to include response, deployment, search, evacuation, and assistance to specialized units.

### II. POLICY

While many bomb threats are later determined to be hoaxes, they all present particularly serious response requirements for law enforcement agencies. It is the policy of the Woonsocket Police Department that all responses to bomb threats or explosive devices be conducted systematically, efficiently, and in a manner that gives primary consideration to the protection of human life.

### III. DEFINITIONS

**Bomb Threat:** A bomb threat condition exists when an explosive device has been reported or is suspected to be at a given location.

**Bomb Emergency:** A bomb emergency exists when a suspected or actual explosive device has been located or has been detonated.

***Improvised Explosive Device (IED):*** Any item suspected of, or containing an explosive or incendiary filler, which could be solid, liquid, or gaseous. This will include but is not limited to, all homemade bombs, military or civilian ordnance, pyrotechnics, and dangerous chemicals.

## IV. PROCEDURES

### A. Bomb Threat

#### 1. Communication Responsibilities:

##### a. Communications personnel receiving bomb threats or warnings from callers shall, to the degree possible:

- 1) Keep the reporting party on the line until all pertinent information has been received and first responders have arrived on the scene;
  - a) The name, address, and phone number of the intended target.
  - b) The name, address, and title or position of the caller.
  - c) Who and where the officer will make contact.
  - d) What, if any, action has been taken or if any action is anticipated by the person in charge of the premises before police arrival.
- 2) Identify the location of the device with as much precision as possible to determine when it will be or if it has been detonated;
- 3) Determine what type of explosive device is involved;
- 4) Attempt to determine: (1) what the device looks like; (2) the type of bomb involved; (3) what will make it detonate (e.g., radio signal, time-delay fuse); and (4) why it was placed
- 5) Be alert to (1) exact wording of threat; (2) estimate of the sex, race, and age of the caller; (3) nature/character of the caller's voice; (4) nature of any background noises;
- 6) If the caller does not give identification, the dispatcher shall attempt to contact the location. If successful, an open landline shall be maintained and responding officers shall be advised before instituting radio silence;
- 7) Complete the RI Fire Marshal Bomb Threat Checklist (attached); and
- 8) Dispatch appropriate patrol units and other emergency service personnel.

##### b. Communications personnel receiving reports from individuals or organizations that have received bomb threats shall:

- 1) Alert the Officer-in-Charge (OIC);

- 2) Determine the location, time of detonation, appearance, and any other available information concerning the nature of the threat or the identity of the perpetrators;
  - 3) If no explosive device has been identified, ask that the caller alert employees and others to unusual parcels or items on the premises;
  - 4) Dispatch requisite patrol units and emergency personnel; and
  - 5) Ensure that the patrol supervisor is notified as soon as possible.
- c. Based on the nature of the threat the OIC will as required, alert:
- 1) The RI State Fire Marshal Bomb Squad;
  - 2) Woonsocket Fire Department;
  - 3) HAZMAT units;
  - 4) Canine team(s); and
  - 5) Chief of Police via the chain-of-command.
2. Responding Officers' Responsibilities:
- a. Officers responding to an actual explosion, actual device, or bomb threat shall institute radio silence and not transmit via radio within 300 yards of the location in question.
- 1) Officers shall not use cellular phones within this perimeter.
  - 2) A landline telephone will be utilized when communicating with headquarters.
  - 3) If radio communications are deemed necessary, the radio should be on and in a receive-only mode.
  - 4) If officers need to transmit, they should move to a safe distance.
- b. If applicable, contact the individual who received the threat to obtain additional information, to include:
- 1) Whether previous threats have been received;
  - 2) Context of the threat;
  - 3) The suspected goal of the threat;
  - 4) Potential hazard to life and property;
  - 5) Size of the target area and nature of business;
  - 6) Possible motives and/or suspects;
  - 7) Estimated time of incident involvement for search, evacuation, and investigation;
  - 8) Exploration of any basic information provided to communications.
- c. In bomb emergencies, officers should establish and secure a suitable inner and outer perimeter by posting officers, placing police vehicles, and utilizing

crime scene tape to divert pedestrian and vehicular traffic away from the target.

- d. Officers should be cognizant of the possibility of any secondary explosive devices.
- e. Officers shall protect the entire target area, including the exterior area, as a crime scene.

### 3. Patrol Supervisor Responsibilities

- a. The patrol supervisor shall maintain command of the incident until properly relieved by another ranking officer. The patrol supervisor shall immediately receive a briefing from the first officer on-scene.
- b. The patrol supervisor shall establish a command post at least 2,000 feet from the target. The command post area should be large enough to accommodate a relatively large number of victims as well as a suitable evacuation route.
- c. The command post should be established at a location with access to a landline, if possible, so the patrol supervisor can communicate with officers within the target area.
- d. All radio communications from the scene, except for an extreme emergency, should be made through the patrol supervisor.
- e. Direct all other responding units, if any, to their respective assignments.
- f. Determine the incident involvement for search, evacuation, and investigation.
- g. Estimate the number of persons involved for a possible evacuation, evacuation route, and safe assembly areas.
- h. Decide if any other police or public safety personnel or equipment are needed (i.e.: fire and rescue, detectives, traffic, crowd control).
- i. Ensure the OIC is notified.

### 4. Evacuation

- a. A police officer can order the evacuation of any area or building, only after it has been determined that there is an imminent threat to life or property. Therefore, until a device or suspected device is located, Woonsocket Police personnel will advise all owners, managers, or persons in charge of the premises of the potential hazards involved. The decision to evacuate the premises will then be left up to those persons unless otherwise directed by a competent authority.
- b. All evacuations will be conducted in an orderly manner, taking due precaution to prevent panic, ensuring all persons are conducted to designated safe areas.
- c. If it has been determined that evacuation of an area or premises is mandated by either the situation or by a person(s) in charge of that premises, the OIC will be immediately notified of the following:

- 1) Location of the incident;

- 2) Context of the threat;
- 3) Nature of business, if applicable;
- 4) Actions already that have been taken;
- 5) The approximate number of persons involved;
- 6) Evacuation routes and alternates;
- 7) Areas that could be designated as safe for evacuees;
- 8) Support personnel required to maintain evacuee area

## 5. Searching for Explosive Devices

- a. If an explosive device is alleged to be within a building but has not been located, the patrol supervisor will contact building owners/management or other responsible people to determine if a search of the facility is desired.
- b. The decision to search, evacuate, or to reenter a structure/location during a bomb threat will be the responsibility of the individual in charge of the property.
  - 1) The patrol supervisor shall provide information as available to the responsible parties to assist them in making decisions on searching, evacuation, or reentry.
  - 2) If management or the responsible agent does not wish that a search be conducted, no further action of this department is warranted except for standardized reporting requirements.
  - 3) Only in cases where a real or suspected explosive device has been detected shall an evacuation be conducted regardless of the desires of the building management.
- c. Searches of target buildings shall be conducted only with the direct assistance of employees or others knowledgeable of the contents and layout of the building.
  - 1) The patrol supervisor may request the assistance of a bomb detection canine and/or bomb disposal personnel to assist in searching.
  - 2) RI State Fire Marshall - Bomb Squad Procedure
    - a) Bomb Squad Commander will request a situation briefing and will assume control;
    - b) May make adjustments in security and support elements;
    - c) May request assistance in certain equipment positioning;
    - d) Bomb Squad Commander will secure the scene upon completion.
- d. Search techniques will vary with each incident. Consideration should be given to the following in developing that technique:

- 1) Context of the threat;
  - 2) Reliability of the threat;
  - 3) Size and construction of the premises;
  - 4) Number of competent persons available to search;
  - 5) Time element; and
  - 6) History or current events involving the targeted area.
- e. All searches should be conducted efficiently and professionally in keeping with proper police techniques with due regard for police and public safety, the care of the private property, and the procurement of all evidence.
- f. A floor plan shall be obtained whenever possible and a systematic search organized by the patrol supervisor.
- g. Upon termination of the search, no premises or area can be officially declared completely safe by police or public safety personnel unless that premises or area has been examined in detail by competent authorities. Therefore, the decision for that premises or area to return to normal operation or be reoccupied will be left up to the occupant, manager, or person(s) in charge of that premises or area. Woonsocket Police personnel will only advise those persons to the probable reduction of the potential hazard that existed with the threat.
- h. When searching without the assistance of the bomb disposal personnel, officers should be particularly alert to the following items as indicators that there may be explosives at that location. Officers should be cautioned that the absence of the following does not assure that there is no bomb present:
- 1) Explosive-related pamphlets, periodicals, and books;
  - 2) Excessive amounts of galvanized or PVC pipe nipples and end caps, especially if they have drill holes in the nipple or cap;
  - 3) Low-explosive powders or other incendiary mixtures;
  - 4) Fuses of any type to include homemade burning fuses, such as string soaked in a burning powder;
  - 5) Electrical switches; and
  - 6) Electrical matches, blasting caps, or similar initiators.
- i. If a real or suspicious device has been located, or paraphernalia identified, officers should:
- 1) Not attempt to move or otherwise disturb the device;
  - 2) Do not use radio communication within 300 yards of the device(s);
  - 3) Proceed with immediate evacuation of the structure and/or the area to a point consistent with the threat but not less than 300 yards from the device(s);
  - 4) Define and secure the perimeter;
  - 5) Notify emergency services personnel

- 6) Contact communications by telephone and request the assistance of the RI State Fire Marshal's Bomb Squad.

## B. Located Explosive Devices

### 1. Responding officers' responsibilities:

- a. Officers responding to either a suspected or confirmed bomb scene will, within 300 yards of said location, turn off their portable radios.
  - 1) Cellular telephones will not be used.
  - 2) A landline telephone will be utilized when communicating with headquarters.
  - 3) If radio communications are deemed necessary, the radio should be on and in a receive-only mode.
  - 4) If officers need to transmit, they should move to a safe distance.
- b. The uniformed officer assigned will respond to the incident, along with any other uniformed officers so assigned by the Communications Center.
- c. In all incidents where an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) has been located, the OIC will be notified; the patrol supervisor will be notified and will respond.
- d. If a threat was communicated, determine:
  - 1) How the threat was communicated.
  - 2) Who received the threat.
  - 3) Context of the threat.
  - 4) The suspected goal of suspects.
- e. Isolate all persons who have first-hand knowledge of the IED for contact with the Bomb Technician.
- f. Establish a safe command post and a liaison with the occupant, manager, or persons in charge of the premises.
- g. Identify and secure the immediate area with the highest potential of hazard.
- h. Identify and establish safe areas.
- i. Make an initial estimate of support personnel required.
- j. Determine the size of the target area and the nature of the usual business or routine.
- k. Initiate the evacuation of persons to a designated safe area.
- l. Avoid any physical contact with or any movement of the IED. It is easier to move people away from the IED than to move the IED away from people.
- m. Protect the crime scene.

### 2. Patrol supervisor's responsibilities

- a. The patrol supervisor shall maintain command of the incident until properly relieved by another ranking officer. The patrol supervisor shall immediately receive a briefing from the first officer on-scene.
- b. The patrol supervisor shall establish a command post at least 2,000 feet from the target. The command post area should be large enough to accommodate a relatively large number of victims as well as a suitable evacuation route.
- c. The command post should be established at a location with access to a landline, if possible, so the patrol supervisor can communicate with officers within the target area.
- d. All radio communications from the scene, except for an extreme emergency, should be made through the patrol supervisor.
- e. Direct all other responding units, if any, to their respective assignments.
- f. Determine the incident involvement for search, evacuation, and investigation.
- g. Estimate the number of persons involved for a possible evacuation, evacuation route, and safe assembly areas.
- h. Decide if any other police or public safety personnel or equipment are needed (i.e.: fire and rescue, detectives, traffic, crowd control).
- i. Ensure the OIC is notified.

### 3. Uniform OIC responsibilities

- a. Assume control and full responsibility upon arrival.
- b. Receive a briefing from the patrol supervisor.
- c. Notify the Chief of Police via the chain-of-command.
- d. Notify and brief the Rhode Island State Fire Marshal Bomb Disposal Unit.
- e. Should the Rhode Island Fire Marshal Bomb Disposal Unit not be available, the United States Navy Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Unit in Newport, Rhode Island, will be contacted.

### 4. Evacuation

- a. After a suspected or confirmed IED has been located, police or public safety personnel can now mandate the evacuation of persons from the premises due to the now imminent potential hazard to human life.
- b. All evacuations will be conducted in an orderly manner, taking due precaution to prevent panic, ensuring all persons are conducted to designated safe areas.
- c. Upon completion of the evacuation, recheck the premises.
- d. Secure the area with police personnel at control points. Do not close doors or windows. Venting for a possible blast will reduce fragmentation and damage.

### 5. Bomb Technician

- a. Once a Bomb Technician is notified of an IED situation, he/she will establish a direct line of communication with that person having the most first-hand



knowledge of the incident, utilizing the most direct and secured communication system available. They will ascertain all information available about the location, actions that were already taken, description of the device, personnel on the scene, incident risk potential, and will then cause all such other persons and equipment deemed necessary to respond in a manner appropriate with the attendant incident risk code.

- b. Upon arrival, the Bomb Technician will take complete charge of the incident. They will establish a direct line of communication with the OIC or ranking officer on the scene to coordinate their actions and to receive all proper support. Under no circumstances will any actions be taken by any person concerning the IED without the prior approval of the Bomb Technician or other competent authority.

#### C. Post-incident investigative procedures

1. The Chief of Police will be notified in the event of a non-controlled functioning or detonation of an IED.
2. The area of involvement will be secured under the direction of the OIC.
3. The on-site post-blast investigation and recovery of evidence will be under the direction of the Bomb Technician utilizing all necessary personnel.
4. All post-incident investigations will be assigned to the Detective Division in liaison with the RI Fire Marshal Bomb Disposal Unit. The Bomb Disposal Unit shall have primary responsibility for investigating bombing incidents, to include:
  - a. Checking the site for unconsumed explosives or secondary devices;
  - b. Supervising evidence recovery following agency guidelines;
  - c. Requesting the assistance of other agencies to determine the nature and construction of explosives and the identification of perpetrators;
  - d. Coordination with intelligence operations of this department and those of state and federal sources; and
  - e. Assisting in the evaluation of evacuation procedures, area, and perimeter security, the availability of emergency services, and coordination with the incident commander.

#### RI 7.13

#### D. Media

1. Representatives from the media will be staged outside the perimeter in a safe area.
2. The area designated for the media should be convenient for the reporting of the incident so long as the investigation is not jeopardized and safety considerations are not compromised.
3. The Public Information Officer (PIO) will be assigned to keep the media apprised of the situation in conformance with General Order [#520.01 Release of Police Information](#) and Media Relations and Rhode Island Law.

4. If other agencies are involved in a mutual effort, the agency with primary jurisdiction will be responsible for releasing information unless other arrangements have been agreed upon.

Per order,

***Thomas F. Oates, III***

Chief of Police

***Written directives published within PowerDMS are in full force and effect on the referenced dates and have been approved by the Chief of Police***





# WOONSOCKET POLICE DEPARTMENT

242 Clinton Street, Woonsocket, Rhode Island 02895

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## CHECKLIST FOR BOMB THREAT

Date/Time Reported \_\_\_\_\_ How Reported \_\_\_\_\_

Exact Words of Caller:

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### QUESTIONS TO ASK:

1. When is bomb going to explode? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Where is bomb right now? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What kind of bomb is it? \_\_\_\_\_
4. What does it look like? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Why did you place the bomb? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Where are you calling from? \_\_\_\_\_

Description of caller's voice \_\_\_\_\_

Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_ Young \_\_\_\_\_ Middle Age \_\_\_\_\_ Old \_\_\_\_\_ Accent \_\_\_\_\_

Tone of Voice \_\_\_\_\_ Background noise \_\_\_\_\_ Voice Familiar? \_\_\_\_\_

If so, who did it sound like? \_\_\_\_\_

Other voice characteristics \_\_\_\_\_

Time caller hung up: \_\_\_\_\_ Remarks: \_\_\_\_\_

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Name, Address, Telephone of Recipient: \_\_\_\_\_

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Emergency Numbers: RI State Fire Marshal Bomb Squad:

Days: 277-2335 After 4:30 p.m. 277-2331