Bomb Incident Plan

Model Procedures Guide

Accompanies the film
"Bomb Threat"

Written by:
Shirley Pye

Technical Committee:
Sol Bradman, Sgt. Paul Damery,
Cdr. Tom Rancich, Jack Murphy,
Alice Pfeninge, Doug Pfeninge
## Table of Contents

Statement of Purpose .................................................................................. 5

Introduction .................................................................................................. 5

Preparing the Bomb Incident Plan .............................................................. 7

Sample Bomb Incident Plan ...................................................................... 13

Appendix A - Bomb Threat Checklist ....................................................... 21

Appendix B - Searching for the Bomb ...................................................... 22

Appendix C - Recognizing Letter & Package Bombs ................................. 24

Appendix D - Threats Involving Biological Agents/ Chemical Agents or Hazardous Materials ................................................................. 25

Bibliography .............................................................................................. 27
Model Procedures Guide

A resource for facilities that may receive bomb threats

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

This Model Procedures Guide accompanies the Emergency Film Group program "Bomb Threat," which trains facilities to plan for and manage bomb threat incidents. This Guide is designed to assist security personnel, school officials, building management, crisis management teams, government officials, and others in the preparation of a Bomb Incident Plan for their facility.

INTRODUCTION

Fueled by media attention and domestic terrorism, bomb threats are on the rise. Local high schools, shopping malls and factories are targeted as least as often as high profile office complexes and sports arenas. A Bomb Incident Plan is the best tool a facility can have to deal effectively with a bomb threat.

Bomb threats and attempted bombings may cause panic in facilities where personnel are not prepared to handle such situations. By developing a Bomb Incident Plan, organizations can take charge of the situation, substantially reduce the incidence of bomb threats, and lessen the impact of the threat.

No Bomb Incident Plan can serve all facilities. Each one must be tailored to the structure of the particular facility or organization. However, there are certain elements which are common to most plans. These elements include instructions for:

- Receiving the call
- Establishing a chain of command
- Setting up the emergency operations center
- Communications planning
- Alerting procedures
- Evacuation procedures
- Searching for the bomb
- Supporting the bomb squad

Once completed, it is important that the plan be printed and distributed to key personnel. However, the printed plan should be considered a CONFIDENTIAL document, not available to the general staff. Nevertheless, every person within the facility should be aware of the existence of the plan.

To remain effective, the Bomb Incident Plan must be updated on a regular basis, at least semi-annually and more often if key personnel change positions or leave. All personnel, including temporary workers, who will have a role in the bomb incident response should be trained during exercises.

Following is a template with suggestions in each section that will help organizations create their own Bomb Incident Plan tailored to their facility. A sample Bomb Incident Plan for a fictitious organization is included as well.
Preparing a Bomb Incident Plan
For Your Organization

I. Statement of Purpose
This opening statement could read as follows: The purpose of this document is to establish a procedure for all members of (your facility) to follow in the event of a bomb threat.

II. Bomb Incident Committee
This section should include specific information on who is responsible for preparing the Bomb Incident Plan; how it will be practiced and implemented; and how frequently it will be reviewed. Members of the Bomb Incident Committee typically will include representatives from upper management and human resources, as well as highly placed individuals within the security and maintenance departments. Any other individuals who are familiar with the building layout, equipment, and issues involved may be included as well. It is also helpful to have a member of a local emergency response organization included on the committee, such as a fire or police safety officer or a member of the local bomb squad. Even if they are not available to serve on the committee, they should be available to review the plan.

III. Security
This section should stress that the Bomb Incident Plan is a confidential document and should list the persons or positions who will receive printed copies of the plan.

IV. Scope
This section should include information on the jurisdiction where this document will apply (normally the entire facility, unless the facility comprises several organizations) as well as the types of threats that will be covered. Typically, the following procedures will apply to all types of threats, including threats delivered by telephone, mail, fax, delivery, e-mail, or "lipstick on the mirror" type threats. These procedures should also be applied to the discovery of a suspicious package/object in the mail room or anywhere else on the premises.

V. Responsibility
The On-Site Emergency Manager is usually the final decision-making authority on all issues regarding the bomb incident. (In some cases, decisions will be made with input from representatives from emergency response organizations such as the fire chief and/or police chief.) In this section, the primary On-Site Emergency Manager and at least one alternate will be designated. Use of job titles, such as Security Director or Safety Manager, rather than person's names will help to keep the document current and eliminate confusion when people transfer out of positions.
The responsibilities of the On-Site Emergency Manager will be specified in this section. Some of these responsibilities include:

- Ensuring that all properly authorized persons receive copies of the Bomb Incident Plan;
- Ensuring that all personnel in the facility are aware of the existence of the Bomb Incident Plan;
- Ensuring that proper training in these guidelines is given to all persons who may become involved in a bomb incident response:
  - Receptionists and other telephone personnel
  - Search teams
  - Evacuation teams
  - Others as necessary. Pertinent temporary employees should be included as well.
- Contacting outside emergency response agencies for assistance, including fire, police, bomb squads, and medical facilities;
- Ordering a search;
- Command Center operations;
- Ordering an evacuation;
- Ordering re-entry;
- Other responsibilities as become necessary.

VI. Receiving the threat

VI.1 Telephone threat

This section will outline the procedures to be followed by the person who receives a bomb threat by telephone. It should include the questions to be asked of the caller; instruct how the information provided by the caller is to be recorded; list which employees should keep a Bomb Threat Checklist by their telephone; and list other instructions that may be pertinent to your facility. Note that a sample Bomb Threat Checklist as recommended by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco & Firearms (BATF) is included on the CD-Rom.

This section should provide the following instructions to the person receiving the threat by telephone:

- Remain calm and courteous at all times
- Have the caller repeat the threat
- Ask all questions included on the checklist and write down all the answers
- Write down the exact wording of the threat
- Have a second person listen in on the conversation from a different telephone if possible
- Record the call if possible (and legal in your jurisdiction)
- Keep the caller on the line as long as possible by asking other questions
- Check Caller ID (if available)
- Contact the designated On-Site Emergency Manager immediately after the call is over
- Remain available throughout the response to the On-Site Emergency Manager and any emergency responders.
VI.2. Receiving a written threat

This section will apply to a threat received by mail, delivery, facsimile, or any other written method. All employees at the facility should be familiarized with the following practices:

- Persons who discover a written bomb threat should not handle the note or the packaging unnecessarily.
- All materials should be treated as evidence.
- The designated On-Site Emergency Manager must be notified immediately.

VI.3. Discovery of a suspicious package

This section will apply to a suspicious package, suspicious letter, or other suspicious object discovered in the mailroom or elsewhere on the premises, indoors or outdoors. All employees at the facility should be familiarized with the following practices:

- If a suspicious package, letter or object is discovered, it should not be touched.
- The designated On-Site Emergency Manager must be notified immediately.

VI.4. Threat by e-mail

This section will apply to any employee who receives a bomb threat by e-mail. All employees should be familiarized with the following practices:

- Employees who receive a bomb threat by e-mail are instructed to leave the message on the computer screen. It may be possible to track the sender.
- The designated On-Site Emergency Manager must be notified immediately.

VII. Evaluating the Bomb Threat

In this section, a list of criteria that the On-Site Emergency Manager will use to determine the seriousness of the threat and the need for evacuation should be outlined. Factors to consider may include:

- Recent unrest at the facility by individuals or groups;
- Recent bombings or bomb threats in the area;
- Recent highly publicized bomb incidents anywhere;
- The nature of the business or organization;
- The message itself.

There may be other criteria specific to your location, such as the feasibility of conducting an effective search without an evacuation, or the liability involved if an explosion occurs and the building was not evacuated.

This section will also outline a list of options the On-Site Emergency Manager may have to respond to the threat. Possibilities include:

- Do nothing
- Order a limited covert search without evacuation
- Order a complete covert search without evacuation
- Evacuate a portion of the facility for search
- Order a full evacuation
VIII. Alerting procedures
This section will provide instructions for alerting search teams, evacuation teams, and personnel about the need for search and/or evacuation. Most organizations prefer to use coded messages when using the public address system to call for a search. This keeps the incident low-key and eliminates panic. Different codes may indicate the level of the search and which search teams are involved. All persons who may become involved in a search must be trained in these codes during training exercises. Appropriate personnel should be trained to never use the word "bomb" when alerting by public address system.

It is necessary to determine how an evacuation alert will be made. Most bomb squads recommend that public address systems be used rather than fire alarms if possible. This is because it is important to relay specific information to the evacuees, as noted below. However, it must be considered that that the public address system itself could be the trigger for an explosive device.

The evacuation alert should be specific regarding the route personnel will follow to the designated safe location. The evacuation alert should instruct personnel to leave doors and windows unlocked and open, and to take personal property such as pocketbooks, briefcases and backpacks with them. This reduces the amount of searching that will be necessary. The alert should also instruct all persons to immediately discontinue use of cellular telephones, cordless telephones, pagers, and other electronic equipment for the duration of the emergency to prevent electronic signals from detonating any bombs.

As mentioned in Section V, the On-Site Emergency Manager will alert appropriate emergency response organizations, including fire, police, emergency medical, and bomb technicians.

IX. Command Post
This section will designate a primary location for a Command Post, to be headed by the On-Site Emergency Manager, and at least one alternate location in the event that the first location is not usable. If necessary and feasible, an outdoor, mobile Command Post can be used. The Command Post should have access to multiple telephone lines and should, at all times, be stocked with updated blueprints of the facility and master keys to all doors. Home and work telephone numbers and extensions for key building personnel and emergency response resources should be available here as well. All evacuation and search reports will be made to the Command Post.

X. Communications
This section should tell what method(s) of communications will be used during search and evacuation procedures. Electronic equipment should not be used. Some communications options include:

- Hard wired telephones
- Hand signals
- Messengers
- Non-electronic audible alarms
- Computer networks

XI. Evacuation
Many organizations choose to keep employees, students and other personnel in a designated location rather than to send them home automatically. This eliminates in-house bomb threats aimed at early dismissal.
This section should pre-designate primary and at least one secondary 'safe' location where employees, students, or other personnel can congregate during an evacuation, as well as the route to those locations. A safe location should be away from potential hazards in the event of an explosion. An ideal location would be 1,000 ft. away from any potential explosive device, have had limited public access recently, and have the protection of walls and ceilings. (Realistically, some facilities have no other option but to evacuate to athletic fields or parking lots.) The chosen location and the routes to any selected location must be searched for potential explosive devices or possible ambushes before the evacuation alert is carried out.

This section should instruct evacuation teams to direct evacuees with assuredness to the designated location. This section should also make provisions for any necessary equipment shutdowns, for instance, equipment that involves flammable liquids.

XII. Emergency Responder Assistance
Police and fire officials are routinely notified of bomb threats and, depending on the circumstances, may come to the facility immediately. Bomb squad technicians usually do not come to the scene unless a suspicious device is found. Check with your jurisdiction to find out what emergency response resources are available to you and what their procedures are. To find out whether bomb dogs may be available for a search of your facility, contact the local bomb squad and include that information in this section of the Bomb Incident Plan.

If bomb technicians are called in, usually they will be supported by at least one fire truck and one ambulance. They may also set up an independent Command Post from which to work. The Bomb Incident Plan should indicate where staging areas will be set up for arriving emergency units. Provisions should be made during training exercises to familiarize all those involved in the bomb threat response with procedures and equipment normally used by emergency responders in your jurisdiction.

XIII. Search
Police, fire and bomb squad officials may not be a part of the search process. Typically the search for a bomb is carried out by trained search teams composed of employees familiar with the premises. Police and/or fire officials often do assist school personnel with bomb searches.

This section will outline procedures to be followed by search teams when a search is ordered. Procedures for both covert and overt searches should be included. Search sequence and procedures determined during training will be outlined here. See "Searching for the Bomb," a separate file on the CD-Rom, for suggested procedures.

The plan should stress that the local bomb squad will be responsible for determining whether any suspicious object discovered during a search is a bomb, and for rendering the object safe. In the event that a bomb is discovered, bomb squad technicians may search the facility for secondary devices.

XIV. Hazardous Materials and Biological/Chemical Agents and Hazardous Materials
The Bomb Incident Plan should also address the possibility that anthrax (or any biological/chemical agent or other hazardous material) could be involved in the threat. It is important to know and record procedures to follow in the event that a biological or chemical agent or hazardous material is part of the threat.
Emergency response teams, including hazardous materials units and emergency medical personnel, should be called immediately if there is a threat involving chemical or biological agents or hazardous materials. Depending on the severity of the situation, the head of the hazardous materials team may assume command of the incident.

**XV. Re-Occupying the building after a search**
The decision to re-occupy the building is made by the On-Site Emergency Manager, with input from emergency responders. Factors which affect this decision may include:

- Confidence in the search
- Perceived level of the threat
- Mood of the personnel

**XVI. Evaluation**
The Bomb Incident Plan should make provisions for an evaluation of the Plan after each major evacuation. The evaluation should take place in a timely manner to be most effective.
I. Statement of Purpose

- This purpose of this document is to establish a proper procedure to follow in the event of a bomb threat at Hometown School.

II. Bomb Incident Committee

- This document was prepared by the Bomb Incident Committee of the Hometown School.

- The Bomb Threat Committee shall consist of the Principal of Hometown School, the Assistant Principal of Hometown School, the Director of Security for Hometown School, The Maintenance Manager of Hometown School, the Safety Officer from the Hometown Police Dept., and others as designated by the principal of Hometown School.

- The Bomb Incident Committee of the Hometown School will meet semi-annually, in August and March, to review the Bomb Incident Plan.

III. Security

- This document is classified as confidential material. The printed document will be distributed to members of the Bomb Incident Committee and members of search teams and evacuation teams only.

IV. Scope

- The following guidelines apply to any bomb threat received in any form by any person at the Hometown School, including:

  - Telephone threat
  - Mailed threat
  - Faxed threat
  - Delivered threat
  - E-mailed threat
  - Notes left in or near the facility
• The following guidelines apply to the discovery of any suspicious package inside or outside of the Hometown School.

• The following guidelines apply to threats of contamination by anthrax or other biological or chemical agent or by hazardous material, with additional provisions noted in section XVIII.

• The following guidelines have been prepared with the assistance of the Hometown Fire Department and the Hometown Police Department.

V. Responsibility

• The Principal of the Hometown School is designated as the On-Site Emergency Manager for bomb incidents.

• The On-Site Emergency Manager has final decision-making authority on all issues regarding the bomb incident.

• The On-site Emergency Manager is responsible for notifying outside agencies of any bomb threat, including the Hometown Fire Department, Hometown Police Department, State Police Bomb Squad, Hometown Hospital, Hometown Electric Co., and others as deemed necessary.

• In the event that the above person is not available, the Assistant Principal of the Hometown School will be the designated On-Site Emergency Manager for bomb incidents.

• It is the responsibility of the On-Site Emergency Manager to ensure that members of the Bomb Incident Committee receive printed copies of this document.

• It is the responsibility of the On-Site Emergency Manager to ensure that all personnel who may become involved in a bomb incident are fully trained to follow these guidelines, including all employees who work the switchboard, evacuation teams, search teams and others as appropriate.

• It is the responsibility of each member of the Bomb Threat Committee to become familiar with this document and to ensure that all employees and students are aware of the existence of a Bomb Incident Plan at Hometown School.

VI. Receiving the telephone threat

• A Bomb Threat Checklist listing specific questions to ask the caller will remain at all times near the telephone of all employees who are likely to receive a telephone bomb threat.

• The Bomb Threat Checklist must be completed by the person who receives the bomb threat.

• The person receiving the bomb threat will keep the caller on the telephone for as long as possible in order to obtain as much information as possible.

• The person receiving the bomb threat will use hand motions to signal to another employee to listen in on the conversation.

• The person receiving the bomb threat will remain calm and courteous towards the caller at all times.
• The person receiving the bomb threat will attempt to keep students, faculty and others from overhearing the conversation.

• Upon completion of the call, the person receiving the bomb threat will immediately notify the On-Site Emergency Manager of the threat.

• The person who received the threat will remain available throughout the period of the incident and response to the On-Site Emergency Manager and all emergency responders.

VII. Receiving a written threat

• This section applies to a written bomb threat that is received by mail, facsimile, delivery person, or any other means. All employees at the Hometown School should be familiarized with the following practices:

• An employee who recognizes that he or she has received a written threat must not handle the message or any packaging materials unnecessarily.

• The employee who receives a written threat must contact the designated On-Site Emergency Manager immediately.

• All materials, including packaging and envelopes, must be retained and preserved for evidence.

• The employee who discovered the written threat will remain available throughout the period of the incident and response to the On-Site Emergency Manager and all emergency responders.

VIII. Suspicious package

• This section applies to any suspicious package received in the mailroom or discovered on the premises of the Hometown School. All employees and students at the Hometown School should be familiarized with the following practices:

• If a suspicious package or object is discovered, it should not be handled.

• Any person discovering a suspicious package or object should immediately notify the On-Site Emergency Manager.

• The person who discovered the suspicious package will remain available throughout the period of the incident and response to the On-Site Emergency Manager and all emergency responders.

IX. Threat by E-mail

• This section applies to a bomb threat that is received by e-mail. All employees at the Hometown School should be familiarized with the following practices:

• If a bomb threat is received by e-mail on any computer at the school, the message should be left on the screen in order that the sender may be identified.

• The designated On-Site Emergency Manager must be notified immediately.
• The employee who received the e-mail threat will remain available throughout the period of the incident and response to the On-Site Emergency Manager and all emergency responders.

X. Evaluating the Bomb Threat
• Upon notification of a bomb threat at Hometown School, it is the responsibility of the On-Site Emergency Manager to determine action to be taken.
• The decision to search/evacuate will be made on the basis of the following factors:
  - Current tensions at Hometown School
  - Previous similar threats at Hometown School
  - Recent highly publicized bombing incidents
  - The perceived validity of the caller
  - Risks involved
  - Input from attending police and fire officials.
• The On-Site Emergency Manager may select from the following actions:
  - Do nothing
  - Conduct a limited, low-key search
  - Evacuate the school and conduct a full-scale search

XI. Alerting Procedures
• The On-Site Emergency Manager will be responsible for alerting the Hometown Fire Department that a bomb threat has been received at the school.
• In the event that a low-key search of the school is required, the following announcement will be broadcast over the public address system: "Mr. Green, please contact security." This announcement will serve as a code to search teams that they must report to the Command Center to conduct a limited search of the school. This message will be repeated twice at 30-second intervals.
• In the event that a full-scale search of the school is required, the following announcement will be broadcast over the public address system: "Mr. Brown, please contact security." This announcement will serve as a code to search teams and evacuation teams to report to the Command Center to prepare for a full evacuation and search. This announcement will be repeated twice at 30-second intervals.
XII. Emergency Operations Center

- Upon receipt of a bomb threat, an Emergency Operations Center (EOC) will be established in the Main Office of the Hometown School.
- The On-Site Emergency Manager will be in charge of the Emergency Operations Center.
- In the event that the Main Office is not an appropriate location, the alternate designated location for the EOC will be the Boy's Gym Office.
- The designated EOC and alternate EOC will at all times have an updated blueprint of the entire school complex and a list of telephone numbers of key building personnel, members of the Bomb Incident Committee, and emergency response resources.

XIII. Communication Systems

- The primary method of communication between search teams, evacuation teams and the Command Center will be by hard-wired telephones. No cellular telephones, cordless telephones, walkie-talkies or pagers are permitted.
- The secondary method of communication will be the use of messengers.
- Search teams will sound a manual horn to indicate the discovery of a suspicious object.

XIV. Evacuation procedures

- An evacuation team will be trained during pre-incident planning to understand and follow these guidelines.
- The evacuation team will consist of the Principal, Assistant Principal, all Guidance Counselors, Dean of Women Students, Dean of Men Students, and other persons as determined by the Bomb Incident Committee.
- The On-Site Emergency Manager will be responsible for the on-going training of the evacuation team.
- In the event that an evacuation is required, Athletic Field B is designated as the gathering place for all students, teachers and other employees.
- If Athletic Field B is declared unsafe, the rear parking lot along Baker Street is designated as the alternate gathering place.
- If an evacuation is ordered, an immediate search of the designated gathering place will be undertaken by a search team.
- If the designated gathering place is found to be clear of suspicious objects, the following announcement will be broadcast over the public address system: "An emergency situation exists. You are required to leave the building immediately by the front door. Please take with you pocketbooks, backpacks, briefcases and other personal property currently in your possession. Do not go to your lockers. Leave
doors and windows open and unlocked. Remain with your teachers. We will gather on Athletic Field B. Do not leave the premises. Do not use cellular phones or other electronic equipment until further notice."

- Teachers will be responsible for evacuating their classrooms calmly and quickly. Science teachers will shut down any equipment deemed dangerous.
- Teachers will remain with their classes as they exit the building and proceed to the designated meeting place.
- Once at the designated meeting place, teachers will be responsible for checking attendance.
- The evacuation team will be responsible for guiding students and personnel to the proper exit and to the designated meeting place.
- The evacuation team will be responsible for checking restrooms before exiting the building.
- It is the decision of the On-Site Emergency Manager whether school will be dismissed early.
- The On-Site Emergency Manager, the evacuation team, and all other Administration and Faculty will at all times conduct themselves in a calm manner so as not to alarm the students.

XV. Search procedures

- Search teams will be trained during pre-incident planning to understand and follow proper search procedures.
- The On-Site Emergency Manager will be responsible for the on-going training of search teams.
- Search teams will include personnel from the Security and Maintenance departments.
- Search teams may be assisted by fire and police officers.
- The On-Site Emergency Manager will call the Springfield Bomb Squad for the help of a bomb dog. Determine if the dog is available and how long it will take for him to arrive at the school.
- Each search team will consist of a minimum of two persons.
- Search teams will be equipped with the following equipment: manual horn, flashlight; knife; standard and Phillips screwdrivers; crescent wrench; probe; extension mirror; and labels to mark where the search has been completed.
- The On-Site Emergency Manager will designate the areas to be searched, beginning with any area mentioned by the threat-maker. The following public areas must always included in the search:
  - Cafeteria
  - Front lobby
  - Exterior perimeter
Gymnasium
Rest rooms
Stairwells
Other areas as designated by the On-Site Emergency Manager

- Search teams must not turn lights on or off.
- Search teams must touch nothing that appears suspicious.
- If a suspicious object is discovered, search teams will alert the On-Site Emergency Manager by sounding a manual horn.
- Following a search of each area, searchers will label the area as 'searched' with supplied labels.
- Searchers will remain in communication with the On-Site Emergency Manager regarding the progress of their search.

XVI. Bomb Squad

- It is the decision of the On-Site Emergency Manager, with input from fire and police officers, whether to request the assistance of the State Police Bomb Squad.
- The Bomb Squad will set up a staging area in the bus lane along the front of the building.
- Bomb technicians alone will be responsible for examining and rendering safe any suspicious objects discovered during the search. All Hometown personnel and students are directed to remain out of the building and away from any suspicious objects.
- The On-Site Emergency Manager, maintenance personnel, the person who received the threat and the persons or persons who discovered suspicious letters or objects will remain available to the bomb squad for the duration of the response.

XVII. Secondary devices

- All personnel are reminded to be alert for the existence of secondary explosive devices.

XVIII. Anthrax/Hazardous Materials incidents

- If a threat involves anthrax or other hazardous material, the On-Site Emergency Manager will call for the support of the Springfield HazMat Team and the Hometown Hospital.
- If a package or letter is received claiming to contain anthrax or other hazardous material, the object should not be handled and the immediate area should be evacuated. All persons in the shipping department and front office should be trained in this procedure.
• Any persons suspected of being contaminated by anthrax or other hazardous material must be immediately quarantined until examined by qualified medical personnel.

• If necessary, a decontamination corridor will be set up in the front parking lot and operated by members of the Springfield HazMat Team.

XIX. Re-entering the building

• If a search of the building turns up no explosive device, it will be decision of the On-Site Emergency Manager, with input from fire and police officers, to re-enter the building.

• If a suspicious device is discovered in the building, the On Site Emergency Manager must determine whether students will be dismissed. However, students will not be permitted to re-enter the building until a complete search is conducted by the State Police Bomb Squad.

XX. Post-Incident Evaluation

• The Bomb Incident Committee will convene within one week of a bomb incident to evaluate the response and to make necessary revisions to the Bomb Threat Plan.

• The On-Site Emergency Manager is responsible for arranging a full-scale training exercise annually, to be held during the school year. The training exercise should involve members of the Hometown Police and Fire Departments, Hometown Hospital, Springfield HazMat Team, all members of the Bomb Incident Committee, all members of the evacuation team, and all members of the search teams.