

Annapolis Police Department



GENERAL ORDER

Number: C.1

**Issue Date: June
2010**

TO: All Personnel

SUBJECT: Bomb Threat Response Plan/ Weapons of Mass Destruction

PURPOSE

The purpose of this General Order is to establish clear guidelines in the event of a bomb threat, explosion or Weapons of Mass Destruction event (WMD).

POLICY

It shall be the policy of the Annapolis Police Department that officers shall respond to bomb threats/ Weapons of Mass Destruction events as serious hazards to be handled professionally.

DEFINITIONS

1. **Bomb** - Any suspected explosive or incendiary device, including blasting caps and military ordinance.
2. **Bomb Incident** - Any situation involving a suspicious item that may be an explosive or incendiary device.
3. **Bomb Threat** - A telephoned, verbal or written threat that indicates that an explosive device has been or will be set to detonate.
4. **Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD)** - Any explosive, incendiary or poison gas, bomb, grenade, missile having an explosive or incendiary charge, mine, or similar device. Any type weapon by whatever name known which will or may be readily converted to expel a

projectile by the action of an explosive or other propellant. Any combination from the previous sentences from which a destructive device may be readily assembled. Any weapon that is designed or intended to cause death or serious bodily injury through the release, dissemination

or impact of toxic or poisonous chemical or their precursors. Any weapon involving a disease organism or any weapon that is designed to release radiation or radioactivity at a level dangerous to human life.

For the purpose of this policy a bomb threat or explosion and a WMD threat or incident will be used interchangeably unless specially stated.

Required Action

A. Receipt of bomb threat calls:

Police Communications Operators, following the guidelines of General Orders and Standard Operating Procedures, shall immediately attempt to solicit the following information from the recipient of a bomb threat call:

- a. Location of potential bomb site;
- b. Demographics of the potential bomb site;
- c. Evaluation response;
- d. The specific message of the bomb threat;
 - i). Time of explosion
 - ii). Type of explosive device
 - iii). Where the bomb is located and what it looks like
 - iv). What will cause the bomb to explode
 - v). Who placed the bomb
 - vi). Exact wording of the threat
 - vii). Caller's association with the group, organization, target of threat, reason for threat
- e. The identification of the individual receiving the threat; and any identifying characteristics of the caller such as:
 - i). Gender, age;
 - ii). Speech- slang, accent, drawl, slur or stutter;
 - iii). Listen for background noise, and special nuances in the voice of the caller.

B. Response to bomb threat calls:

1. Communications personnel shall:

- a. Immediately dispatch the appropriate post car and supervisor;
- b. Maintain a telephone connection with the complainant long enough to establish a meeting point outside the threatened site;
- c. Immediately notify the Annapolis Fire Marshal;

- d. Assist officers on site by contacting the various other agencies deemed necessary by the supervisor, such as:
 - i). Annapolis Fire Department;
 - ii). State Fire Marshal;
 - iii). Bomb/explosives canines;
 - iv). Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF); and/or
 - v). Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) if it involves a WMD.
- e. Immediately notify the Media Relations Officer to handle media inquiries.

2. Officers shall:

- a. Immediately respond to the complainant's location or bomb site, **turning off portable and mobile radios, mobile data terminals cellular phones, and pagers** until cleared by the Annapolis Fire Marshal.
- b. Be aware of vehicles and persons leaving the scene. Pay particular care surveying the scene prior to parking and exiting the vehicle. **Expect a secondary device.**
- c. Immediately identify the individual(s) responsible for building security and maintenance. Interview the person in charge at the location and evaluate the validity of the threat. Factors to consider include:
 - i). The amount of detail provided by the caller;
 - ii). The type of place threatened, e.g., Planned Parenthood clinic, laboratories, school during exam time.
 - iii). The notoriety of the person - if the person is threatened.
 - iv). The number of prior false threats received by the place or person.
 - v). Whether the caller identified themselves with an organization known to carry out bombings.
 - vi). Any current events surrounding the threatened person/premises.
- d. Advise the supervisor of the situation.
- e. File a written report prior to the end of the shift.

3. Supervisors shall:

- a. Immediately respond and assess the situation to determine the

deployment of personnel and necessary resources to safely fulfill the police department's role.

- b. Set up a command post, ensure that an inner and an outer perimeter are established. If the threat involves any material that is/can become/has the potential to be airborne, set up the command post upwind from the incident.
 - i). Determination of the need for evacuation of occupants:
 - a). Senior business/school officials on scene will be responsible for determining if an evacuation will be undertaken, **except** when a suspicious package or real device is found.
 - b). The standard recommendation is to evacuate the school or other building.
 - c). Officers on the scene will implement evacuation procedures when a suspicious package or real device is found.
 - d). If evacuation is undertaken, the supervisor will ensure that the structure is secure from unauthorized entry.
 - ii). Security of evacuees at a location with the following specifications:
 - a). At least to a location that a reasonable person could expect to safely withstand an explosion from the threatened site;
 - b). Away from anything that could be sympathetically detonated as a secondary threat (cars, trucks, storage areas, etc.); and
 - c). Away from responding emergency equipment and police vehicles.
 - iii). Facilitation of services:

Facilitate services of all individuals to effectively handle the situation.
 - iv). Ensure that the Media Relations Officer has been notified.

C. Search for bomb devices

1. Searchers:

- a. The search of the premises must be conducted in conjunction with public safety personnel. Maintenance personnel, janitors, etc., are generally excellent for this purpose as they are thoroughly familiar with the premises and should quickly recognize foreign or out-of-

place objects.

- b. Search with eyes and ears only. Touching and moving things could cause a premature detonation. Search the premises from the bottom upward, being particularly attentive to public areas (restrooms, hallways etc.) and remote areas (utility rooms, furnace rooms).
- c. Run elevators through one full cycle before using them.
- d. Search visually from the floor to the ceiling.
- e. Use flashlights when necessary. Do not turn on the lights.
- f. Fire department personnel are not trained to do bomb searches and will not participate unless exigent circumstances dictate their assistance.
- g. Bomb technicians will be provided a staging area close enough to the incident to respond quickly, but far enough away as to be out of danger.
- h. Bomb technicians will not be included in the search teams, but will be immediately available if a device or suspicious package is found.

2. Decision to search:

- a. The on scene supervisor shall make the decision to search the location based on;
 - i). Assessment of all available information;
 - ii). Consultation with the fire department, building manager, or other involved participants;
 - iii). Feasibility of finding a package or device in the building without having precise information;
 - iv). Availability of an explosives K-9 unit; and
 - v). Size of the structure.
- b. Occupied buildings should not be searched except where absolutely necessary.

3. Safety concerns

- a. Recognizing the fact that buildings are replaceable, while people are not, supervisors will not unnecessarily endanger any police officer or other individual.
- b. Search teams will be removed from any threatened premises in adequate time to ensure the utmost safety margins.

- c. The entire building will be secured until the search is complete.
4. In the event a suspected device found
 - a. **UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD IT BE TOUCHED OR MOVED BY UNTRAINED PERSONNEL**
 - i). The exact location and description should be relayed to the command post and bomb technicians (the State of Maryland Fire Marshals office or other recognized agency).
 - ii). The search teams shall be immediately withdrawn from the building, unless there is credible information to support the fact that another device may be present and the device must be located.
 - iii). Commanders and supervisors reserve the right to withdraw search teams at their discretion.
 - b. If the device is determined to be a WMD (chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear) or obviously not of an explosive nature, evacuate as indicated in B 3 b. As soon as it is determined to be a WMD the officer(s) should don the PPE and notifying all responding personnel to do likewise. Evacuations should then be conducted

D. Post Search

Once the search has been concluded, or the time period for the threat has lapsed, the premises representatives shall be told:

- a. The police have ended their search with negative results, if this is the case;
- b. The police cannot guarantee the safe conditions of the building; and
- c. Any decision to re-enter the building is the sole responsibility of the premises representative.

E. Explosions

1. After an explosion, it is imperative that officers remain a safe distance from the site of the explosion. **Treat all explosion sites with caution, as additional explosive devices may be present.**
2. Responding officers will:
 - a. Not enter any structure where an explosion has occurred except when immediately necessary to save lives or prevent serious injury to persons;

- b. Initiate a 10-3;
 - c. Establish an outer perimeter;
 - d. Establish a preliminary command post at least to a distance that a reasonable person could expect to safely withstand an explosion from the threatened site;
 - e. Direct all responding units to the preliminary command post for assignment;
 - f. Maintain command until officially relieved by a higher ranking officer;
 - g. Keep onlookers away; and
 - h. Request explosive K-9 unit.
3. Supervisors will
- a. Respond to the scene and take command of police operations;
 - b. Initiate the All Hazards Operations Plan, if warranted;
 - c. Notify the on call Watch Commander, Duty Officer (if weekend) and the Patrol Commander who will notify the Chief of Police.
 - d. Designate a media briefing area (by outer perimeter) and maintain news media relations until the Media Relations Officer can be summoned to the scene. Refer to **General Order B.7.**
4. Communications personnel shall:
- a. Notify the Annapolis Fire Department and any other agency deemed necessary by the on scene commander.
 - b. Initiate the All Hazards Operations Plan, if warranted.
5. Crime scene procedures
- a. Crime scene security will be established as outlined in **General Order L.3.**
 - b. The collection of evidence shall be in accordance with **General Order L.3.**

6. Investigation

The Department will assist the Fire Marshals office and any other agency in the investigation of bomb threats and/or explosions.

Michael Pristoop
Chief of Police

References
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Accreditation Standards 46.1.22. General Orders B.7 News Media Relations, L.3 Crime Scene Procedures/Collection of Evidence3. All Hazards Plan

Revision: This General Order replaces General Order C.1 Bomb Threat Response Plan dated February 2000