

BOMB THREAT AND EVACUATION POLICY

Bomb Threats

Introduction

Terrorism often involves acts of extreme violence or threatened violence in order to promote its various causes. Targets for that violence can include individuals, organisations, political bodies or other representatives of authority. Increasingly, terrorist acts have become indiscriminate, placing members of the general public at risk, with the overall aim of causing casualties and disrupting critical public services and economies. Often targets are chosen for their high profile and the publicity a terrorist act would generate. With this in mind the Council has developed the following information for staff should they become suspicious of a package or should a bomb alert occur.

What do you do if you receive a telephone bomb threat?

The great majority of telephone bomb threats are simply made by malicious prankster with the sole intention of causing disruption to the target. However, it must be remembered that such an act is still a criminal offence and should always be reported to the police on (9)999. Due to the direct dial telephone system a wide range of staff are potentially vulnerable to receive bomb threats.

If you receive a telephone bomb threat:

- Remain calm.
- Keep the caller talking and record as much information as possible (a sample form is available in appendix 1 for distribution to appropriate).
- If a colleague is on hand, they should notify the most senior person on duty or contact the Police directly on 999.

If a colleague is not on hand:

- If your phone has a caller display, record the number or dial 1471 to try and obtain the caller number. Any information gathered should be passed to the Police.
- Notify the most senior person on duty or contact the Police directly on 999.

What do you do if you receive or come across a package you think might contain an explosive device?

- Do not handle or touch the package any further. Leave the package where it is.
- Leave the area and instruct others in the area to do the same.
- Notify the most senior person on duty and provide them with as much detail as possible.

What do you do if you receive or come across a package you think might contain chemical or biological contaminants?

- Do not handle or touch the package any further. Leave the package where it is.
- Leave the area and instruct others in the area to do the same. Close any doors and windows to the area on your way out.

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- Try to isolate yourself and any other person potentially exposed to prevent further contamination and be available for medical examinations as required.
- Call the most senior person on hand and provide them with as much detail as possible.

What do you do if you think you might have been exposed to a contaminate?

- Remain calm.
- Avoid touching your face or body.
- Remain isolated from those not contaminated.
- Wash hands in soap and water.
- Provide as much detail as possible to your line manager and the emergency services.
- Do not eat, drink or smoke until informed safe to do so.
- Remain available for medical treatment.

Why a letter or package might be considered suspicious

- Package or letter appears discoloured, stained, has powder like residue or has a strange smell.
- Unusual size and or weight.
- Odd shape.
- Excessive packaging.
- Excessive postage.
- Incomplete or errors in addressing.
- No return address.
- Wording such as 'personal' or 'confidential'.

What should managers do when informed of a suspect package?

- Call the police immediately on 999.
- In consultation with the police the most senior manager must decide to:
 - a) Do nothing.
 - b) Search the building and evacuate if something suspicious is found.
 - c) Evacuate the building immediately, without searching.
- Inform the Emergency Planning Officer. This will trigger the major emergency plan notifications and ensure the Managing Director and other Senior Officers are notified.
- Liaise with the Emergency Services.

What should managers do if it is suspected the package may be contaminated?

- Call the police immediately on 999.
- Isolate those suspected of being contaminated, instruct them to wash their hands immediately, refrain from eating, drinking or smoking and ensure they are available to receive medical attention.
- Evacuate others in the vicinity to what is considered a safe distance and isolate the area.

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- Ensure the Facilities Manager or Responsible Person closes down the air-conditioning system.
- Inform the Emergency Planning Officer. This will trigger the major emergency plan notifications and ensure the Managing Director and other Senior Officers are notified.
- Seek appropriate medical advice.
- Liaise with the emergency services.
- Ensure nobody enters the suspected area until given the all clear.

NB: The persons exposed to the contaminate should not be evacuated from the building but isolated in a separate area to await examination. They should be encouraged to wash their hands, if possible, with a hand cleansing solution. Other non-contaminated staff should be evacuated.

How do you undertake a bomb search?

It is unlikely the police will undertake a search of the building following a bomb threat. The police are not familiar with the building and cannot detect out of place items. The main requirement for a 'searcher' is familiarity with the area being searched. Fire Wardens and Fire Marshalls are ideally suited to undertake this task. Any or all members of staff may be trained to the bomb search plan.

Each premises should develop a plan for carrying out a search following a bomb threat. The objective of the plan is to search the building, as quickly, effectively and safely as possible in order to determine if it is safe to remain or re-occupy.

The search plan should determine:

- Who is responsible for initiating the search?
- How the search is initiated.
- Who is responsible for coordinating the search?
- Who is responsible for carrying out the search?
- What area each member is responsible for searching.
- What, if any, are the priority areas (these may include areas of public access).
- Who is responsible for giving the 'all clear'?
- How you are going to keep a record of the areas you have searched so the Police can document what has been done?

Any staff involved in the search should receive training in the search plan. Searchers do not require training in explosive or incendiary devices as these may come in many disguises. Searchers should be made aware that they are looking for any item that:

- Looks suspicious
- Is out of place
- Shouldn't be there
- Cannot be accounted for
- Emits an unusual noise

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- Has an unusual odour

All outside areas up to the perimeter of the premise should be included in the search plan.

In some cases, it may be decided to undertake a clandestine search to avoid unnecessary panic or disruption. In this case it will be necessary to have an 'initiation' signal, this could be in the form of:

- Bomb warning alarm (is the fire alarm). This is by far the most appropriate method but may not be possible in all buildings. If it is not possible, other systems should be used.
- Coded messages over the public address system.
- Cascaded messages using landlines. This system involves one person telephoning two people in the search team who in turn each telephone a further two people until the whole team has been notified. Mobile telephones must not be used during bomb evacuations as the signal may trigger the detonation of the bomb. Hand-held radios should not be used within 15m of the suspect device.

What about evacuation procedures?

All Tactical Security Options Ltd premises will have fire evacuation procedures in place. Staff will be trained to these procedures and the procedures will have been tested for effectiveness in the form of fire drills. The bomb evacuation procedures should build on best practice from the current fire evacuation procedures. However, it is important to note that evacuation for bombs is different to fire evacuation and the key issue is to ensure rapid evacuation of buildings regardless of the reason.

Once the decision has been made to evacuate the building following a bomb alert, the major difference between the fire and bomb evacuation procedures will be the location of the bomb assembly point and the requirement to search the building. To overcome this, an appropriate location, secondary to the fire assembly point should be selected and included in the bomb evacuation plan.

When selecting an appropriate bomb evacuation assembly point, it is recommended it should be approximately 500 metres away from the building and it should not be sited on or near a car park, within line of sight of the device, next to a secondary hazard such as a glass fronted building and must always be behind substantial hard cover. Provision for colleagues, clients, visitors or members of the public with disabilities or other special needs must be included.

Another dimension is the care and welfare of staff and the public. Plans must take into account external influences like the weather as the duty of care extends wider than moving people away from danger. Evacuation is the first step in the process, not the last. It should always be assumed that re-entry to the building will not be possible.

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What training is required?

Training is a key and continuous issue that must begin at the induction process and be regularly updated. The evacuation procedures must be regularly tested to ensure their effectiveness and this must be done on an annual basis as a minimum requirement.

How do you reduce or prevent the likelihood of a bomb being placed on your premises?

Making things more difficult for potential terrorists may dissuade an attack or persuade potential terrorists to select an easier target.

How to make things more difficult:

- Effective general security, including permit control for the entry of non-employees.
- CCTV on entry points to buildings.
- Waste bins located or re-located to where they can be seen.
- Good housekeeping standards throughout the premises.
- A place for everything and everything in its place.

The responsibility for ensuring adequate bomb procedures are in place rests with the Facilities Manager for each premises. The guidance in this procedure should be adopted. Additional support can be obtained from the Health & Safety Team and the Emergency Planning Team.

Who do you call?

- All incidents must be reported to the appropriate emergency service using 999.
- All emergency incidents must be reported to the Emergency Planning Officer using the Company contact number 07787788811. This will trigger the major emergency plan notifications ensuring the MD and other Senior Officers are notified immediately. This will ensure a standard approach to all emergencies.

What you need to do – Line Managers

- Ensure you read and fully understand these arrangements.
- Ensure you know your role in the event of a bomb threat or evacuation.
- Ensure you know how to contact the Facilities Manager or Responsible Person for your building.
- Inform the Emergency Planning Officer in the event of a bomb threat or evacuation.
- Contact emergency services as necessary.

Tactical Security Options Ltd, Room 704 Cameron House, White Cross Industrial Estate, South Road, Lancaster, Lancashire, LA1 4XF. Registered Company (10391759)

Tel: 07787788811 Email:

dgap@hotmail.co.uk

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- Liaise with the emergency services as necessary.
- Ensure your staff carry out regular practice evacuation drills.

What you need to do – Facility Managers

- Ensure you read and fully understand these arrangements.
- Ensure you know your role in the event of a bomb threat or evacuation.
- Ensure a bomb evacuation plan is in place.
- Ensure a bomb search procedure is in place.
- Ensure Fire Marshall / Wardens are trained to the procedures.
- Liaise with line management and emergency services as required.
- Close down energy supplies and/or air conditioning units if required.
- Ensure regular evacuation drills take place.

What you need to do – Fire Marshalls and Wardens

- Ensure you read and fully understand these arrangements.
- Ensure you know your role in the event of a bomb threat or evacuation.
- Practice bomb searches in line with building procedures.
- Attend Fire Marshall / Warden training as required.
- Liaise with line management and Facilities Manager when evacuating or carrying out searches.

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What you need to do – employees

- Ensure you read and fully understand these arrangements.
- Ensure you know what to do in the event of a bomb threat or evacuation.
- Practice evacuation procedures as requested.
- Cooperate with line management to ensure safe and swift evacuations.

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Appendix 1

Telephone Bomb Threat Report Form
(see overleaf)



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This policy has been approved & authorised by:

Name: Dave Pattinson & Stacey Vivian

Position: Managing Director & Operations Manager

Date: April 2020

Signature:

Dave Pattinson

Signature:

Stacey Vivian