



Learning that Connects

Procedure in the event of a Bomb Threat

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Chair of Governors: Bob Paton

Governors Approval: 28th September 2016

Please note that Simon Hanson is our Chair of Governors as from 29th November 2016

Procedures for handling bomb threats

Most bomb threats are made over the phone and the overwhelming majority are hoaxes, often the work of malicious jokers, although terrorists do make hoax calls with the intent of causing alarm and disruption. Any hoax is a crime and, no matter how ridiculous or unconvincing, must be reported to the police.

Calls may be of two kinds:

- Hoax threats designed to disrupt, test reactions or divert attention
- Threats warning of a genuine device – These may be attempts to avoid casualties or enable the terrorist to blame others if there are casualties. However genuine threats can provide inaccurate information about where and when a device might explode.

Principles

Base bomb threat procedures on the following principles:

Ensure that all staff who could conceivably receive a bomb threat are trained in handling procedures or have ready access to instructions. This applies particularly to courts, banks, hotels, hospitals, news agencies, public transport organisations and those offering any sort of emergency service. Switchboard operators should be familiarised with procedures.

Draw up a clear list of actions to follow upon receipt of a call. Even though staff may be unable to assess a threat's accuracy or origin, their impressions of the caller could be important. A suggested bomb threat checklist is available under Related Documents.

Consider that the member of staff who receives the threat may not be prepared – receiving such a threat may be the closest that many people ever come to acts of terrorism – so offer some basic advice for staff on handling a threat, for example:

1. Stay calm and listen.
2. Obtain as much information as possible – try to get the caller to be precise about the location and timing of the alleged bomb and whom they represent. If possible, keep the caller talking.
3. Ensure that any recording facility is switched on.
4. When the caller rings off, dial 1471 (if that facility operates and you have no automatic number display) to see if you can get their number.
5. Immediately report the incident to the relevant manager or security team to decide on the best course of action and notify the police. If you cannot get hold of anyone, and even if you think the call is a hoax, inform the police directly. Give your impressions of the caller and an exact account of what was said.
6. If you have not been able to record the call, make notes for the security staff or police. Do not leave your post – unless ordered to evacuate – until the police or security arrive.

Bomb threat checklist

This checklist is designed to help staff to deal with a telephoned bomb threat effectively and to record the necessary information.

Actions to be taken on receipt of a bomb threat:

- Switch on recorder/voicemail (if connected)
- Tell the caller which town/district you are answering from
- Record the exact wording of the threat:

Ask the following questions:

- Where is the bomb right now?

- When is it going to explode?

- What does it look like?

- What kind of bomb is it?

- What will cause it to explode?

- Did you place the bomb?

- Why?

- What is your name?

- What is your address?

- What is your telephone number?

Record time call completed:

- Where automatic number reveal equipment is available, record number shown:

- Inform the Security Co-ordinator of name and telephone number of the person informed:

- Contact the police on 999. Time informed:

The following part should be completed once the caller has hung up and the Security Co-ordinator and the police have been informed.

- Time and date of call:

- Length of call:

- Number at which the call was received (i.e. your extension number):

About the caller

- Sex of caller:

- Age:

- Nationality:

✓ **Tick**
where
appropriate

Language

- Well spoken
- Irrational
- Taped message
- Offensive
- Incoherent
- Message read by threat-maker

Caller's voice

- Calm
- Crying
- Clearing throat
- Angry
- Nasal
- Slurred
- Excited
- Stutter
- Disguised
- Slow
- Lisp
- Accent

Type of accent

- Rapid
- Deep
- Hoarse
- Laughter
- Familiar

If so, whose voice did it sound like?

Background sounds

- Street noises
- House noises
- Animal noises
- Crockery
- Motor
- Clear
- Voice
- Static
- PA system
- Booth
- Music
- Factory machinery
- Office machinery
- Other (specify)

Other remarks

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Print name: _____

Suspected letter or parcel bombs

In the case of suspected letter or parcel bombs - evacuate the room and the floor concerned along with the two floors immediately above and below.

Seven key instructions for handling suspicious items

- do not touch suspicious items
- move away to a safe distance
- prevent others from approaching
- communicate safely to staff, visitors and the public
- use hand-held radios or mobile phones away from the immediate vicinity of a suspect item, remaining out of line of sight and behind hard cover
- notify the police
- ensure that whoever found the item or witnessed the incident remains on hand to brief the police.