

# SAN FRANCISCO FIRE DEPARTMENT

Division of Training  
Training Bulletin



## BOMB AND BOMB THREAT PROCEDURES

TRAINING BULLETIN 02-1

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# TRAINING BULLETIN

## BOMB AND BOMB THREATS

### Purpose

The San Francisco Fire Department responds to a wide variety of calls to investigate strange odors and unusual conditions. For example, companies might be called out to investigate an unattended package or a vehicle leaking a strange substance. Company Officers need to address these incidents with high degree of suspicion that it could be a terrorist threat.

In light of recent events, it is apparent that terrorist threats are on the rise. In the United States the weapons of choice are explosives, both large and small. This does not rule out the use of chemical, biological or nuclear agents.

This training bulletin is designed to raise the level of awareness of all members about the standard distances that should be adhered to when at the scene of a Terrorist Bomb Threat. Attached is a reference card that provides exact information about explosive devices or materials and the recommended evacuation distance. The initial safe distance from any suspected explosive device should be 1000 feet horizontal and vertical. The type of cover and concealment you can place between you and the device can reduce these distances.

If Fire Department personnel should discover a suspected explosive device or evidence of one, the device shall not be disturbed in any way. Identify and set boundaries, leave the area immediately, deny entry to exclusion zone by marking the area with tape and, from a safe distance, notify the Communication Center to request the SFPD – Explosive Ordinance Disposal Unit (EOD).

### Responsibility and Oversight

A reported bomb threat, destructive device, or explosions are crime scenes and therefore is under the authority of the San Francisco Police Department. The first assigned patrol officer has the responsibility to initiate the investigation, search, and potential evacuation and notifications. This may result in the notification of the Explosive Ordinance Disposal Unit, Special Investigations Division and/or the Operations Center and the Fire Department. Note: **Fire Department Personnel - DO NOT PARTICIPATE IN ANY SEARCH EFFORTS FOR A DEVICE.** The Fire Department shall conduct a secondary search around their apparatus once at the staging area or any parked apparatus, for any suspicious devices.

It is the responsibility of the Police Department with assistance from the building owner/manager to evacuate the premises and it is also their decision when to reoccupy the building. This is done with the advice and assistance of the Fire Department.

When the ECD-911 receives a report of a bomb or bomb threat, the Police Department shall be immediately notified. The Fire Department will on the following manner:

- Fire Department units respond to the Staging Area.
- Fire Chiefs report to the Command Post.
- The Police Department is in charge of the incident.
- It is the Police Department's responsibility to search for and locate any explosives.

## Bomb Threat Procedures

Upon Arrival. Fire Department procedures will be conducted as necessary to assist the Police.

- Establish a Unified Command Post with Police Department and a Staging Area away from the bomb scene. Use the following distances as a guideline for the Command Post and Staging Area locations:
  - ✓ 300 feet – If you **have** cover.
  - ✓ 900 feet – If you **do not have** cover. (Outside in an open area, line of sight operations)
  - ✓ If there is any question as to safety, use 900 feet as a general rule.
- Adhere to radio and cellular phone discipline – No radios or cellular phone are to be used within 300 feet of the incident. There shall be no radio communications or sirens used in the Incident Area until the Police Department gives clearance.
- Police officials will leave the decision as to whether or not to shut off gas, electricity or other utilities to the Fire Department.
- All department apparatus and all support vehicles, (i.e. Water Dept., P.G.&E., ambulances, etc.) shall be directed to the Staging Area.
- If the explosive device should detonate and a fire results, the Fire Department shall conduct necessary fire suppression and rescue operations and then exit the area immediately. If the Bureau of Investigation is not already on the scene, the Incident Commander shall immediately summon them. **No overhauling shall take place and the area shall not be disturbed.** If a building is involved, structural collapse is a possibility and additional devices may be present. **Use extreme caution.**
- Fire Department personnel shall not enter the Incident Area until the Police Department declares the area safe.
- All Fire Department actions are at the discretion of the Fire Department Incident Commander and the Department safety practices shall be observed at all times. All actions shall be coordinated through the Unified Police and Fire Department Command Post.

Cover versus Concealment. Cover is defined as an object that will provide you safety from projectiles such as shrapnel, glass, debris, etc. Concealment is defined as an object that obstructs another's view of you, but offers no real protection from the above projectiles.

When responding to a suspicious incident, please keep the following in mind:

- An engine company's water-tank or cement wall is COVER
- An ambulance patient compartment is CONCEALMENT

Debris from an exploding device can travel approximately 2,800 feet per second. The distance for a pipe bomb may be 300 – 900 feet, but the distance for a truck with unknown quantity of ANFO (ammonium nitrate and fuel oil) is much greater, i.e. Oklahoma City (blast effects line of

site were 1 ½ miles). If you can see the bomb, the bomb can see you. Projectiles from an exploded device depending on the composite and particular size can travel 1600 – 16,000 feet per second. It is best to look for **cover** rather than concealment. When selecting cover it is better to choose a building than a kiosk. It is better to get behind a retaining wall than a tree trunk.

Any **unconfirmed** bomb requires a Battalion Chief, Engine, Truck and Medic response to the Police Department staging area. The staging area will not be announced verbally, upon dispatch. All responding units will be informed to check their MDT for further information. No terminology will be used that would refer to a BOMB.

Any **confirmed** bomb shall require the full "Bomb" response of a Battalion Chief, Engine, Truck and Medic response to the Police Department staging area. The staging area will not be announced verbally, upon dispatch. All responding units will be informed to check their MDT for further information. No terminology will be used that would refer to a BOMB. The Communications Center shall dispatch all units to a location to assist the Police Department. The location would be the Staging Area.

NOTE: The ECD may call the responding Battalion Chief via landline to give staging information prior to dispatch.

If the Fire Department is first on the scene and the Police Department is not present:

- Secure the area and deny entry.
- Request the ECD, **utilizing a telephone landline**, to dispatch the Police Department.
- The Police will conduct a search of the building with the assistance of the building management or the owner.
- If a device is located inside a building prior to the Police Department's arrival, get a detailed description of it (i.e. size, location, room description, component parts, etc.) from occupants. Do not enter the building to do so. Provide this information to the Police upon their arrival.
- If the device is outside, keep all citizens inside buildings or in a protected area.
- When dealing with bomb threats, the decision to evacuate and the actual evacuation is the responsibility of the Incident Commander and the building's management or owner. The Fire Department is there to support activities and ensure the safety of citizens. Make certain that evacuees are taken to a safe area. **After any evacuation, DO NOT allow evacuees to leave the area, as you will need to account for all civilians and employees. The Police may need to interview the evacuees about possible or suspected devices found in their area.**
- During the Police Department's EOD search, and if they should locate a suspected device, the decision and responsibility to evacuate rests with the Incident Commander. In high-rise buildings, occupants may be relocated four (4) floors above or below the suspected device, rather than evacuating the entire building. This is the decision of the Incident Commander.

- When dealing with bomb threats, the decision to reoccupy the building rests with the Police Department and the building's management or owner.

Progress reports shall be made at regular intervals to the ECD. Landline (public telephone or METS) shall be used if progress reports originate from within the suspected bomb area.

Consider that a secondary device is a possibility at a bomb scene. A hoax device may be detonated to keep attention away from the actual device. Also, the detonation of a first device may be initiated so as to attract rescue personnel and evacuees to a targeted area. It could be followed by a second and larger detonation designed to maim or kill. Incident Commanders should be aware of this possibility when deploying personnel at a bomb scene.

### **San Francisco Police Department Policy**

#### **A. Responsibilities of the Explosive Ordnance Disposal Unit**

Response. The Explosive Ordnance Disposal Unit (EOD) shall respond to the scene of a suspected undetonated device.

Disarming. Disarming of all suspected devices is the sole responsibility of the designated EOD personnel.

Search. EOD personnel will provide assistance as requested at the scene; however, they are not to conduct routine searches.

#### **B. EOD Command Authority**

The EOD shall be under the authority of the officer-in-charge at the scene, except during the rendering safe procedure, when handling a suspected device, or when gathering physical evidence. During these times, the EOD shall be under the direct command of its commander or supervisory officer.








#### **C. Handling and Storage**

Handling/Discretion. Only officers designated by the Chief of Police shall touch, tamper with, transport, or store any suspected device, explosive or military ordinance. No explosive matter, either liquid or solid, may be brought into any police facility unless it has been designated as a destructive device storage facility. EOD personnel will have full discretion in determining what procedure is appropriate for the situation and deciding what methods to use. EOD personnel will evaluate, render safe, transport, and dispose or store destructive devices.



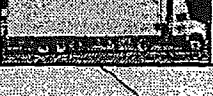
Evidence. EOD Personnel will preserve and collect all destructive device evidence. Firebombs and incendiary devices will be rendered safe by the EOD, but collected and preserved by the Arson Task Force. All evidence, except for explosive, flammable or unstable materials, will be booked as property for identification and forwarded to the Property Control Section.

Attachment: Terrorist Bomb Threat Stand-Off Card (Copy)

# Terrorist Bomb Threat Stand-Off Card Front

 Terrorist Bomb Threat Stand-Off	THREAT	THREAT DESCRIPTION	EXPLOSIVES CAPACITY <sup>1</sup> (TNT EQUIVALENT)	BUILDING EVACUATION DISTANCE <sup>2</sup>	OUTDOOR EVACUATION DISTANCE <sup>3</sup>
		PIPE BOMB	5 LBS/ 2.3 KG	70 FT/ 21 M	850 FT/ 259 M
		BRIEFCASE/ SUITCASE BOMB	50 LBS/ 23 KG	150 FT/ 46 M	1,850 FT/ 564 M
		COMPACT SEDAN	500 LBS/ 227 KG	320 FT/ 98 M	1,500 FT/ 457 M
		SEDAN	1,000 LBS/ 454 KG	400 FT/ 122 M	1,750 FT/ 534 M
		PASSENGER/ CARGO VAN	4,000 LBS/ 1,814 KG	640 FT/ 195 M	2,750 FT/ 838 M
		SMALL MOVING VAN/DELIVERY TRUCK	10,000 LBS/ 4,536 KG	860 FT/ 263 M	3,750 FT/ 1,143 M

# Terrorist Bomb Threat Stand-Off Card Back

	THREAT	THREAT DESCRIPTION	EXPLOSIVES CAPACITY <sup>1</sup> (TNT EQUIVALENT)	BUILDING EVACUATION DISTANCE <sup>2</sup>	OUTDOOR EVACUATION DISTANCE <sup>3</sup>
		MOVING VAN/ WATER TRUCK	30,000 LBS/ 13,608 KG	1,240 FT/ 375 M	6,500 FT/ 1,982 M
		SEMI-TRAILER	60,000 LBS/ 27,216 KG	1,570 FT/ 475 M	7,000 FT/ 2,134 M

All personnel must evacuate (both inside of buildings and out).

Building Evacuation Distance

Outdoor Evacuation Distance

Threat

All personnel must either seek shelter inside a building (with some risk) away from windows and exterior walls, or move beyond the Outdoor Evacuation Distance.

Preferred area (beyond this line) for evacuation of people in buildings and mandatory for people outdoors.

<sup>1</sup> Based on maximum volume or weight of explosive (TNT equivalent) that could reasonably fit in a suitcase or vehicle.

<sup>2</sup> Governed by the ability of an unstrengthened building to withstand severe damage or collapse.

<sup>3</sup> Governed by the greater of fragment throw distance or glass breakage/falling glass hazard distance. Note that pipe and briefcase bombs assume cased charges which throw fragments farther than vehicle bombs.