

HVERFORD TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT OPERATIONS MANUAL		
Issue Date February 2021	Review Date February 2022	Directive Number 2.2.4
Accreditation Index:		Rescinds: Directive 2.2.4 of November 2019
Section: Two – Law Enforcement Functions		Chapter: Two – Unusual Occurrences and Special Operations
Chief of Police: <i>John F. Viola</i>		

SUBJECT: BOMB THREATS AND SEARCHES

I. PURPOSE

It is the purpose of this Directive to provide officers with a protocol for dealing with threatened bombings to include response, deployment, search, evacuation and assistance to specialized units.

II. POLICY

While many bomb threats are later determined to be hoaxes, they all present particularly serious response requirements for law enforcement agencies. It is the policy of the Haverford Township Police that all responses to bomb threats or emergencies be conducted systematically, efficiently and in a manner that gives primary consideration to the protection of human life.

III. DEFINITIONS

Bomb Threat – A bomb threat condition exists when an explosive device has been reported or is suspected to be at a given location.

Bomb Emergency – A bomb emergency exists when a suspected or actual explosive device has been located or has been detonated.

IV. PROCEDURE

A. Responding Officer Responsibilities

1. Responding patrol units shall use only walkie-talkies for communications within 300 feet of the location in question. (Some explosive devices may be detonated by stronger radio signals)
2. If applicable. Contact the individual who received the threat to obtain additional information, to include:
 - a. Whether previous threats have been received;
 - b. Possible motives and/or suspects;
 - c. Vulnerabilities of equipment and personnel; and
 - d. Exploration of any basic information provided to Communications Center personnel
 - e. In bomb emergencies, establish and secure a suitable perimeter.

C. Searching for Explosive Devices

1. If an explosive device is alleged to be within a building but has not been located, the Supervisor will contact building owners/management or other responsible person to determine if a search of the facility is desired.
2. The decision to search, evacuate or reenter a structure/location during a bomb threat will be the responsibility of the individual in charge of the property.
 - a. The supervisor at the scene shall provide information as available to responsible parties in order to assist them in making decisions on searching, evacuation or reentry.
 - b. If management or the responsible person does not wish that a search be conducted, no further action by the Department is warranted with the exception of the preparation of reports.
 - c. Only in cases where a real or suspected explosive device has been detected shall an evacuation be conducted regardless of the desires of building management.

3. Searches of buildings shall be conducted only with the direct assistance of employees or others knowledgeable of the contents and layout of the building.
 - a. A search plan shall be developed identifying the extend of the search depending upon the type of establishment, the motivation of the perpetrator, and accessibility of the building.
 - b. A floor plan should be obtained whenever possible, and a systematic search organized by the Supervisor.
 - c. In no case shall Department personnel declare that no bomb is present or in any way make the representation that the building is safe to occupy, no matter how thorough the search.

4. When conducting a search officers should be particularly alert to the following items that may be considered as common indicators that there may be explosives at the location: (Officers should be aware that the absence of the following does not assure that no bomb is present)
 - a. Explosives related pamphlets, periodicals and books;
 - b. Excessive amounts of galvanized or PVC pipe nipples and end caps, especially if they have drill holes in the nipple or cap;
 - c. Low-explosive powders or other incendiary mixtures;
 - d. Fuses of any type to include homemade burning fuses, such as string soaked in a burning powder;
 - e. Electrical switches; and
 - f. Electrical matches, blasting caps or similar initiators.

D. Located Explosive Devices

1. If a real or suspicious device has been located, or paraphernalia identified officers should:
 - a. Not attempt to move or otherwise disturb the device(s);
 - b. Use only walkie-talkies for communication within 300 feet of the device(s);

- c. Proceed with immediate evacuation of the structure and/or the area to a point consistent with the threat but not less than 300 feet from the device(s);
 - d. Define and secure the perimeter;
 - e. Notify emergency services personnel;
 - f. Contact Delcom by telephone and request assistance of the Delaware County Bomb Disposal Unit.
2. The Supervisor, unless relieved by the Duty Commander, is responsible for the command of the scene and the briefing of investigators and bomb disposal personnel.
 3. Upon arrival of the Delaware County Bomb Disposal Unit, they shall assume functional authority at any bomb emergency to direct Department personnel in a manner necessary to accomplish its mission in a safe and efficient manner.

E. Post-Explosion Investigation

The Investigations Unit of the Department shall have primary responsibility for investigating bombing incidents, to include:

1. Requesting assistance from the Delaware County Bomb Disposal Unit to check the site for unconsumed explosives or secondary devices;
2. Supervising, with the assistance of the Delaware County Criminal Investigations Division, of evidence recovery.
3. Requesting the assistance of other agencies to determine the nature and construction of explosives and the identification of perpetrators;
4. Coordination with intelligence operations of state and federal sources.

BY ORDER OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE