



University of Pennsylvania Police Department 4040 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, Pa 19104		 
Directive: 62	Subject: Bomb Threats and Searches	Effective Date: 05/17/1996
Order of: Gary Williams, Chief of Police		Amended Date: 08/01/2023

I. Purpose

It is the purpose of this directive to provide University of Pennsylvania Police Department (UPPD) police 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 unfounded, they all present particularly serious response requirements for law enforcement agencies. It is the policy of the UPPD 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. All such responses shall be conducted in conjunction with the Philadelphia Police Department (PPD).

III. Scope

This directive shall affect all sworn officers.

IV. Definitions

- A. Bomb Scare: A bomb threat condition exists when an explosive device has been reported or is suspected to be at a given location.
- B. Bomb Emergency: A bomb emergency exists when a suspected or actual explosive device has been located or has been detonated.

V. Procedures

A. General Considerations

1. The discovery of explosive material, military explosives, deteriorating Ether and Picric Acid, or suspicious devices or ANY event resulting in an explosion will be investigated by members of the UPPD Detective Unit in conjunction with the PPD detective division of occurrence and PPD Ordinance Disposal Unit. Explosive material will also include fireworks and "Molotov" cocktails.

2. In the event of loss of life or life-threatening injuries, the investigation will be the responsibility of the UPPD Detective Unit in conjunction with the PPD Homicide and Ordinance Disposal Units.
3. UPPD Detective and Canine personnel in conjunction with the PPD detective division of occurrence will investigate “bomb scares” in which no explosive device is discovered.
4. Only certified Hazardous Device Technicians from the PPD Ordinance Disposal Unit shall handle, deactivate, remove, detonate, examine or transport any found explosive material. PPD Ordinance Disposal will be the final authority on the method of disposal.
5. No explosive material will be permitted inside UPPD headquarters.
6. No one will be permitted to enter any crime scene where explosive material has been found or where an explosion has occurred until the PPD Ordinance Disposal Unit has rendered the area safe and eliminated the possibility of a secondary device.

B. PennComm Center Responsibilities

1. PennComm Center personnel receiving bomb scares or warnings from callers shall, to the degree possible:
 - a. alert the PennComm Center Police Supervisor,
 - b. keep the reporting person on the line,
2. PennComm Center personnel receiving reports from individuals or university departments/organizations that have received bomb scares shall:
 - a. alert the PennComm Center Police Supervisor,
3. In addition to the above, the PennComm Center Police Supervisor will ensure:
 - a. the PPD is notified of the bomb scare/emergency,
 - b. non-essential personnel are instructed to stay clear of the area until further notice.

C. Responding Officer’s/Supervisors Responsibilities (Bomb Scare)

1. Upon arrival, alert those responsible for the building (manager/owner) about the bomb scare and gather any pertinent information. If the building is unoccupied, attempt to contact owner/manager.
2. Determine if the UPPD Canine unit is needed or appropriate.
 - a. Requests for the response and services of the canine team shall be made only by an on-duty shift supervisor.
 - b. Responding personnel and the on-duty supervisor shall be guided by UPPD Written Directive 103, “Police Canine Unit”.

D. Searching for Explosive Devices

1. If an explosive device is alleged to be within a building (Bomb Scare) but has not been located, the on-scene supervisor will contact the building’s owner/manager or other responsible person to determine if a search of the facility is desired.

2. The decision to search, evacuate, or to re-enter a structure/location during a bomb scare, absent the detection of a real or suspected explosive device, will be the responsibility of the individual in charge of the property.
 - a. The on-scene supervisor shall provide information as available to the responsible parties in order to assist them in making decisions on searching, evacuation, or re-entry.
 - b. If the building owner/manager or other responsible person does not wish that a search be conducted, no further action of the UPPD is warranted with the exception of standard reporting requirements.
 - 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 target 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 extent of the search depending upon the type of establishment, the motivation of the perpetrator and accessibility of the building.
 - b. A floor plan shall be obtained whenever possible and a systematic search organized by the on-scene supervisor.
 - c. In no case shall UPPD personnel declare that a bomb is not 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 without the assistance of the PPD's Ordinance Disposal Unit, officers should be particularly alert to the following items as indicators that there may be explosives at the location. Officers should be cautioned that the absence of the following does not assure that there is no bomb present:
 - a. .
5. Canine Team Searches: All searches involving UPPD Canine Teams Shall be guided by UPPD Written **Directive 103, "Police Canine Operations"**.
 - a. Canine officers/handlers are responsible for determining whether a situation justifies canine use and the appropriate tactical measures that should be taken based on the handlers' assessment of the situation and their knowledge of the canine's capabilities.
 - 1) Where the on-scene Supervisor disagrees with the handler's tactical assessment, the on-duty (or on-call) Commander shall be notified.
 - b. In accordance with their training, the UPPD canine teams may be used for building, area and vehicle searches for explosive devices under the following guidelines:
 - 1) Upon determining the use of the canine is feasible, the canine officer/handler shall coordinate with the on-scene supervisor, commander, or designee and plan the operation for utilization of the canine.
 - 2) The perimeter shall be secured (if possible) and held for search by the canine team.

- 3) The canine officer/handler shall direct all phases of the search and coordinate with on-scene personnel, including communications.
- 4) Canines should not be used to search facilities that contain substances potentially harmful to the canine handler and/or animal, unless overriding risk to human life is present.

E. Responsibilities When a Suspected Explosive Device is Found

1. If a real or suspicious device has been located, or paraphernalia identified, officers will:
 - a. notify the on-scene supervisor of the device.
2. If a real or suspicious device has been located, or paraphernalia identified (such as noted in C. above), the on-scene supervisor will:

Note: Police personnel will not be put at risk to obtain this information.

- a. establish a staging area and secure an open hardwire telephone communications line,
- b. designate safe routes of approach for responding police and fire vehicles. Coordinate the re-routing of traffic and public transportation with the PPD as necessary, and
- c. ensure a written chronology of events is maintained (via a Crime Scene Log (UPPD-27)), to include responding units, times, and locations, displaced individuals, injuries, and other pertinent information. The chronology shall be given to the assigned UPPD Detective upon completion.

Note: M-80's or M-100's and common class "C" fireworks such as firecrackers and bottle rockets can be extremely dangerous and will only be handled by qualified Ordinance Disposal personnel. Additionally, military items that have been taken out of the military's jurisdiction can also be extremely dangerous due to possible booby traps and other hazards. Ordinance Disposal personnel will handle any of these items.

3. If a real or suspicious device has been located, or paraphernalia identified (such as noted in C. above), the PennComm Center Police Supervisor will make the following notifications:
 - a. On-duty/on-call detective and a Detective Supervisor (dispatched to scene),
 - b. Shift Commander (dispatched to scene),
 - c. Captain of Patrol,
 - d. Chief of Fire and Emergency Services (dispatched to scene, if on duty, paged if off duty),
 - e. Facilities Services Department (place on standby),
 - f. Telecommunications Department (place on standby),
 - g. Deputy Chief of Investigations (place on standby),
 - h. Deputy Chief of Patrol Operations (place on standby), and
 - i. The Chief of Police (place on standby).
4. The UPPD Incident Commander will:

- a. coordinate efforts with the PPD Incident Commander,
 - b. ensure no one enters the perimeter or affected area and that the explosive material is not touched or moved,
 - c. confer with PPD Ordnance Disposal personnel to determine a course of action based on their recommendations,
 - d. adjust the area of evacuation and perimeter based on the recommendation of PPD Ordnance Disposal,
 - e. ensure necessary equipment is on the scene, and
 - f. keep the PennComm Center informed of any police actions taken.
5. The PPD Ordnance Disposal Unit's personnel will:
- a. report to the Incident Commanders,
 - b. examine, identify, and, if possible, predict the destructive potential of the explosive material and inform the Incident Commanders,
 - c. determine whether material can be safely disarmed or removed,
 - d. ensure, if possible, that the material is photographed, and
 - e. search for secondary explosive devices.

Note: Once an Initial Device Has Been Found, Only Ordnance Disposal Personnel Will Be Used for Searches.

F. Post Explosion Investigation

1. The PPD's Ordnance Disposal Unit shall have primary responsibility for investigating bombing incidents, to include:
 - a. checking the site for unconsumed explosives or secondary devices,
 - b. supervising evidence recovery in accordance with PPD guidelines,
 - c. requesting the assistance of other agencies to determine the nature and construction of explosives and the identification of perpetrators,
 - d. coordination with the various investigating agencies to include state and federal sources, and
 - e. assisting in the evaluation of evacuation procedures, area and perimeter security, the availability of emergency services and coordination with the UPPD and PPD Incident Commanders.

G. Letter and Parcel Bombs

1. Because of the particular dangers of explosive devices contained in letters and other parcels, police personnel will be careful not to handle any suspicious packages.
2. Upon discovery of any letter or package that may appear to be suspicious, the PennComm Center, Shift Supervisor, and the PPD will be notified immediately.

H. Compliance

Violations of this directive, or portions thereof, may result in disciplinary action.

I. Officers Assigned to Other Agencies

Officers of this department assigned to or assisting other law enforcement agencies will be guided by this directive.

J. Application

This directive constitutes departmental policy, and is not intended to enlarge the employer's or employee's civil or criminal liability in any way. It shall not be construed as the creation of a higher legal standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense with respect to third party claims insofar as the employer's or employee's legal duty as imposed by law. Violations of policy will only form the basis for departmental administrative sanctions. Violations of law will form the basis for civil and criminal sanctions in a recognized judicial setting.