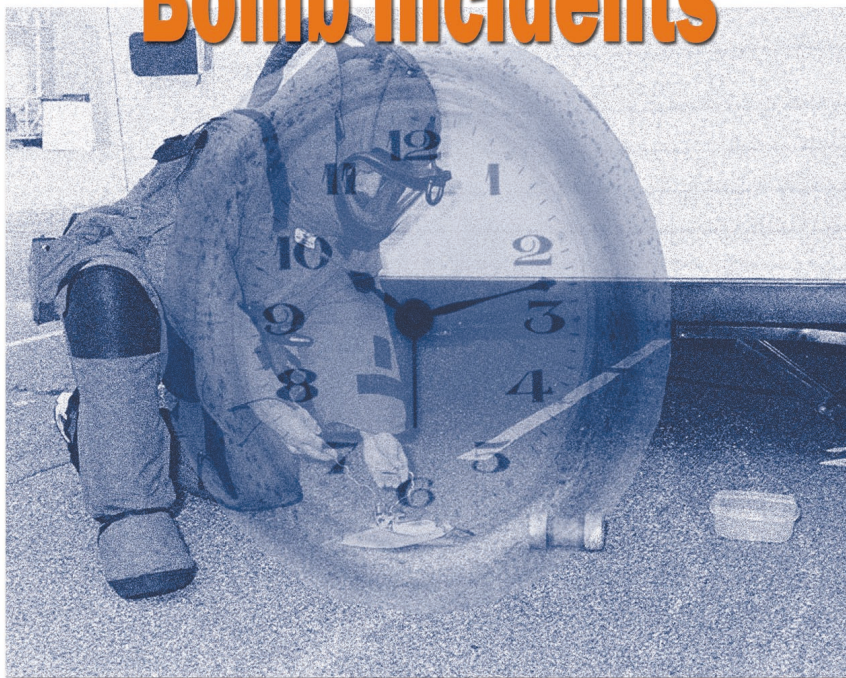


# A Guide to Handling Bomb Incidents



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## Preface

This guide is a condensed reference for bomb searches, bomb threats, and the discovery of suspicious items or explosive devices. It is impossible to provide a complete overview of all scenarios, as each incident, location and facility is unique. Prior to an actual incident, a Bomb Incident Plan should be developed that outlines how a bomb threat will be handled. Incorporate the elements from this guide into your organization's Bomb Incident Plan and then train personnel in implementing the procedures. Additional training is strongly suggested in bomb search and bomb threat response techniques. Preparedness is the difference between life and death with incidents involving explosive devices.

For more information on developing a Bomb Incident Plan, contact your local law enforcement agency or the Georgia Bureau of Investigation Bomb Disposal Unit at 404-244-2600.

## Bomb Incident Plan

The first line of defense in dealing with a bomb incident is to develop a plan that manages how your facility's personnel will respond to an actual emergency. A Bomb Incident Plan reduces the dangers to everyone involved, lessens confusion, and minimizes the loss of production time. A working plan outlines how to handle a bomb threat, how to conduct a search, what to do when a suspicious item is located, and establishes evacuation procedures.

A Bomb Incident Plan should include the following elements:

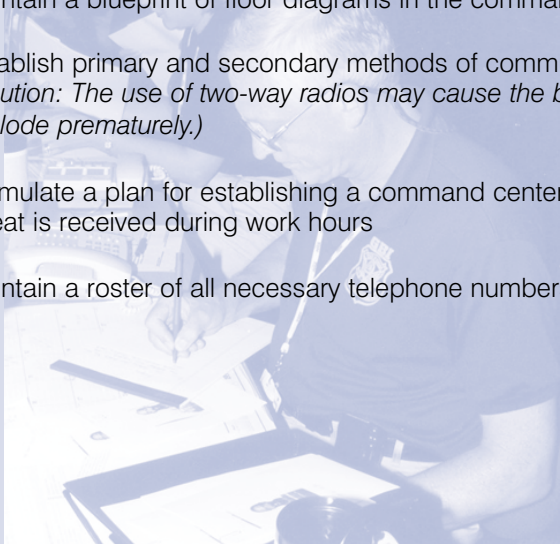
- ▼ Designate a chain of command
- ▼ Establish a command center
- ▼ Decide what primary and alternate communication will be used
- ▼ Establish clearly how and by whom a bomb threat will be evaluated
- ▼ Decide what procedures will be followed when a bomb threat is received or device discovered
- ▼ Determine to what extent the available bomb squad will assist and at what point the squad will respond
- ▼ Provide an evacuation plan with enough flexibility to avoid a suspected danger area
- ▼ Designate search teams
- ▼ Designate areas to be searched
- ▼ Establish techniques to be utilized during a search
- ▼ Establish procedures to report and track progress of the search and a method to lead qualified bomb technicians to a suspicious package
- ▼ Have a contingency plan available if a bomb should explode
- ▼ Establish a simple-to-follow procedure for the person receiving the telephone threat
- ▼ Review your security plan in conjunction with the development of your Bomb Incident Plan

## Command Center

A key element of any Bomb Incident Plan is establishing a centralized location away from potential dangers where critical decisions can be made and the Bomb Incident Plan implemented. Personnel assigned to the command center provide direction on the steps that need to be taken and brief public safety on the incident as they arrive at the scene. A center should be established as soon as a viable threat is received.

Here is a guide to setting up a command center. Please note that some changes may be necessary to accommodate your facility.

- ▼ Designate a primary location and an alternate location
- ▼ Assign personnel and designate decision-making authority
- ▼ Establish a method for tracking search teams
- ▼ Maintain a blueprint of floor diagrams in the command center
- ▼ Establish primary and secondary methods of communication  
*(Caution: The use of two-way radios may cause the bomb to explode prematurely.)*
- ▼ Formulate a plan for establishing a command center if a threat is received during work hours
- ▼ Maintain a roster of all necessary telephone numbers



## The Telephone Threat

When a bomb threat is made by telephone, the individual receiving the call must be prepared to ask a series of questions. **If possible, the threat should be tape-recorded.**

### Questions to ask caller:

- ▼ When will the bomb explode?
- ▼ Where is the bomb?
- ▼ What does the bomb look like?
- ▼ What kind of bomb is it?
- ▼ What will cause the bomb to explode?
- ▼ Did you place the bomb?
- ▼ Where are you calling from?
- ▼ What is your address?
- ▼ What is your name?

### Individual who received call should note:

Is the voice familiar and whom did it sound like? \_\_\_\_\_

List any background noises: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of person who received the call: \_\_\_\_\_

Date and time the call was received: \_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_ a.m./p.m.

Reported call immediately to: \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

**Note any accents or voice characterizations in the caller's voice. Circle those that pertain to the caller:**

Accent	Lisp	Rapid	Sincere
Disguised	Slurred	Loud	Angry
Deep	Nasal	Normal	Excited
Broken	Squeaky	Calm	Crying
Stutter	Slow	Stressed	Giggling

## Response Options

When a telephone threat is received, there are three possible ways you can respond to the threat.

### **IGNORE** threat

Not advisable. By choosing to ignore, innocent lives are placed at risk.

OR

### **EVACUATE** immediately

Disruptive effect on the facility. A suspect may have placed the bomb at an exit normally used to evacuate and then called in the threat.

OR

### **EVALUATE** the threat, **SEARCH**, and if necessary, **EVACUATE**

Use all available indicators to make an informed evaluation. Conduct a search to determine whether evacuation may be warranted. If indicators are NOT present, then evacuation may not be necessary.

## Threat Indicators

These are some possible indicators of a valid threat, but they are not inclusive. Additional indicators unique to the threat at your facility may cause you to decide to take action.

- ▼ Suspect package present (to include obvious explosive device)
- ▼ Suspicious person(s) in your facility
- ▼ Signs of forced entry on windows or doors (indicating that someone may have made an unauthorized entry)
- ▼ A note or message inside the facility indicating that the suspect may currently be or may have been inside the facility
- ▼ Identification of disgruntled individuals who may have a motive to disrupt your facility and the opportunity to place a bomb
- ▼ Previous threats or actual explosive devices at your facility



## Canine Searches

When to call for an explosive detection canine:

**C**anines are best for use in searching for bombs and explosives in the following areas (*but not limited to*):

- ▼ Locked containers, including school lockers
- ▼ Hidden compartments
- ▼ Concealed bombs and explosives
- ▼ Large open areas
- ▼ Vehicles

**Canines should not be used to evaluate packages already deemed suspicious.** This endangers the canine handler as well as the canine. Once a package has been deemed suspicious, it is then the responsibility of a certified bomb technician to analyze and render safe. A canine could accidentally disturb a package causing injury to the handler and the canine.

A suspicious package may not be explosive in nature but contain other hazardous items. A canine may not recognize these potential hazards.

## Team Searches

When possible use more than one person to conduct a search no matter how large the area. Designate a search team leader.

### *Who should conduct searches?*

#### **SUPERVISORY PERSONNEL**

Positive benefits: Rapid search, little disruption  
 Negative impact: May create employee morale problems  
 and may sacrifice thoroughness

OR

#### **AREA OCCUPANTS**

Positive benefits: Thoroughness, rapid search, less disruption to  
 workday, positive effect on morale (when properly trained)  
 Negative impact: Requires training, increased danger to workers

OR

#### **TRAINED EXPLOSIVE SEARCH TEAMS**

Positive benefits: Safest for employees  
 Negative impact: Loss of production time for facility, search  
 may be limited and less thorough because the trained search team  
 is not as familiar with the facility as area occupants

## Conducting Outdoor Searches

Always remember common areas and areas readily accessible to the public may be prime locations for the placement of explosive devices. These locales may be good starting points for your search.

The following contains only basic search techniques and is not meant to include all possible searches:

### Grid Pattern Searches

*The Two-person Grid Pattern Search* is one of the more common search methods and utilizes overlapping techniques. Have a team leader identify the area to be searched outside the building. Line up at each end of the search pattern. Conduct the search shoulder to shoulder from one end of the search area to the opposite end. Turn and repeat the process until the area is covered.

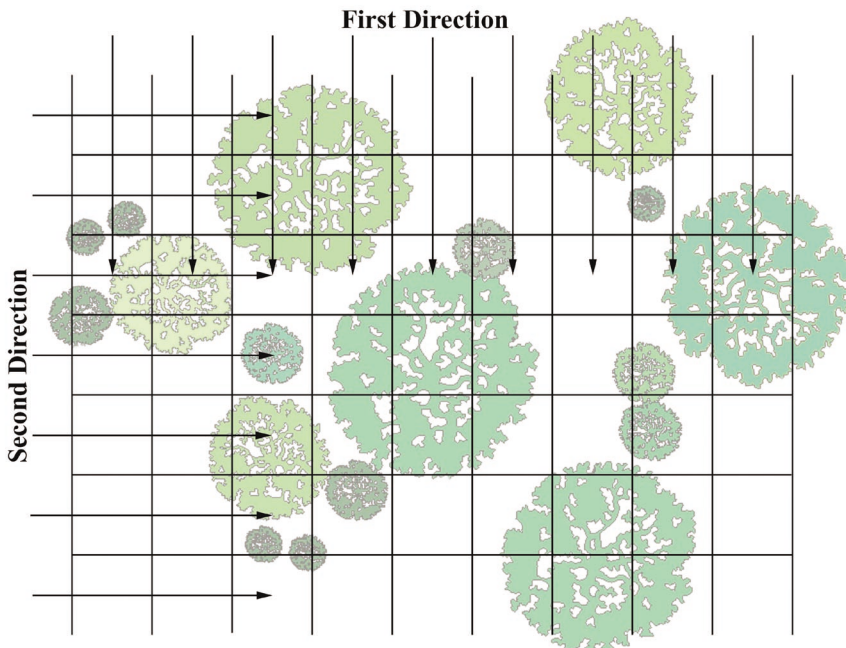


A second search with the team members alternating their positions provides for additional thoroughness. In areas where little cover for a bomb is present, the search may be expedited by increasing the width of coverage for each member of the search team.

## Where to Search

- ▼ Trash containers, motor vehicles, shrubs, manholes, sewers, trees, flower boxes, and building ledges are all possible locations where a bomb could be concealed.
- ▼ Look for fresh dirt or disturbed mulch around the shrubbery that could indicate a bomb has been concealed in the ground. Also don't forget to look up.
- ▼ Be mindful that bombs could be placed in or near evacuation routes.

## Two-person Grid Pattern Search



## Conducting Indoor Searches

Care should be taken not to turn on or off lights since some explosive devices can be built to function with a light switch.

As the search team enters the room, the members should disperse to various areas of the room and listen for ticking associated with clockwork mechanisms used in timed explosives. The group also should note the background noise level.

### Prepare for Search

The team leader should:

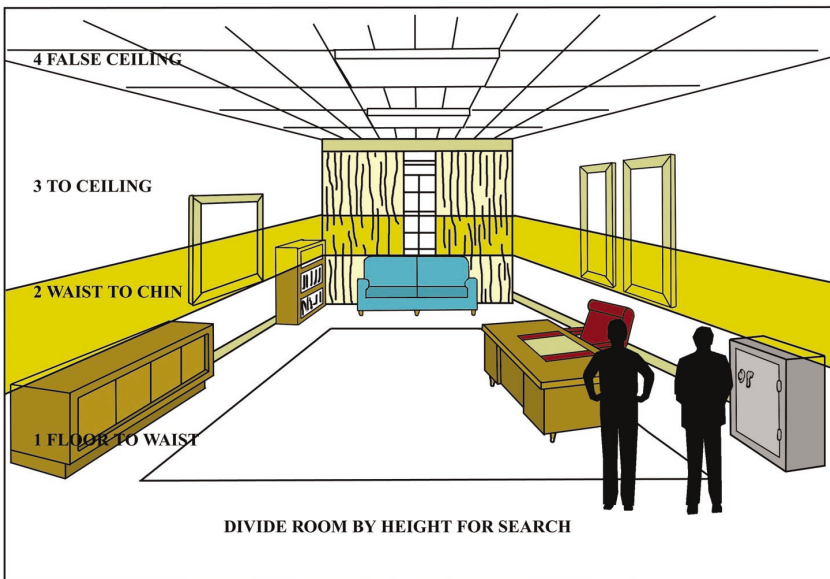
- ▼ Divide the room into two equal parts using an imaginary division line.
- ▼ Divide the room into at least three different height search areas:

Floor to waist

Hip to shoulder

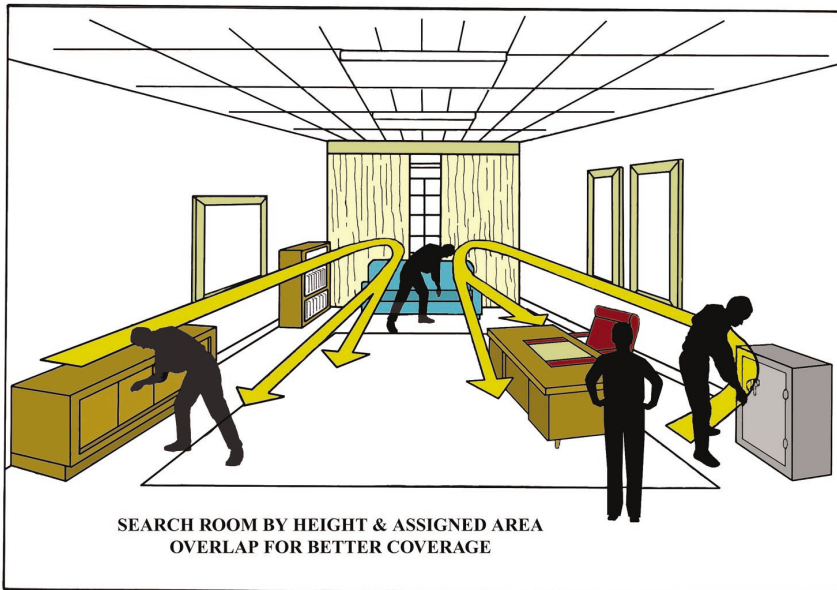
Shoulder to ceiling

In the case of a suspended ceiling, a fourth area above the suspended ceiling



## Search Procedures

- ▼ Both search team members should go to one end of the room division line and begin from a back-to-back position. This starting point should be used for each successive searching sweep.
- ▼ Each person searches his/her way around the wall area of the room from floor-to-waist height, working toward the other person. When both members of the search team meet, a “wall sweep” has been completed.
- ▼ Return to starting position and conduct a “hip-to-shoulder sweep” followed by a “shoulder-to-ceiling sweep” using the same procedures. A second search with the team members alternating previous search areas provides additional thoroughness.
- ▼ As the search is conducted, be mindful of area rugs, ventilation ducts on the floor, walls and ceiling, light fixtures, built-in cabinetry, trash containers and furniture.
- ▼ Once the search of one area is completed, mark the area as “searched” either by placing a piece of tape or paper on the entrance so as to prevent duplication of the search effort for other teams. Proceed to the next search area if applicable.



## When A Suspicious Item Is Located

- ▼ Do not disturb the item
  - ▼ Do not move it
  - ▼ Do not place the item in water
  - ▼ Do not cover the item
  - ▼ Do not continue to search for secondary devices
  - ▼ Discontinue search
  - ▼ Leave immediately
- 
- ▼ Evacuate the building. Identify the danger area and block it off with a clear zone. Use a 1,000-foot evacuation distance if available or a minimum of 300 feet with shielding, such as buildings or natural dirt barriers. Stay away from glass windows and doors.
  - ▼ Report the location and a description of the suspicious item to the command center.
  - ▼ Leave the doors and windows open to the area unless public access to the area needs to be restricted (ie: public schools or businesses where locking or closing the doors may be necessary to prevent inadvertent or curious onlookers from entering).
  - ▼ Return to the command center and meet with public safety personnel for debriefing.
  - ▼ Do not permit re-entry into the building until the item has been cleared by public safety personnel.



**P**rior to evacuation, check the evacuation route(s) for other explosives or hazards that could cause injury.

### Handicapped Evacuation

Special consideration should be given to evacuees who may be handicapped or have disabilities. As a Bomb Incident Plan is developed, review the proposed plan with individuals who have disabilities to ensure their special needs are addressed in cases of evacuation.

### Evacuation Distances

Evacuation distances can be expanded as needed. The size of the bomb may warrant increasing the evacuation distance.

As a general rule:

- ▼ Evacuate to a minimum distance of 1,000 feet and use shielding, such as a building or other hard structures between evacuees and the suspicious item. Natural or manmade dirt berms also may be used as shielding.
- ▼ In cases where 1,000 feet is not feasible, use the greatest distance available with shielding between the evacuees and the suspicious item.
- ▼ Stay away from glass windows and glass doors.

## Communications

In cases of entry by an intruder with a suspicious package, use whatever form of communication necessary to contact public safety personnel, then follow the guidance of the local emergency 911 center or the local public safety agency.





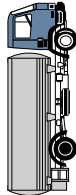
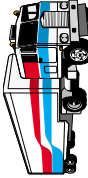
### Hazardous Forms of Communication

- ▼ Cellular telephones: Turn off all cellular phones within 1,000 feet of a suspicious item.
- ▼ Cordless telephones: Never use a cordless phone in the presence of a potential explosive device.
- ▼ Walkie-talkies or radios: Do not transmit or talk on walkie-talkies or radios. If possible, turn them off unless it is necessary to listen without transmitting.
- ▼ Pagers: Turn off pagers that transmit messages. Pagers that “receive only” may be left on.

### Safer Forms of Communication

- ▼ Verbal communication
- ▼ Visual signals: Hand signals, colored flags or paper
- ▼ Telephones using a hard-wire system
- ▼ Bullhorns
- ▼ Public address systems that have hard-wire links

## Large Vehicle Bomb Evacuation Distances

<b>GBI</b>	<b>VEHICLE DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>MAXIMUM EXPLOSIVES CAPACITY</b>	<b>LETHAL AIR BLAST RANGE</b>	<b>MINIMUM EVACUATION DISTANCE</b>	<b>FALLING GLASS HAZARD</b>
	Compact Sedan	500 lbs. 227 kilos (In trunk)	100 Feet 30 Meters	1,500 Feet 457 Meters	1,250 Feet 381 Meters
	Full-sized Sedan	1,000 lbs. 455 kilos (In trunk)	125 Feet 38 Meters	1,750 Feet 534 Meters	1,750 Feet 534 Meters
	Passenger Van or Cargo	4,000 lbs. 1,818 kilos	200 Feet 61 Meters	2,750 Feet 838 Meters	2,750 Feet 838 Meters
	Small Box Van (14 ft. box)	10,000 lbs. 4,545 kilos	300 Feet 91 Meters	3,750 Feet 1,143 Meters	3,750 Feet 1,143 Meters
	Box Van or Water/Fuel Truck	30,000 lbs. 13,636 kilos	450 Feet 137 Meters	6,500 Feet 1,982 Meters	6,500 Feet 1,982 Meters
	Semi-Trailer	60,000 lbs. 27,273 kilos	600 Feet 183 Meters	7,000 Feet 2,134 Meters	7,000 Feet 2,134 Meters

Source: Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco & Firearms



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