

# Bomb Threat Plan

TRUE SECURITY INTEGRATION



A  FIRSTSERVICE COMPANY



## BOMB THREAT PLAN

### Overview

***“There’s a bomb in your building! You bastards better get out NOW!”***

Every year, individuals and organizations receive thousands of calls similar to this one. The call is traumatic to the recipient, and potentially disruptive to the target premises.

In fact, 99.9% of all telephone bomb threat calls do not involve the placement of a genuine/false bomb or incendiary device. It is reasonable to assume that the main intent of all but a few callers is to disrupt business by causing work stoppages, and the evacuation of the building’s occupants. Callers are gratified by the sight of terrified people standing outside their building surrounded by masses of emergency vehicles.

Since the caller’s motives and objectives are well understood, Police and security professionals have developed a **5-step process** for effectively dealing with bomb threats. The five steps are:

1. Receiving the call and notifying the Control Point.
2. Evaluation of the call by the Control Point, and determining which of the following steps is required:
  - A search
  - No search
  - An evacuation
3. A search of the premises.
4. If necessary, evacuation of the premises in an orderly manner.
5. All clear.

### Justification of the 5-Step Process

The initial reaction by most individuals upon receiving a bomb threat is to say: “I’m leaving”, and depart the premises. While this is a very logical human response under this circumstance, it is not the most appropriate path to take.

Since the device is most likely located in an unsecured, common area such as the first floor lobby or a public washroom, evacuating the building without a proper search may actually increase the risk of casualties by moving occupants closer to the bomb’s blast. Some bombers have actually planted secondary devices along evacuation routes, or in areas used for staging or regrouping. Secondly, callers want to feel that they have caused a disruption and discomfort. Any visible evacuation may encourage further threatening calls. In some cases, the caller may be eagerly waiting on the property or in the area to watch the proceedings. Naturally, you want to disappoint the caller. The safest policy is a comprehensive search, and if required, followed by an orderly evacuation of the premises.



## BOMB THREAT PLAN

### **The 5-Step Process Breakdown**

#### ***Step 1a: Receiving the Call***

This is a traumatic and frightening experience. It is important that, in spite of the stress of the situation, the recipient attempt to obtain as much information as possible. The recipient should listen to the sound of the caller's voice, and any background noises, for as long as possible. With this in mind, ***'Threatening Call Forms'*** should be distributed to all reception and security personnel who are most likely to receive the initial call. A recommended ***'Threatening Call Form'*** follows. These forms must be left next to telephones so that they can be accessed **quickly**. You will have only **one** opportunity to get this information before the bomber hangs up. The recipient must try to ask the questions listed on the form. When the call has terminated, the recipient must notify:

- a. Property management who will then contact the Chief Searcher.
- b. Security who will then contact the Director of Security, the Security Supervisor, and any Security Officer(s).
- c. His or her Supervisor.

Upon completion of these phone notifications, the recipient must bring the completed form to the Security Office, which is now the Bomb Threat Control Point. The recipient should be prepared to make him/herself available for at least the next two hours, or longer, in order for the Police and Security to conduct interviews.

***THE FOLLOWING THREE PAGES ARE A SAMPLE OF A 'THREATENING CALL FORM'. THEY CAN BE REMOVED AND PHOTOCOPIED FOR YOUR USE:***



## BOMB THREAT PLAN

### The 5-Step Process Breakdown cont'd

#### Step 1a: Receiving the Call cont'd

### Threatening Call Form

This form is to be used as provided by company policy in the event of *any* threatening call (e.g., bomb threat, extortion attempt, etc.). It is to be **filled out as completely as possible** either *during* the call, or *immediately* afterward.

1. The call was received on (month/day/year): \_\_\_\_\_
2. Phone number at which call was received: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Line: \_\_\_\_ Ext: \_\_\_\_\_
3. The above-noted phone number is:  Listed  Unlisted
4. The call was possibly:  Local  Long Distance  Cellular
5. The call began at (time): \_\_\_\_\_ The call ended at (time): \_\_\_\_\_
6. Did the caller state a 'code word'?:  Yes: \_\_\_\_\_  No

**Check off ANY critical words the caller may have used. This may indicate if the threat is REAL:**

7.  Det Cord  Explosives  Plastic  Initiation  C.E.4  
 Detonate  Switch  Detonator  Explosion  808  
 Fuse  Booby Trap  Safety Fuse  Timer  Shrapnel  
 Initiate  P.E.4  Trigger  Semtex  Trip Wire  
 Plastic Explosive  Power Source  Chemical Fuse  Trip  Dynamite  
 T.N.T  Nitro
8. Was the caller reading from a 'text'?:  Yes  No

If *Yes*, the caller's **exact words** were as follows:

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BOMB THREAT PLAN

**The 5-Step Process Breakdown cont'd**

*Step 1a: Receiving the Call cont'd*

***Threatening Call Form cont'd***

**Questions to Ask:**

- 9. When will the bomb go off?: \_\_\_\_\_
- 10. Where is the bomb right now?: \_\_\_\_\_
- 11. What does the bomb look like?: \_\_\_\_\_
- 12. What kind of bomb is it?: \_\_\_\_\_
- 13. What will cause the bomb to explode?: \_\_\_\_\_
- 14. Why did you call me?: \_\_\_\_\_
- 15. Why did you plant the bomb?: \_\_\_\_\_
- 16. Who are you?: \_\_\_\_\_
- 17. The caller's sex was:  Male  Female
- 18. The caller's age seemed to be about?: \_\_\_\_\_

**Background Noise(s) – Check ONE or MORE:**

- 19.  House Noises  PA System  Aircraft  Traffic
- Crockery  Kids Crying  Voices  Static
- Office Machinery  Factory Machinery  Animal Noises  Music
- Bar Sounds  Trains  Motors  Clear

Other – Please Specify: \_\_\_\_\_

**The caller's ACCENT was:**

- 20.  English (Canadian)  French  German  Italian
- English (British)  Spanish  Polish  Pakistani
- English (American)  Jamaican  Russian  Chinese
- English (Australian)  Japanese  Greek  Scandinavian
- English (South African)  Arabic

Other – Please Specify: \_\_\_\_\_



BOMB THREAT PLAN

**The 5-Step Process Breakdown cont'd**

*Step 1a: Receiving the Call cont'd*

***Threatening Call Form cont'd***

**The caller SEEMED to be:**

- |     |                                      |                                     |                                     |                                 |
|-----|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 21. | <input type="checkbox"/> Calm        | <input type="checkbox"/> Emotional  | <input type="checkbox"/> Irrational | <input type="checkbox"/> Crying |
|     | <input type="checkbox"/> Intoxicated | <input type="checkbox"/> Excited    | <input type="checkbox"/> Drugged    | <input type="checkbox"/> Cool   |
|     | <input type="checkbox"/> Immature    | <input type="checkbox"/> Frightened |                                     |                                 |

Other – Please Specify: \_\_\_\_\_

**The caller's MANNER of SPEECH was:**

- |     |   |  |                                     |   |
|-----|---|--|-------------------------------------|---|
| 22. | <input type="checkbox"/> Ragged               | <input type="checkbox"/> Slurred         | <input type="checkbox"/> Polite     | <input type="checkbox"/> Slow           |
|     | <input type="checkbox"/> Frightened           | <input type="checkbox"/> Clearing Throat | <input type="checkbox"/> Incoherent | <input type="checkbox"/> Cracking Voice |
|     | <input type="checkbox"/> Fast                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Taped           | <input type="checkbox"/> Stuttering | <input type="checkbox"/> Deep Breathing |
|     | <input type="checkbox"/> Lispering            | <input type="checkbox"/> Obscene         | <input type="checkbox"/> Normal     | <input type="checkbox"/> Rude           |
|     | <input type="checkbox"/> Whispering           | <input type="checkbox"/> Disguised       | <input type="checkbox"/> Defective  | <input type="checkbox"/> Out of Breath  |
|     | <input type="checkbox"/> Well Spoken/Educated |  |                                     |   |

Other – Please Specify: \_\_\_\_\_

23. Was the caller's voice familiar?:  Yes  No

24. Who might the caller have been?: \_\_\_\_\_

**This FORM was COMPLETED by:**

25. Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Position/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Form Completed: \_\_\_\_\_

Time Form Completed: \_\_\_\_\_



## BOMB THREAT PLAN

### **The 5-Step Process Breakdown cont'd**

#### ***Step 1b: Bomb Threat Control Point***

It is important to have a designated Control Point location planned out **prior** to receiving a bomb threat. The Control Point should be well stocked with communications equipment such as multiple telephone lines, a computer, fax machine, etc. The Control Point should be located in an area that is easily accessible to the Police and Security. If for some reason the Control Point is not available (e.g., due to renovations), then an alternative location should be designated.

Upon receipt of notification of a bomb threat, the Chief Searcher (or his/her alternate), the Director of Security, and the appropriate management staff should report immediately to the Control Point to evaluate the **'Threatening Call Form'**, and interview the recipient of the call. The Bomb Threat Control Point, and its alternative location, should both have up-to-date lists of required search areas and 'searchers'. It is recommended that the Director of Security update these lists twice a year. The on-duty Security Officers must always advise the Police of a bomb threat.

#### ***Step 2: Evaluation of the Call & Determination of a 'Search/No Search' Decision***

The decision to search, or not to search, is made by the Chief Searcher (or in his/her absence, an alternate). Normally, the best policy is to search the premises after receiving **any** call threatening a bombing or an explosion. However, in some cases, it may be appropriate to not search and initiate an immediate evacuation.

#### **Conditions/Situations Where/When a Search May Not be Required:**

- a. The caller is extremely young (e.g., 10 - 12 years old), and other children can be heard laughing in the background.
- b. The caller is **definitely** known to the recipient, and has called **numerous** times before.
- c. Generally, a complete search is the best policy to ensure that no device is present.

#### **Conditions/Situations Where/When an Immediate Evacuation of the Entire Complex/ Specific Tenancy may be Required in Addition to a Search:**

- a. A caller with an Irish accent states: "There is a bomb in the British Consulate. It will go off in 15 minutes. Long live the I.R.A.".
- b. "This is Fred Smith. I worked on the fourth floor, and I was fired this morning. There is a bomb under my desk".

The specific information and focus of these above-noted calls indicate that the Police, and all building occupants, should be immediately notified. As well, a rapid evacuation of the target floor, and the floor above and below, is required. This should be followed by the quick evacuation of the entire complex. Calls from active terrorist groups such as the I.R.A usually include a 'code word' that is known to Police.



## BOMB THREAT PLAN

### **The 5-Step Process Breakdown cont'd**

#### ***Step 2: Evaluation of the Call & Determination of a 'Search/No Search' Decision cont'd***

Generally, the more specific, detailed, and genuine the information, the greater the chance the bomb threat is real. Less accurate information such as mentioning details about the site that are blatantly incorrect (e.g., store/building names that do not exist, etc.), increases the chance that the bomb threat is a hoax. However, the best policy is to always search the area. If the threat is perceived as genuine, there should be an immediate local evacuation of the targeted tenancy or area, prior to searching for suspicious packages or devices.

#### ***Step 3: Search of the Premises***

##### **Communications:**

a. During a bomb threat, the preferred methods of communication are:

- Telephones or intercoms (personal conversations only)
- Pagers
- Public address systems

Communication by e-mail, voice mail and fax are **not acceptable** because of the possibility of a time lag. As well, communication by two-way radio and/or cellular phone is **not acceptable**. This is because certain types of explosive detonators may be triggered by radio signals in their immediate area. Persons equipped with two-way radios may receive transmissions, but must **not** transmit (talk) during bomb threats.

b. The decision to initiate the search is made by a pre-determined individual or his/her alternate. The preferred method of initiating a search is by using the P.A. system in the building. Many persons are perceptive enough to evaluate the real purpose of a thinly veiled P.A. announcement such as: "A plumber is required on the 8th floor". We suggest that all P.A. announcements refer to a parking emergency in shipping/receiving. These announcement 'messages' should be covered during training for Bomb Threat Team Leaders, and included on every Search Team Member's instructions (***sample attached***).

- For 'Start Your Search', we suggest the following message:

"Would the owner of car license number CBC-277 please call shipping/receiving. You are blocking three vehicles". ***Repeat this message.***

- For 'All Clear', we suggest the following message:

"Would the driver of tractor-trailer licence number AMA-115 please call shipping/receiving".  
***Repeat this message.***

Alternatively, Search Team Leaders can be notified by staff at the Control Point using the Control Point's Designated Search Areas Emergency Telephone List (***sample attached***), and the Control Point Search Completion Checklist (***sample attached***).



## BOMB THREAT PLAN

### **The 5-Step Process Breakdown cont'd**

#### ***Step 3: Search of the Premises cont'd***

##### **Communications:**

- c. As Search Team Leaders call in to the Control Point, ideally just one staff member should be tasked to document these incoming calls. This individual should then record the time that each Team Leader has advised that his/her area is 'All Clear'. When all Team Leaders have reported in to the Control Point, then a general 'All Clear' should be declared by either using the P.A. system, or by notifying the Team Leaders by telephone.
- d. When searching, remember that devices or suspicious packages can take many forms. For example, bombs have been concealed in computer monitors and then delivered to the target organization. Suspect devices include:
  - Mail bombs. Please refer to Intercon's '***Package & Letter Bomb Briefing***' and Intercon's '***Letter Bomb Recognition Points Bulletin***'
  - Vehicle bombs. Either parked on the perimeter, in an underground parking garage, or on a parking deck
  - Proxy bombs. Can be delivered by a contractor, courier, or employee, and often under duress

#### ***Step 4: Orderly Evacuation***

The staff of the Control Point would immediately advise the Chief Searcher upon receipt of a report of a suspicious package or suspect device. The Chief Searcher (or his/her alternate) would then decide to initiate appropriate action that would normally be:

- a. Notification of the Police Bomb Squad and building Security.
- b. Simultaneous, immediate evacuation of the floor in question, and the floor directly above and below where the device was found. Search Team Members responsible for these floors/areas would be notified of the situation by telephone.
- c. A general, orderly evacuation of the remainder of the building would begin with the notification of Search Team Leaders by telephone. The evacuation would commence with those located in areas closest to the suspicious package. If the package is located in a stairwell, then Team Leaders are directed not to use it. Ensure that all evacuations take place away from the suspect device/suspicious package.
- d. Closing the building off to visitors.
- e. Control Point staff, and/or the Director of Security, and/or any available management staff in the Control Point would normally notify Search Team Leaders by phone. The time of these calls should be documented on the Control Point Search Completion Checklist.



## BOMB THREAT PLAN

### The 5-Step Process Breakdown cont'd

#### *Step 5: All Clear*

- a. Searchers should remain at their designated telephone extensions, in their search areas, until the Control Point advises that they may resume their normal duties. Persons equipped with pagers are permitted to move about freely, but only in their designated search areas. This is because at any time, until an 'All Clear' is declared, an evacuation may be necessary. Besides communication with Search Team Members by phone or pager, an 'All Clear' may be declared using the P.A. system. The use of the building's P.A. system is intrusive, and it will alert building occupants to the fact that something is occurring, but it is a very fast method of notifying Search Team Members. For the purpose of this procedure, the 'All Clear' signal could be:

“Would the driver of tractor-trailer licence number AMA-115 please call shipping/receiving”.

***Repeat this message.***

Any series of words or phrases may be selected as per management's direction.

- b. The reporting and documentation of **all** bomb threats is the responsibility of the on-site Director of Security, Security Supervisor, or on-duty Senior Security Officer.

### Instructions for Search Team Leaders

1. Remain calm, 99.9% of all threats are hoaxes. However, you should remain alert because there is always a small chance that it may be a real bomb.
2. Keep your work area free of debris and waste. This will make it easier to search and eliminate some potential hiding places.
3. Keep areas not normally used on a daily basis secure. This includes storage rooms, electrical rooms, and mechanical areas.
4. Use the two-person search technique (*see Page10*). When searching, pay special attention to the following:
  - Areas where the public has access
  - Any area where the door and/or door frame shows recent marks of forced entry
  - Be aware that moving an object may activate a trigger that will detonate the bomb
5. When searching, you should be looking for:
  - Any object inconsistent with its surroundings
  - Anything that resembles flares or explosives
  - Anything with a timer and wiring attached such as flares, flammable liquids, or explosives



## BOMB THREAT PLAN

### Instructions for Search Team Leaders cont'd

- Any leaking package or a package emitting an unusual noise or odour
  - Be suspicious of 'fancies', objects that entice you to pick them up  
*(Note: The most frequently found devices are pipe bombs and bottle bombs).*
6. Immediately notify the Control Point upon completion of your search, or if you find a suspicious package.
  7. If you find a suspicious package or suspect device:
    - Do **not** touch it
    - Evacuate **all** persons, including yourself, to a safe area at least 100 metres (110 yards) from the package/object
    - Notify the Control Point
    - If it is safe to do so, remain at your designated phone number, or go to the Control Point
    - Stop other people from passing by or entering the area containing the suspect device
  8. Remember these P.A. signals:
    - "Would the owner of car licence number CBC-277 please call shipping/receiving. You are blocking three vehicles". ***This means start your search***
    - "Would the driver of tractor-trailer licence number AMA-115 please call shipping/receiving". ***This means resume your normal duties***
  9. Until you are advised of an 'All Clear', or given instructions to evacuate, please remain at your designated telephone number/extension (as long it is safe to do so), and keep it available for incoming calls.

### Two-Person Search Technique

The following room search technique is based on the use of a two-person searching team. There are many possible, minor variations when searching a room. The following contains only the basic techniques:

1. When the two-person Search Team enters the room to be searched, they should first move to various parts of the room, stand quietly with their eyes closed, and listen for a 'clockwork' device. Frequently, a 'clockwork' mechanism can be quickly detected without the use of special equipment. Even if no 'clockwork' mechanism is detected, the Team is now aware of the background noise level within the room.



## BOMB THREAT PLAN

### **Two-Person Search Technique cont'd**

2. Background noise or transferred sound is always disturbing during a building search. If a ticking sound is heard, but cannot be located, one might become unnerved. The ticking sound may come from an unbalanced air conditioner fan several floors away, or from a dripping sink down the hall. Sound will transfer through air conditioning ducts, along water pipes, and through walls. One of the most difficult buildings to search is one that has steam or hot water heat. This type of building will constantly thump, crack, chatter, and tick due to the movement of the steam or hot water through the pipes, along with the expansion and contraction of the pipes. Background noise may also include outside traffic sounds, rain, wind, etc.
3. The individual in charge of the room Searching Team should first look around and determine how the room is to be divided for searching, and to what height the first searching sweep should extend. The first searching sweep would cover all items resting on the floor up to the selected height.
4. You should divide the room into virtually two equal parts. This equal division should be based on the number and type of objects in the room to be searched, and not on the size of the room. An imaginary line would then be drawn between two objects in the room (e.g., the edge of the window on the north wall, to the floor lamp on the south wall).

#### ***First Room-Searching Sweep***

- a. Look at the furniture or objects in the room. Determine the average height of the majority of items resting on the floor. In an average room, this height usually includes table/desk tops and chair backs. The first searching height usually covers the items in the room up to hip height.
- b. After the room has been divided, and a searching height has been selected, both individuals should go to one end of the room's division line and start from a back-to-back position. This will be the starting point, and the same point will be used on each successive searching sweep. Each person now starts searching his/her way around the room, working toward the other person, checking all items resting on the floor around the wall area of the room. When the two individuals meet, they will have completed a 'wall sweep'. They should then work together checking all items in the middle of the room right up to the selected hip height, including the floor under the rugs. This first searching sweep should also include those items that may be mounted on or in the walls, such as air conditioning ducts, baseboard heaters, and built-in wall cupboards (if these fixtures are below hip height).
- c. The first searching sweep usually consumes the most time and effort. During all of the searching sweeps, use an electronic or medical stethoscope on walls, furniture items, and floors.

#### ***Second Room-Searching Sweep***

Again, the individual in charge looks at the furniture or objects in the room and determines the height of the second searching sweep. This height is usually from the hip to the chin or top of the head. The two persons return to the starting point, and repeat the searching technique at the second selected searching height. This sweep usually covers the pictures hanging on the walls, built-in bookcases, tall table lamps, etc.



### ***Third Room-Searching Sweep***

When the second searching sweep has been completed, the person in charge again determines the next searching height, usually from the chin or the top of the head right up to the ceiling. The third sweep is then conducted. This sweep usually covers high-mounted air conditioning ducts, hanging light fixtures, etc.

### ***Fourth Room-Searching Sweep***

- a. If the room has a false or suspended ceiling, the fourth sweep involves the investigation of this area. Flush or ceiling-mounted light fixtures, air conditioning or ventilation ducts, sound or speaker systems, electrical wiring, and structural frame members should all be thoroughly checked.
- b. Have a sign or marker indicating: 'Search Completed' conspicuously posted in the area. If the use of a sign is not possible/practical, a piece of coloured, Scotch™ tape should be placed, at approximately two feet above floor level, across the door and door jam.

### ***Additional Room-Searching Information***

The room searching technique can be expanded. The same basic technique can be applied to search any enclosed area. Encourage the use of common sense or logic when searching. If a guest speaker at a convention has been threatened, common sense would indicate searching the speaker's platform and microphone(s) first. However, always return to the searching technique. Do **not** rely on random or spot-checking of only logical target areas. The bomber may not be a logical person.

In conclusion, the following steps should be taken in order to search a room:

- Divide the area and select a search height
- Start from the bottom and work up
- Start back-to-back and work toward each other
- Go around the walls and proceed toward the centre of the room

### **Suggestions for Building Management**

1. If bars are to be used to protect a building's windows, it is prudent to install them **inside** the glass. If they are installed on the exterior, bombs or incendiary devices can easily be attached to them. The use of 15ml Mylar Glass-Gard™ (or the equivalent) security film is preferable to the use of bars.
2. Partially full planters around the perimeter, or in the lobby, are undesirable because of their potential for use as bomb hiding places. Planters should be filled to the top with soil or gravel. Should someone try and hide a bomb in them, this will hopefully result in noticeably spilled soil or gravel.

*(Note: A useful method of deterring car bombers is to deploy heavy planters across the front of the building, which have been spaced to permit pedestrian access and not vehicle access).*



**BOMB THREAT PLAN**

**Control Point: Search Completion Checklist**

Area #	Search Team Leader Notification		All Clear		Device Located Notification		Evacuation Notification	
	Time	By (Initials)	Time	Rec'd By (Initials)	Time	Rec'd By (Initials)	Time	Called By (Initials)



BOMB THREAT PLAN

**Control Point: Designated Search Areas – Emergency Telephone Listings**

<b>Area #:</b>	
<b>Building:</b>	
<b>Floor:</b>	
<b>Tenancy:</b>	
<b>Description:</b>	

<b>Search Team Leader Name:</b>	
<b>Phone Number:</b>	
<b>Alternate Phone Number:</b>	
<b>Pager Number:</b>	

<b>Alternate Search Team Leader Name:</b>	
<b>Phone Number:</b>	
<b>Alternate Phone Number:</b>	
<b>Pager Number:</b>	

<b>Tenancy Management Contact Name:</b>	
<b>Phone Number:</b>	
<b>Alternate Phone Number:</b>	
<b>Pager Number:</b>	

<b>Tenancy Alternate Management Contact Name:</b>	
<b>Phone Number:</b>	
<b>Alternate Phone Number:</b>	
<b>Pager Number:</b>	

*(Note: If a tenancy has more than one search area, the management contact(s) should appear only for the first search area).*

**Date Issued:** \_\_\_\_\_

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