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# Terrorism Awareness: Weapons Of Mass Destruction: Part IV, Explosives

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## Abstract

This article written in 4 parts. It covers the fields of terrorism awareness and some of the weapons used by terrorists: chemical, biological, radiological and explosive weapons.

Part 1: Chemical Agents

Part 2: Biological Agents

Part 3: Radiological Agents

## EXPLOSIVE ORDINANCES

The example given at the beginning of this manual asked what would you do if your security office received a report of an explosive device (bomb) on the facility. What would your company do?

If this has not happened yet, you are in for a new experience. Almost every facility, business, governmental agency and educational facility has received these types of threats. Whether this is a real incident or just a hoax will have to be determined by you or your company's security / emergency response department and / or local law enforcement.

When we talk about Hazardous Material, the acronym IEDC should come to mind.

I – Isolate the area / product.

E – Evacuate the area.

D – Deny entry to the area.

C – Call for trained help.

## ALL FROM A SAFE DISTANCE!

When dealing with any type of explosive ordinance, the trained help you need to call for is a Bomb Squad or Explosive Ordinance Disposal (EOD) Unit/Team. Use your

company's policy on bomb threats to determine how involved your personnel will become in searching for a device. Keep in mind; if the device detonates and your team was looking for it, they could now be part of the problem.

In the US, it is estimated that 70% of all terrorist attacks worldwide involve some type of explosives. As we said earlier, you can purchase the components for most of the explosive devices used in these attacks from the corner drug, hardware and / or grocery store.

To understand the threat and capabilities of explosive ordinances first you should understand what explosives are. They are materials capable of violent decomposition. When these products violently decompose they produce a sudden gas release followed by high temperatures, strong shock waves and a loud noise.

Some of the cheapest and easiest devices to make are incendiary in nature. For example, a firebomb or old bottle of gasoline or some other type of flammable product, with a rag or fuse in it. This type of device has a long history of use. The effects they produce not only cause fires, injuries and possible death; but they can cause additional explosions, until all the fuel is consumed.

Explosives can be placed almost anywhere and be concealed

in almost any type of package. Some different types of packages used are automobiles, trucks, pipes, book bags, suitcases, briefcases, shoebox, an envelope, etc. Bombers are limited only by their imagination. Some of these devices can carry large amounts while others carry only small amounts. It depends on the amount of harm or damage they want to produce.

The safety of everyone, ERP's, employees and the community is important. If a threat is received, treat it like there may be a device. If any strange or out of place item(s) are discovered, no matter how large or small, treat it with respect. Time, Distance and Shielding is one place to start. The North American Emergency Response Guidebook (NAERG) is another great place to start.

For public safety measures it recommends isolating the area for at least 3,000 feet in all directions. Further, it recommends not using any type of radio or cell phone within 300 to 400 feet of the suspected or confirmed device. Most emergency responders should stage at least 1,000 feet away.

If there has been some type of detonation, confirm the safety of the area personnel. Yours, or the civilians in the area. Evacuate any victims, remembering some simple principles. Life over limb is the most important. If one device has detonating, expect a secondary device. The term secondary device is given to those devices designed to hurt or kill us, the emergency responders. There have been numerous cases in the last few years of devices being placed where the emergency responders would be staging or setting up their command post. Always remember; if you have found one possible device, there could be a second. Search everywhere and everything.

When searching for secondary devices after a detonation or searching for the first device, take someone from the area or facility. This person will know what is out of place or if something is unusual. Always search around the staging, command post, medical treatment or other areas where ERP, media or civilians are located. Look up, look down, and look all around when searching. Usually start at least 100 feet from the first device. Remember that this is now a crime scene and that local, state, and possible federal agencies will be getting involved. Do not touch, move or cover any device or possible device.

The only good thing that can be said is 90 % of all bomb threats are threats, a hoax. The other small percentage, the bomber is just wanting more victims. How do we know

when it's a hoax or when it's the real thing? Look at the Olympic Park Bombing, a few minutes after 911 received a garbled call, the bomb detonated. You just never know.

In the appendix you will find a phone report for bomb threats. This will help whoever receives the threat to get good information. A bomb threat caller identification worksheet will help you and the law enforcement agency in your area investigate the threat and possibly lead to an arrest of the caller.

### **RESOURCES**

- United States Department of Justice
- Center for Domestic Preparedness
- Office of Justice Programs Manuals
- United States Department of Transportation (DOT)
- United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- State of Alabama
- Emergency Management Agency
- Anti-Terrorism
- Personal Security Planning Guide
- (Alabama Dept of Public Safety)
- (Alabama National Guard)
- (Georgia Emergency Management)
- (The Federal Bureau of Investigations)
- (The Federal Emergency Management Agency)
- Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM)
- The National Fire Academy
- Emergency Response to Terrorism
- The Mobile Alabama Fire-Rescue Department
- Chemical, Biological and Radiological

- Incident Response Guide
- The History Channel Special Reports and Documentaries
- Journal of American Medical Association August 1997
- Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC)
- Militia Task Force

\_\_\_\_\_

Why was it placed there?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Did you place it there? Yes / No Why?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX 1  
PHONE REPORT FOR BOMB THREATS**

Date and Time: \_\_\_\_\_

What did the caller say?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Location of the device (bomb):

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Description of the package or device (bomb):

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

When will it explode?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What will cause it to explode?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Can it be deactivated? Yes / No If so How?

\_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX 2  
BOMB THREAT CALLER IDENTIFICATION WORKSHEET**

Did the caller identify him or herself or group? Yes No

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Sex of caller: Male Female Age (approximately how old):  
Adult Child

Origin of Call: Local Long Distance Internal

**Figure 1**  
Callers Voice

|                  |              |               |                |
|------------------|--------------|---------------|----------------|
| ___ Loud         | ___ Soft     | ___ Fast      | ___ Slow       |
| ___ Deep         | ___ Squeaky  | ___ Distant   | ___ Distorted  |
| ___ Sincere      | ___ Raspy    | ___ Stressed  | ___ Shutter    |
| ___ Nasal        | ___ Drunken  | ___ Slurred   | ___ Lisp       |
| ___ Disguised    | ___ Crying   | ___ Broken    | ___ Calm       |
| ___ Irrational   | ___ Rational | ___ Angry     | ___ Incoherent |
| ___ Excited      | ___ Laughing | ___ Righteous | ___ Accent     |
| ___ Scared       | ___ Hesitant | ___ Unsure    | ___ Confident  |
| ___ Other: _____ |              |               |                |

**Figure 2**  
Background Noises

|                  |            |               |                         |
|------------------|------------|---------------|-------------------------|
| ___ Voices       | ___ Trains | ___ Airplanes | ___ Street Traffic      |
| ___ Animals      | ___ Party  | ___ Quiet     | ___ Factory<br>Machines |
| ___ Music        | ___ Horns  | ___ Bells     | ___ Office<br>Machines  |
| ___ Other: _____ |            |               |                         |

Familiarity:

Did the caller sound familiar? Yes No If so how?

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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Did the caller appear to be familiar with the facility or location the device or bomb was supposed to have been placed? Yes No If so how?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name and title of person receiving the call:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number the call was received on:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Extension: \_\_\_\_\_

Immediately after the call, report the threat to Security, The Senior Facility Manager, Local Police and Fire (if applicable)

**References**

**Author Information**

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