

Hurricane Fire & Rescue

Hurricane, WV

Operation Guidelines

Subject
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Terrorism
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Purpose: This guideline will adapt to a wide variety of terrorist incidents such as:

- Car bombing
- Bombing inside a structure
- All bombings occurring after a threat is made
- Pipe bomb in a crowd
- Any sudden partial or complete demolition of a structure with unknown cause
- Chemical/bio release

Scope: All Personnel

Responsibility: It is the responsibility of all personnel to adhere to these guidelines.

Note: Acts of terrorism often involve the use of a secondary device designed to target rescuers. Secondary devices are typically larger and more devastating than the primary device. For the safety of personnel, it will be anticipated that a secondary device exists

Terrorist incidents are divided into five basic categories. Using the acronym **B-NICE**, they are: **B**iological, **N**uclear, **I**ncendiary, **C**hemical, and **E**xplosive. An explosion may include any of these elements. Explosions, with or without subsequent building collapse, will be considered intentionally caused unless verified to be otherwise.

GENERAL

We are faced with new challenges today that seriously endanger not only the public, but also the very people whose responsibility it is to help and protect the public. It is imperative that emergency responders become familiar with modern threats and have proper response procedures in place in order to safely mitigate hazards caused by explosions of diabolic intent, and other acts of terrorism.

MANAGEMENT

Early implementation of a unified Incident Command System (ICS), after a terrorist event, is critical to the outcome of the incident. The ICS will direct and control all agencies from one lead source, thereby:

- a. Establishing one command post
- b. Ensuring events are handled systematically and by priority
- c. Organizing deployment of resources
- d. Providing for multi-agency response
- e. Centralizing focus on safety

In the event of a bomb threat or discovered device, the lead agency will be law enforcement. With the complication of an NBC release, detonation, multiple casualty, etc., the primary concerns become life safety, entrapment, hazard mitigation, search and rescue, fire suppression, decontamination, and advanced life support, all lying under the scope of responsibilities of the fire department.

With the establishment of ICS, as opposed to multiple command posts for each agency, non-fire/rescue agencies responding will send a ranking officer to the established command post to establish a unified command.

SAFETY

Emergency operations must be organized to be successful. Actions of the first responders and early implementation of the ICS is vital to the overall outcome of the incident. Safety cannot be over emphasized. Incidents involving acts of terrorism are inherently dangerous and the risk to rescuers is great. Biological contamination, toxic atmosphere, structural collapse and the presence of a secondary device can cause severe injury or death to emergency responders.

Note: A situation may become too dangerous or impossible to attempt mitigation. The confirmation of nuclear, biological, or chemical presence may dictate needs far beyond the capability of local responders, thus requiring federal assistance, i.e., Civilian Support Teams (CST). The only viable option may be to withdraw from the scene, deny entry and allow the incident to run its course.

All actions should be conducted on a risk/benefit analysis.

SUPPORT AGENCIES

In the event of an incident of large magnitude, state and federal assistance will usually not arrive until 24 to 72 hours after the event and therefore cannot be relied upon initially. Not all representative agencies are expected to arrive at the command post, but may be more appropriately utilized in the local or county emergency operations center. The scope of involvement will determine the agencies responding:

- Designated Haz Mat Team
- Designated Bomb Squad
- County Emergency Management
- Critical Incident Stress Management Team
- Medical Examiner
- West Virginia State Police (lead state agency for terrorism response)
- U.S. Army
- Federal Bureau of Investigation (lead federal agency for terrorism response)
- Federal Support
 - (Involves) Department of Defense (DOD)
 - Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
 - Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
 - Public Health Services (PHS)
- Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms
- West Virginia State Fire Marshal
- Designated Urban Search and Rescue
- DMORT Team (disaster mortuary) (state and federal)
- Civilian Support Team

SUBJECT: BOMB THREAT

The lead agency will be law enforcement crisis management. Fire/rescue providers are a support agency and may be called upon to assist within the scope of their responsibility in providing medical services, fire protection or perimeter security (consequence management). At no time will fire/rescue providers assist in searching, examining, or transporting any explosive device.

THE FOLLOWING GUIDELINES WILL PREVAIL:

- A primary unit will be en route (non emergency) to the scene unless dispatch advises of injuries at the scene, at which time the unit will upgrade to responding.
- Based on the information received, the officer in charge will verify that law enforcement has been notified and determine if any immediate action is required.

- To ensure rapid intervention and based on information received, the respective IC contacted may request additional units. All units will be en route unless their station is within one mile of the incident and therefore may remain on standby at their station. Those units en route will stage at a safe location, a minimum of 3,000 feet from the reported threat and not in direct site of the scene, until law enforcement declares the scene safe.
- If requested, units will assist law enforcement with evacuation.
- Response, if any, will be non-emergency unless otherwise assigned by the officer in charge.
- Communications by fire and rescue units over radios or cellular telephones are prohibited within 3,000 feet from the scene until clearance for such is authorized via the law enforcement IC.

SUBJECT: DISCOVERED DEVICES

The lead agency will be law enforcement. Fire rescue may be called upon to assist in isolating the incident.

Dispatch will initiate a full structure response on all devices that are **discovered**. Depending on the threat potential, and the extent of the need for evacuation, the officer in charge may upgrade to additional alarms.

- Full bunker gear with SCBA
- The officer in charge should obtain the location of the command post.
- Units will use level II staging, uphill/upwind, 3,000 to 5,000 feet from the scene; units will not pass the scene to achieve this. (In more congested areas this distance may not be practical.)
- Officer in Charge should obtain specifics on type of device and potential for damage, and develop a contingency plan.
- Staging should not be located in areas that may conceal secondary devices.

Watch Outs

- Consider if location has been the address of one or more false alarms in the recent past (staging location may need to be altered for safety from secondary devices).
- If you can see the bomb technicians working - you are too close.
- Where there is one device, there likely will be a second nearby.
- Ideal staging distances may not be practical in more congested areas.

SUBJECT: DETONATED DEVICES

Unified command will be established.

Notifications to the following will be made:

- Local law enforcement
- County Emergency Management
- Designated bomb squad

FIRST UNIT

- Determine if scene is safe to enter (initial observations may indicate the need for immediate withdrawal, i.e., numerous deceased on ground, obvious blistering on victims, strong acrid odors, victims in seizure activity, etc.)
- Stage vehicle close enough to deploy an attack line if necessary to effect a rescue or mitigate immediate hazards to life.
- Size-up will include approximate number of survivors, magnitude of damage, etc.
- Begin rapid evacuation from hot zone and initiate triage. Evacuate to a triage site in the safe zone (1,000 feet away, uphill/upwind).
- All surviving victims, walking-wounded, and **all uninjured** must be directed to the triage site for evaluation (names of evacuees and uninjured is critical to be obtained).

OFFICER IN CHARGE

- Establish unified command post (1,000 feet from blast site uphill/upwind).
- Explosion of unknown cause or suspected to be of a terrorist nature requires a Haz Mat upgrade, and appropriate bomb squad response
- Consider need for additional resources:
 - Technical Rescue
 - USAR Team
 - CISM
 - Medical Director
 - Medical Examiner
- Consider allowing product to burn until identification can be made.
- Ensure control of media and establish one P.I.O. for all media contact.
- Implement the passport accountability system.
- Establish medical sector to coordinate all treatment/transport.

The incident commander will want to ensure the following are accomplished by non-fire agencies:

- Bomb squad response for detection of complete/incomplete detonation
- The integrity of the crime scene to the best of their ability
- Search for secondary device begun
- Ingress/egress is being maintained
- Structural engineers to establish soundness of remaining structure(s)
- Procure heavy equipment to support search and rescue.
- Develop an incident action plan

ALL ADDITIONAL UNITS:

- Stages in a safe zone (1,000 to 3,000 feet away) until assignments are made.
- Establish a staging officer.

***** No entry will be made into the hot zone (blast site) where it has been determined that there are no surviving casualties. Existing hazards such as active fire, flammable gas leak, etc., not of an immediate threat to life, will be handled at the discretion of the Incident Commander or after determination has been made that a secondary device does not exist.**

***** Treatment of casualties will be performed via rapid extrication from the hot zone (blast site) of any act of diabolic intent. All c-spine control, bandaging, etc., will be accomplished at a safe zone (1,000 to 3,000 feet from blast site).**

- Rapid evacuation of all survivors from the hot zone will be the primary objective.

Watch Outs:

- It is expected with a terrorist attack, that people will die and that there may be nothing that can be done about it.
- It will be assumed that all intentional explosions involve a secondary device in the vicinity.
- Secondary devices are most always more powerful than the primary device.
- The primary explosive may not have detonated entirely and further disturbance could initiate a second explosion or collapse.
- The presence of unusual colored vapor clouds, strong acrid odors, victims in seizure activity, etc., could indicate the presence of a chemical/biological weapon.

- Every person involved at the blast site, including victims, is automatically considered a suspect.
- Citizens and the media will question decision making, as they will not recognize that safety of field personnel is paramount.
- Explosions are considered crime scene unless known to be otherwise.
- Any removal of clothing from victims requires containment as evidence.
- Complete tracking of all patients. (i.e., to what hospital, mode of transport, etc.)
- Detonations may include a biological/chemical agent. Suspect packages that explode causing little or no damage. B-NICE.

SUBJECT: NBC DEVICES (Nuclear/Biological/Chemical)

Unified command will be established

Dispatch will initiate a full structure response for NBC incidents. The responding company officer will upgrade the call to include a Haz Mat response, if warranted, and may elect to do so upon receiving additional information. As the incident may involve unknowns, the IC should contact a Haz Mat staff officer for recommendations.

***** NBC sites are not to be entered by fire rescue personnel if the scene is known to be without casualties.**

DECONTAMINATION

Decontamination (de-con) will be a primary concern for NBC terrorism.

- Patients are not to be turned over to ambulances for transport prior to completing decontamination measures.
- All victims believed to be contaminated must be properly de-coned, and all clothing/jewelry contained (bagged) with victim's ID.
- Some incidents may require that contaminated victims receive a primary de-con with water for gross contaminants and a secondary de-con with a 10 percent sodium hypochlorite (bleach) and water solution. Assessment with monitoring devices by the Haz Mat team should precede transport.
- Due to the potential serious/fatal effects of exposure to some biological/chemical agents, victims contaminated with an "unknown substance" will require emergency de-con with a soap and water solution, unless the substance is known to be water reactive.

INDICATION FOR IMMEDIATE RETREAT

The following observations may indicate the scene is too risky to enter:

- Unusual numbers of sick or dying people or animals
- Mass casualties without signs of trauma
- Multiple victims in seizure activity

- **NUCLEAR**

The possibility of a terrorist faction producing a nuclear bomb is very remote due to lack of technological capability. An act of terrorism involving a nuclear device would most likely involve procurement of radioactive devices and/or equipment to cause the release of radioactivity.

- Isolate the area until support agencies arrive
- Notify Emergency Management

Watch Outs:

- Most radioactive devices readily available emit a very low level of radiation.
- A Haz Mat team that is equipped with Geiger counters and dosimeters for radiation detection may be requested.

- **BIOLOGICAL**

Acts of biological contamination are not likely to be immediately detectable, and may not be evident until 72 hours post exposure. Research is still developing detection devices in this area. These agents contaminate by aerosol, orally, by skin contact and injection. Biological bacteria, viruses and toxins exist as liquid, crystalline or powder. Inhalation and ingestion are the primary routes of exposure, but agents may be contracted through the skin.

Common signs and symptoms are mostly flu-like: fever, weakness, headache, nausea, vomiting, cough, diarrhea, and chills. Other symptoms include: shock, chest pain, double vision, shortness of breath, and skin lesions.

Protective actions:

- Full bunker gear with SCBA
- Stage in a safe zone (1,000 to 3,000 feet away, uphill/upwind) until determination is made for entry.
- Call for an upgrade to a Haz Mat response
- Establish Incident Command post in the safe zone (1,000 to 3,000 feet away, uphill/upwind)
- Evacuation and isolation of the incident
- Emergency rescues at the discretion of the Incident Commander
- Isolate victims and assess their need for de-con
- All contaminated victims to a de-con site
- Appropriate de-con is a soap and water solution, followed by a 10 percent bleach solution.

- All patients should be treated with Universal Precautions using appropriate Body Substance Isolation (BSI).

- **CHEMICAL**

The use of chemical weapons, unlike biological agents, will have immediate effects ranging from seconds after exposure until the first few hours. Chemical agents may be in the form of a solid, liquid or gas. Some common agents used are: phosgene, VX, cyanide, sarin, lewisite and mustard gas. All of which are lethal.

There are five categories of chemical weapons:

- Nerve agents (similar to organophosphate) Sarin, VX, for example
- Blister agents (vesicants) i.e., mustard gas
- Blood agents (asphyxiates) i.e., hydrogen cyanide
- Choking agents, i.e., phosgene
- Irritating agents, i.e., pepper spray, tear gas

Common signs and symptoms include: Pinpoint pupils, difficulty breathing, redness and burning skin, blistering, cough, convulsions, vomiting, pain, muscle twitch, and excessive sweating.

Protective actions:

- Full bunker gear with SCBA
- Stage in a safe zone (1,000 to 3,000 feet away uphill/upwind) until determination is made for entry.
- Call for an upgrade to a Haz Mat response.
- Establish Incident Command post in the safe zone (1,000 to 3,000 feet away, uphill/upwind)
- Evacuation and isolation of the incident
- Emergency rescues at the discretion of the Incident Commander
- Isolate victims and assess their need for de-con
- All contaminated victims to the de-con site
- Appropriate de-con is a soap and water solution, followed by a 10 percent bleach solution.

Watch Outs:

- The presence of unusually colored vapor clouds, strong acrid odors, victims in seizure activity, etc., could indicate a chemical/biological weapon has detonated.
- Scene evidence may indicate the need for massive decontaminations of victims.
- **Chemical/biological presence may not be immediately detectable!**