



Bomb Threat Emergency Response Procedure

Enhancing Health & Safety in RCSI

RCSI DEVELOPING HEALTHCARE LEADERS WHO MAKE A DIFFERENCE WORLDWIDE

This procedure defines the process to be followed in the event of a threat involving an explosive device: 1) Telephone threat 2) Written bomb warning; 3) Suspicious item e.g. package, unattended bag etc. and these are discussed under the separate headings below.

1. Scope

This procedure applies to all RCSI employees and contracted Security providers in the event that there is a bomb threat to the college.

2. Procedure

There are three potential categories of threat involving an explosive device: 1) Telephone threat 2) Written bomb warning; 3) Suspicious item e.g. package, unattended bag etc. and these are discussed under the separate headings below.

2.1 Telephone Threat

A calm response is vital so that as much information as possible can be obtained.

- Keep the caller on the line as long as possible. Ask him/her to repeat the message. Record pertinent information on the Bomb Threat Checklist for call receivers in Appendix 1. Do not hang up until the caller hangs up.
- If the caller does not indicate the location of the bomb or time of possible detonation, ask him/her for this information.
- Inform the caller that the building is occupied and the detonation of a bomb can result in death or serious injury to many innocent people.
- Pay particular attention to background noises, such as motors running, music playing, vehicle traffic and any other noise which may give a clue as to the location of the caller.
- Listen closely to the voice (male, female), the mood of the caller (calm, excited, despondent), accents or speech impediments.
- Report the threat to Security at 01 402219 or Extn. 191 immediately after the caller hangs up. Security will then implement its bomb threat response procedure.
- Remain available in the event that Gardai want to interview you.

2.2 Written Bomb Warning

The above may be in a hand delivered envelope, mailed or found in a public location. It may be associated with a general threat or point to a specific device.

- Save all materials including the envelope.
- Once the message is recognized as a threat, further unnecessary handling should be avoided in order to maintain evidence.
- Report the threat to Security at Extn. 191 immediately after receiving a written threat. Security will then implement its bomb threat response procedure.

2.3 Suspicious Item



While the likelihood of receiving a bomb through the mail is remote, letter or package bombs represent an alternate delivery method if the motive of the attack is to inflict injury on a specific individual. Bombs can be constructed to look like almost anything and can be placed or delivered in a number of ways. Its appearance is limited only by the imagination of the sender. Contact Security at Extn. 191 if you come across a suspicious letter or package, bag etc. Security will then implement its bomb threat response procedure. However, the following characteristics may help you in identifying a suspicious letter or package (See also Appendix 2):

- **Feel & Balance** - Letters feel rigid, appear uneven or lopsided or are bulkier than normal. Sponginess or undue pressure can be felt through the package. Contents of the parcel may make a "sloshing" sound.
- **Place of Origin** – Check the delivery postmark to see if the place of origin is familiar.
- **Foreign Packages** – If the item is from another country ask yourself if it is expected. Look for foreign writing, addresses and postage.
- **Unusual Addressing or Delivery Instructions** – There are unusually restrictive endorsements such as "Personal", "Private", and "Confidential" or has no return address.
- **Packaging** – Packaging wrapped in string are automatically suspicious, as modern packaging materials have eliminated the need for twine or string.
- **Postage** – Excess postage on small packages or letters indicate that the object was not weighed by the Post Office. No postage or non-cancelled postage should also be a warning.
- **Writing** – Handwritten notes such as "Fragile", "Rush", or "Prize Enclosed", a foreign style of writing (not normally received), misspelling of common names, places or titles and mail addressed to generic or incorrect titles should be treated with caution.
- **Odour** – The mail or package emits the smell of marzipan or almonds or any other peculiar odour.
- **Appearance** – Leaks, stains, protruding wires, string, tape or tinfoil are present.
- **Sound** – Any package that emits a buzzing, ticking or other unusual noise should be treated with caution.
- **Telephone Calls** – Any packages or letters arriving before or after a phone call from an unknown person asking if the item was received is suspect.
- Under no circumstances should anyone move, jar or touch a suspicious object or anything attached to it. Do not attempt to place the item in water.
- Report the location and an accurate description of the object to Security at 01 4022219 or Extn. 191.
- Security or Facilities personnel should not use portable radios to report a suspicious object as they can sometimes detonate an explosive device.
- If possible, open all doors and windows in the area to minimize primary damage from a blast and secondary damage from fragmentation.

3. Bomb Threat Response Procedures

This section details the response of Security personnel to any of the above threats.

3.1 Incident Management

Once a bomb threat comes to the attention of Security they must take over coordination of the initial response.

- Write down all details from the informant.
- Contact the Estate and Support Services Managers as per Emergency Contacts list who should then proceed to a designated safe Incident Command Post (e.g. Initially this may be the RCSI Security Control Room, or reception desk in a safe building) to meet the Security Supervisor.
- Contact the external emergency services 999/112 and ask for Gardai, pass on all information as to the nature of the threat.
- Await further advice from Gardai / Estates as to "next steps".



RCSI

4.2 Evacuation

- If it is determined that an evacuation is necessary, this instruction will come from Garda and or Estate and Support Services, bomb threat evacuations will follow a procedure similar to the one used for fire evacuations, i.e. in SSG a voice evacuation system on its own will be used or the fire alarm system will be manually activated.
- If an area has been specifically identified as a threat, Security Staff and Porters will be posted in key areas to direct staff to alternate escape routes.
- At all times personnel will be directed away from a potential threat for example if a threat is on a street then staff should be directed to an exit on the opposite side of the building.
- Once evacuation is underway, Security Staff and Porters will be posted at each entry point to prevent re-entry if safe to do so, if necessary for example in the St Stephen's Green Campus by restricting access at each end of York Street.

4.3 Radio Communication / Mobile

Radio transmissions may cause an improvised explosive device to detonate.

- No radio transmissions will be made within fifty feet of the area or building involved.
- Cellular phones will be turned off before approaching within fifty feet of the area or building involved. Cellular phones which are turned on transmit periodically even when a call is not in progress.

4.4 Emergency Services Coordination

- The Security Supervisor /Buildings and Estates Manager/ Engineering Manager / Senior Porter should be available to brief the Gardai with the full incident details when they arrive on scene.
- Inform the Gardai where the Command Post is located.
- The Gardai will take over incident control at this point and all instructions given by them should be followed.

4.5 Building Search

- In the event that a search is required, the area or building will be searched by Gardai, with the assistance of RCSI Security Staff and/or Building Services Staff and Porters.
- Each search team will consist of two persons, preferably a Garda paired with a staff person familiar with the area to be searched. The Garda supervisor will maintain a fixed Command Post with the College representative.
- A complete and thorough search is generally not feasible, due to the size of the typical building, and the difficulty in identifying a concealed or disguised explosive device. The search personnel should check for an "open" or obvious device, as well as for any suspicious items or packages.
- If a device or suspicious package is located, it should not be touched. The Garda supervisor on the scene should be immediately notified of the location of the suspicious item.
- If a deadline was given by the caller, the search will cease and all searchers will evacuate the area fifteen minutes before the deadline. No one will re-enter the area until thirty minutes after the deadline has expired.
- Upon completion of the search, searchers will report to the command post and await further instruction.



RCSI

4. Staff Evacuation Procedure

4.1 Evacuation without alarm:

Depending on the threat level and the instruction from the Gardai / Estate and Support Services the normal fire alarm system may not be permitted and where possible (in SSG) a recorded message, without the fire alarm may be transmitted. This message is:

“Due to unforeseen circumstances a full evacuation of the building is required. All occupants are advised to take their personal belongs and proceed to the nearest emergency exit”.

All Security, Porters and Estate staff are to report to the command post and will be instructed on necessary steps thereafter.

In all other buildings the Gadai in conjunction with Estates will advise on the necessary actions.

4.2 Evacuation with Alarm

If the fire alarm warning system is activated follow the local College Evacuation Procedure as posted in the Fire Instruction Notice.

- Know your escape route in advance. Also be prepared to use an alternate exit in case your primary route is obstructed.
- Pay attention to all alarms and public address system announcements.
- Follow the instructions given by Fire Wardens, Searchers, Security, Porters and Emergency Services.
- Never use an elevator to evacuate unless directed to do so by the Fire Brigade.
- Once outside, move well away from the building and especially away from windows.



RCSI

Appendix 1: Bomb Threat Procedure General Guidelines for all Staff

On receiving a call:

Any person receiving a phone call regarding a bomb threat or a threat against an individual should attempt to obtain as much information as possible from the caller. This information is invaluable in determining the validity, urgency and nature of the threat and consequently in determining what action is appropriate in response to that threat.

- Of utmost importance are the EXACT WORDS of the caller and information provided by him/her.
- Persons receiving threats by telephone should be aware of the following:
- Be calm; be courteous, listen carefully; do not interrupt the caller, make notes.
- Try to keep the caller on the line as long as possible in order to obtain as much information as possible. This can be achieved for example by pretending to have a bad connection.
- Ask the caller to repeat the message.
- Record the caller ID as it appears on your phone.
- Pay particular attention to any strange or peculiar background noises, such as a running motor, background music, trains, sirens, airplane engines and any other noises which might provide clues as to the place from which the call was being made. Record as much information as possible on the document overleaf.
- Listen closely to the voice (male/female) (young/mature), accents, speech impediments or words/phrases used repeatedly.
- Do not hang up the call until the caller does as he/she may volunteer more information.

Once the caller has terminated the call:

- IMMEDIATELY and without delay contact RCSI Security on 191 and inform them that you have received a Bomb threat and provide them with as much information as possible.
- Security will immediately notify Estate and Support Services as per contact list.
- Estate and Support Services will immediately notify Communications department as per the contact list.
- Remain available in the event that Security / Estates / Gardai want to interview you.



RCSI

BOMB THREAT
Checklist for call receivers

Date [] Time []

ASK THE CALLER

- When will the bomb explode?
Where is the bomb right now?
What does it look like?
What kind of bomb is it?
What will make it explode?
Did you place the bomb?
Who planted the bomb?
Why was the bomb planted?
What is your name?
What is your address?
Where are you calling from?
What is your telephone number?

EXACT WORDS OF THREAT

[Empty box for exact words of threat]

CALLER INFORMATION

- Codeword used? Specify
Estimated age?
Familiar voice?

CALLERS VOICE

- Accent (region/nationality)
Angry
Breaking voice
Calm
Clearing throat
Coughing
Crying
Deep
Disguised
Distinct
Excited
Heavy breathing
Hoarse/raspy
Intoxicated
Laughter
Lisp
Loud
Squeaky
Nasal
Normal
Ragged
Rapid
Slow
Slurred
Soft
Stutter
Other
Male
Female

BACKGROUND SOUNDS

- Animal noises
House noises
Kitchen noises
Street noises
Booth
PA system
Conversation
Music
Motor
Clear
Static
Office machinery
Factory machinery
Crockery
Voices

THREAT LANGUAGE

- Incoherent
Irrational
Taped/pre-recorded
Message read
Profane/offensive
Well-spoken