



**Government
of South Australia**

Department of the Premier and Cabinet Circular

PC007 – Security – Opening of Mail / Bomb Threat Calls

January 1989

PC007 - Security - Opening of Mail / Bomb Threat Calls

Summary

Explains what steps should be taken if a threatening phone call is received or a suspicious article is found in the building or received in the post. It also gives you advice on how to liaise with the police.

Every Department and Agency should have a specific plan laid down to prepare staff for the possibility of a bomb threat or a letter or parcel bomb being received.

Bomb Threats

1. A plan to handle bomb threats should include a set of specific instructions to telephonists. These instructions may require the telephonist to promptly switch the call to a nominated senior employee or alternatively to obtain the necessary information.
2. It is suggested that any person responsible for handling such calls has a readily available check list to ensure all important information is obtained from the caller. A sample check list is attached as Appendix A.

Evacuation

3. The responsibility to direct an evacuation is that of the **Manager** or his **Coordinator**, and not the Police. Before making this decision, the following points should be considered:
 - Should the area be searched by the usual occupants.
 - The hoax caller's aim may be to cause disruption and evacuation will encourage repetitions.
 - The possibility of injury due to panic.
4. As soon as a report of a bomb threat is received, the Department or Agency should immediately notify the Police (telephone 131 444)
5. A search should be instituted by management - Police do not search the premises, but will assist with the evacuation.

6. The search should be conducted by people who are intimately familiar with the area.
7. The following steps should be taken:
 - Search for any object FOREIGN to the area.
 - If such an object is located DO NOT TOUCH - a bomb may be triggered by movement.
 - EVACUATE THE AREA if anything suspicious is located - a decision to evacuate the area prior to the location of a suspicious object may have been taken by the organisation.
 - Notify the Police (telephone 131 444) as soon as a suspicious object is located so that disposal personnel can attend.

Suppression of Publicity

8. It is imperative that publicity regarding bombs and bomb hoaxes be kept to an absolute minimum. Publicity will only encourage repetitions of these highly dangerous acts.
9. Under no circumstances should the identity or method of operation of bomb disposal personnel be disclosed.

Letter Bombs

10. Staff responsible for opening mail should be advised of the following:
 - This type of bomb can be concealed in almost any size envelope or parcel.
 - UNEXPECTED parcels or parcels with UNUSUAL addresses or other features should be treated with suspicion.
 - If an object is suspected of being a bomb, DO NOT TOUCH and immediately notify the responsible Manager or his Coordinator, who should contact the Police (131 444) where arrangements are made for bomb disposal personnel to attend and deal with the problem.

There are 16 Mail Bomb Recognition points, any one of which should alert staff to the possibility that a letter or package may be an explosive device. These recognition points are set out on Appendix B, a copy of which should be permanently and prominently displayed where mail is opened.

PC007 - Appendix A Bomb Threat Check List

Questions to ask:	Threat Language
1 When is the Bomb going to explode?	Well spoken:
2 Where did you put the Bomb?	Incoherent:
3 When did you put it there?	Irrational:
4 What does the Bomb look like?	Taped:
5 What kind of Bomb is it?	Message read by caller:
6 What will make the Bomb explode?	Abusive:
7 Did you place the Bomb?	Other:
8 Why did you place the Bomb?	Background Noises
9 What is your name?	Street noises: House noises:
10 Where are you?	Aircraft: Voices:
11 What is your address?	Local call: Music:
Exact Wording of Threat:	Long distance: Machinery: STD: Other:
Action	Other
Report call immediately to:	Sex of caller:
Phone Number:	Estimated age:
Caller's Voice	Call Taken
Accent (specify):	Date: ____/____/____ Time:

Any impediment (specify):	Duration of call: No. Called:
Voice (loud, soft, etc):	Recipient
Speech (fast, slow, etc):	Name: (print):
Diction (clear, muffled):	Telephone number:
Manner (calm, emotional, etc):	Signature:
Did you recognise the voice?	
If so, who do you think it was?	
Was the caller familiar with the area?	

PC007 - Appendix B - Mail Bomb Recognition Points

1. Excessive weight for its size
2. Rigid envelope
3. Lopsided or uneven envelope or package
4. Excessive securing material
5. Protruding wires, string, tin foil, etc.
6. Oily stains or discoloration
7. Source unknown
8. Visual distractions
9. Unexpected or unsolicited mail, both local and foreign
10. Excessive postage on local mail
11. Restrictive markings (private, personal etc.)
12. Hand-written or poorly typed address
13. No return address
14. Incorrect titles
15. Titles, but no names
16. Misspelling of common words