



United States Department of State
Bureau of Diplomatic Security

Overseas Bomb Threat Awareness

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BOMB THREAT AWARENESS

Introduction

This pamphlet is intended to provide an overview of improvised explosive devices (IEDs). **IED** is a term for an explosive device that is constructed in an improvised manner designed to kill, maim, or destroy property. These devices are categorized by their container (i.e., vehicle bombs) and by the way they are initiated. IEDs are homemade and usually constructed for a specific target.

This pamphlet will provide you with basic information and should not be used in dealing with or dismantling an IED. Explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) technicians and local bomb squads are trained to accomplish this mission.

Descriptions

The design and placement of an IED is up to the imagination of the bomber. First and foremost it is an object, regardless of its disguise, that is not supposed to be there. The best and most effective defense is to be aware of your surroundings. Based on your threat, if you think it does not belong in your area, consider it suspicious.

External Appearances of an IED

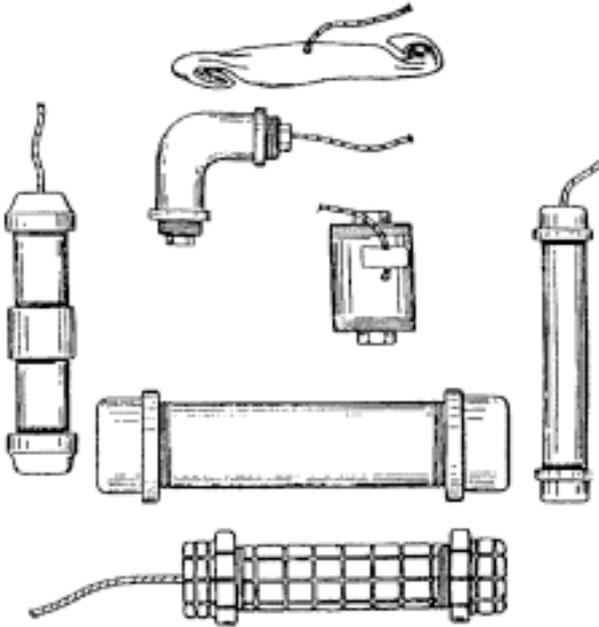
IEDs can be contained in almost anything. The item must be carried or driven to where it will be placed, so concealment or masking of the device will be necessary. The outer container can be, but not limited to:

- ◆ **Pipe Bombs**—steel or PCV pipe section with end caps in nearly any configuration are the most prevalent type of containers.
- ◆ **Briefcase/Box/Backpack**—any style, color, or size; even as small as a cigarette pack.

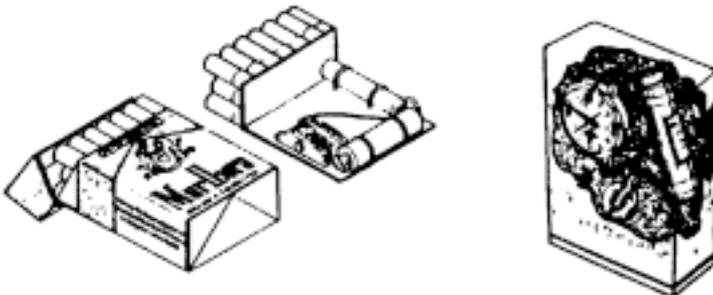
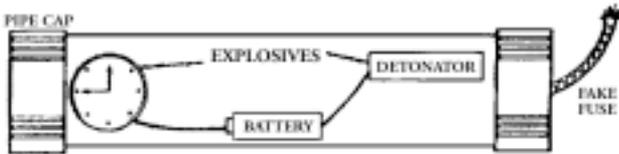
WARNING!

If an object is considered suspicious, *do not touch it or move it. Evacuate the area and notify authorities.* Any movement, however slight, may cause it to function.

SAMPLING OF POSSIBLE PIPE BOMB CONFIGURATIONS



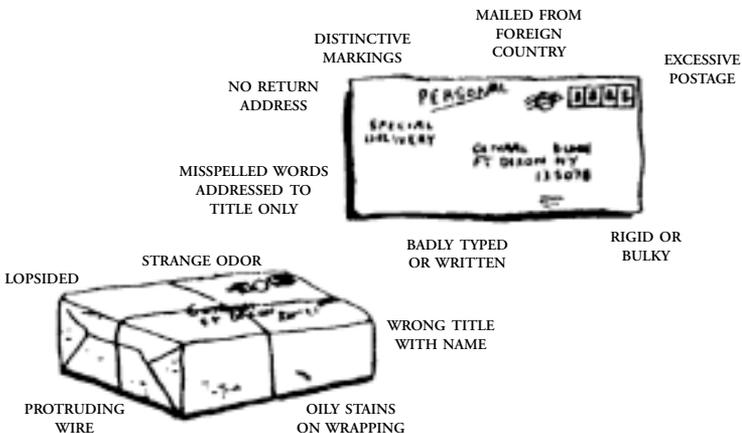
INTERNALLY FUSED PIPE BOMB



◆ **Postal Service Mail**—Because mail screening procedures implemented worldwide have proven successful, terrorists are looking for other ways to deliver devices. There is a long list of possible indicators; these are some of the most common:

- The package or letter has no postage, non-cancelled postage, excessive postage, has been hand delivered, or dropped off by a friend
- Sender is unknown or no return address available
- Addressee does not normally receive mail at that address
- Common words are misspelled
- Package emits a peculiar or suspicious odor
- Letter or package seems heavy or bulky for it's size
- Package makes a ticking, buzzing, or whirring noise
- An unidentified person calls to ask if the letter or package was received

If the letter or parcel exhibits some of the indicators above, it could be considered suspect and the proper authorities should be notified. Never accept unexpected packages at your home, and make sure family members and clerical staff refuse unexpected mail.



◆ **Vehicle Bombs**—By far the most devastating (may contain thousands of pounds of explosives), vehicle bombs can be the easiest to conceal. Indicators may include inappropriate decals or an unfamiliar vehicle parked in your area. The device can be placed anywhere in the vehicle.

A vehicle bomb is intended to create mass casualties or cause extensive property damage.

- ◆ **Existing Objects**—Items that seem to have a purpose can be substituted or used as the bomb container. Some examples are fire extinguishers, propane bottles, trashcans, gasoline cans, or books.

Internal Components

All devices require a firing train that consists of a fusing system, detonator, and main charge (explosive or incendiary). Any switch that can turn something on or off can be used to activate a device. Fusing systems can be categorized into the following:

- ◆ **Time**—preset to detonate or arm the device at an unknown interval of time. The timer may be mechanical such as a kitchen timer, wind-up wristwatch, pocket watch, or electronic, i.e. digital wristwatches, integrated circuit chips, or solid-state timers.
- ◆ **Victim activated**—may be designed to function by pressure, pull, movement, vibration, tension release, or tilting the item. Booby-trapped is the best way to describe it.
- ◆ **Command**—sending a signal via radio frequency or through a hidden wire from a remote location.
- ◆ **Environmental**—designed to function when there is a change in temperature, pressure, light, sound, or magnetic field.

The **detonator or blasting cap** is a small explosive component, widely available from military and commercial sources, which can be initiated by a variety of mechanical and electrical devices. With the increased availability of blasting caps, fabrication and use of improvised detonators are on the decline. However, the possibility of encountering one cannot be excluded.

Main charges can be used to burn, detonate or both, depending on the bombers desired effect. Explosives fall into three general categories.

- ◆ **Commercial Explosives**—used for property demolition, mining and blasting operations. Commercial explosives come in assorted shapes and consistencies including binary (two-part), slurries, gels, and standard dynamites.
- ◆ **Military Explosives**—differ from commercial explosives in several respects. Military explosives must have high rates of detonation, be

relatively insensitive, and be usable underwater. TNT, C-4 plastic explosives, and military dynamite are some of the more common explosives associated with the military.

- ◆ **Improvised Explosives**—when manufactured explosives are not available, it is relatively easy to obtain all of the ingredients necessary to make improvised explosives, such as ammonium nitrate (fertilizer), and potassium/sodium chlorate.
- ◆ **Incendiary**—improvised devices may be designed to burn. Included are some common materials used in incendiary devices: gasoline, iodine crystals, magnesium, glycerin, and aluminum powder.

Because of the vast variety of explosives and incendiary materials, any **unknown** solid, powder, crystal, or liquid should be treated with respect and not handled.

Where IEDs Can Be Placed

IEDs may be placed anywhere. A bomber wants to succeed without being caught. The level of security and the awareness of personnel will determine where and how an IED will be placed. Common areas where IEDs might be placed include:

Outside areas: trash cans, dumpsters, mailboxes, bushes, storage areas, and parked vehicles.

Inside buildings: mail rooms, restrooms, trash cans, planters, inside desks or storage containers, false ceilings, utility closets, areas hidden by drapes or curtains, behind pictures, boiler rooms, under stairwells, recently repaired or patched segments of walls, floors, or ceilings, or in plain view.

In the event that a suspicious device is found, notify the proper authorities in accordance with existing bomb threat procedures. Security personnel should initiate and coordinate the evacuation in accordance with existing procedures, if necessary. Prior to their arrival, immediate actions should be taken.

- ◆ Using adequate cover (frontal and overhead) get as far away from the device as possible. **Do not panic!**
- ◆ Keep away from glass windows that can become lethal fragmentation.
- ◆ If the device is located outside the building, get low to the floor and go to the other side. **Do not look out the window to see what is going on!**

- ◆ Increasing your distance from a suspicious device increases the chances of survival after a detonation.

WARNING!

Secondary devices are always a possibility. A common tactic is to detonate a device attracting a crowd, then detonate a second device to inflict heavy casualties.

Appendix A

Auto Search Checklist

How to search

- ◆ Start with a 360° sweep, looking around and under vehicle. Do not focus your attention on the vehicle to be searched. Be alert for booby traps and secondary devices. Inspect the area for suspicious items such as wire, tape or string. You may spot a suspicious object underneath or attached to the vehicle without approaching it.
- ◆ Be systematic—start and finish your search at a predetermined point

Look for

- ◆ Suspicious packages or items in, on, attached or under the vehicle
- ◆ Tool marks on vehicle or other indications of forced entry

Where to search

- ◆ Exterior
 - Exhaust pipe (insure nothing inside)
 - Inspect the gas tank
 - Fuel entry point and neck of fuel tank
 - Underneath the vehicle
 - Wheel wells, tires and brakes
- ◆ Interior
 - Under the seats front and rear
 - Under dashboard, driver's side and passenger side
 - Under the headrest
 - Sun visor
 - Any areas where you think a bomb could be concealed

WARNING!

Do not sit in or move the vehicle prior to searching the engine and trunk compartments.

◆ Engine compartment

- Raise hood slowly while searching for hanging wires, tape, or packages attached to the underside
- Check the battery and wiring
- Scan the firewall (rear wall of engine compartment)
- Open the air cleaner
- Be familiar with the general appearance of an engine and components

◆ Trunk or luggage storage area

- Slowly raise the trunk while inspecting underside for suspicious items such as wires, string or packages
- Inspect rear wall of trunk (back or rear seat)
- Inspect wiring on rear light assemblies
- Check spare tire (let a little air out)

Appendix B

Building and Room Searches

The search should be systematic thorough and quick. Two-person search teams, people most familiar with the building or room, have proven to be the most effective and efficient method.

How to search

- ◆ Do not alter existing environmental conditions.
 - Listen for suspicious or unusual sounds after entering the room, background noise may mask sounds such as ticking or buzzing
 - **Because a radio-controlled device may be present and pick up on stray RF, as well as pose a hazard to electric blasting caps, do not use hand-held radios for communication within 35 feet of suspicious items or areas not properly searched and cleared**
- ◆ Prior to entering a room and during a search, check for trip wires, and possible indications of pressure-sensitive devices
- ◆ Be systematic. Using one's body as a reference, search from floor to waist, from waist to chin, from chin to ceiling. Do not forget to check false ceilings if applicable
- ◆ Inspect wall hangings, plants, or other decorations

If a suspect item is encountered

- ◆ Evacuate and secure the area
- ◆ Notify the proper authorities in accordance with your existing bomb plan

THIS IS A SAMPLE TELEPHONE BOMB THREAT REPORT FORM. YOU SHOULD ADAPT THIS FORM TO MEET THE SPECIFIC NEEDS OF YOUR POST OR FACILITY.

TELEPHONE BOMB THREAT REPORT FORM

INSTRUCTIONS: BE CALM AND COURTEOUS. LISTEN; DO NOT INTERRUPT THE CALLER. NOTIFY SUPERVISOR/SECURITY OFFICER OF YOUR ACTIVITY BY PREARRANGED SIGNAL WHILE CALLER IS ON THE LINE.

DATE _____ TIME _____

EXACT WORDING OF THREAT:

QUESTIONS TO ASK:

WHEN IS THE BOMB GOING TO EXPLODE?

WHERE IS THE BOMB RIGHT NOW?

WHAT KIND OF BOMB IS IT?

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE?

WHAT WILL CAUSE THE BOMB TO EXPLODE?

DID YOU PLACE THE BOMB?

WHY?

WHAT IS YOUR NAME?

ARE YOU CALLING FROM A PAY PHONE?

LOCATION AND/OR NUMBER

SEX OF CALLER:

M

F

RACE OF CALLER:

AGE OF CALLER:

CALLER'S VOICE

- | | | |
|--|---|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> CALM | <input type="checkbox"/> ACCENT | <input type="checkbox"/> DISGUISED |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SLOW | <input type="checkbox"/> ANGRY | <input type="checkbox"/> FAMILIAR |
| <input type="checkbox"/> LOUD | <input type="checkbox"/> RAPID | <input type="checkbox"/> EXCITED |
| <input type="checkbox"/> NORMAL | <input type="checkbox"/> LAUGHTER | <input type="checkbox"/> SOFT |
| <input type="checkbox"/> NASAL | <input type="checkbox"/> DISTINCT | <input type="checkbox"/> CRYING |
| <input type="checkbox"/> RASPY | <input type="checkbox"/> STUTTER | <input type="checkbox"/> SLURRED |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CLEARING THROAT | <input type="checkbox"/> DEEP | <input type="checkbox"/> LISP |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CRACKING VOICE | <input type="checkbox"/> DEEP BREATHING | <input type="checkbox"/> RAGGED |

BACKGROUND SOUNDS

- | | | |
|--|---|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> STREET NOISES | <input type="checkbox"/> LONG DISTANCE | <input type="checkbox"/> BOOTH |
| <input type="checkbox"/> PA SYSTEM | <input type="checkbox"/> CROCKERY | <input type="checkbox"/> VOICES |
| <input type="checkbox"/> MOTOR | <input type="checkbox"/> OFFICE MACHINERY | <input type="checkbox"/> STATIC |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FACTORY MACHINERY | <input type="checkbox"/> ANIMAL NOISES | <input type="checkbox"/> LOCAL |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CLEAR | <input type="checkbox"/> HOUSE NOISES | <input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC |

THREAT LANGUAGE

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> WELL SPOKEN (EDUCATED) | <input type="checkbox"/> FOUL |
| <input type="checkbox"/> IRRATIONAL | <input type="checkbox"/> TAPED |
| <input type="checkbox"/> MESSAGE READ BY THREAT MAKER | <input type="checkbox"/> INCOHERENT |

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE CALL, NOTIFY YOUR SUPERVISOR/SECURITY OFFICER AS INSTRUCTED. TALK TO NO ONE OTHER THAN INSTRUCTED BY YOUR SUPERVISOR/SECURITY OFFICER.

RECEIVING TELEPHONE NUMBER

PERSON RECEIVING CALL