

Bomb Scare Procedures

1. POLICY STATEMENT

This policy and procedure should be read in conjunction with the College's Fire Policies and Health and Safety Policy

The receipt or setting of explosive or other potential dangerous devices (bomb threats) is a potential hazard in all premises. The consequence of an incident within the College could be potentially serious. The aim at all times must be to ensure that effective procedures are in place and are clearly understood to ensure, so far as it is reasonably practicable, the safety of students, staff and visitors. All College staff has a responsibility to observe the Bomb Threat Policy and Procedure at all times. It is imperative that all staff understand what to do in the event of a bomb threat to ensure the safety of their colleagues, students, the general public and themselves.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES FOR BOMB THREATS PRECAUTIONS

The Institute Director has overall responsibility for managing all bomb threat situations within the College. To assist the Institute Director, the responsibility for the supervision of day to day precautions and the co-ordination of staff action in a bomb threat emergency is delegated to the Deputy Director.

3. INSTITUTE DIRECTOR or NOMINATED DEPUTY

The Institute Director, or in his absence, the Deputy Director, is responsible for the:

- Implementation of the procedures and precautions when dealing with bomb threats.
- Ensuring that all staff receive the necessary training and clearly understand the procedures for bomb threats.
- Co-ordinating and directing students, the general public and staff in the event of a bomb threat.
- Reporting all bomb threat incidents to the police.

4. STAFF

Staff has responsibility:

- To know what to do in the event of a bomb threat and take appropriate action.
- To know what to do if a suspicious package/letter is discovered and take appropriate action.
- To participate in bomb alert training and evacuation.

Foyle International Ltd. 17-21 Magazine Street, Derry, BT48 6HH

Tel: +44 2871 371 535 Fax: +44 2871 371 534 Email: info@foyle.eu Website: www.foyle.eu

5. INSTRUCTION TO STAFF IN THE EVENT OF A BOMB THREAT ALERT

These instructions set out the procedure to be adopted in the event of a bomb threat becoming apparent in any of the College buildings or properties

All actions resulting from a bomb threat will be co-ordinated by the Institute Director or, in his absence, the Deputy Director.

6. DEALING WITH TELEPHONE WARNINGS

Terrorists, militants, extremists (e.g. Animal Rights, etc) frequently, but not always, give telephone warnings of bomb explosions. So, unfortunately, do hoaxers whose threats are empty. A warning may be received that any of the College premises are at risk. In such cases we will have to decide how to respond. In particular we will have to decide whether to evacuate the premises. In all cases, whether or not the person receiving the call considers the threat to be credible, they should:

- Telephone the Police immediately
- Search the premises
- Consider whether to evacuate the premises

In all cases it is important to telephone the Police immediately with details of the call.

Responding to warning calls often involves making difficult decisions. What is often overlooked, however, is how important and yet how difficult it is to obtain the maximum amount of useful information from the call. The following advice is designed to help in this.

Who to inform:

It is most likely that the administrator or receptionist will be most likely have to deal with telephone bomb warnings but any member of staff who has a direct line might also receive a threat. All should therefore know what to do if they receive a threatening call. The four key rules are:

- Keep calm
- Try to obtain as much information as possible from the call
- Make a note of the details on the caller display or use the '1471' Facility, if available
- Report the call to the Institute Director or Deputy Director

OBTAIN INFORMATION

The caller may ring off immediately after giving the message, but whoever takes the call should nevertheless try to get a response to the following questions and write down the answers.

- Where is the bomb?
- What time will it go off?
- What does it look like?
- Why are you doing it?

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THE PERSON RECEIVING THE CALL SHOULD ALSO

- Caller
Is it a man, woman or child?
- The speech
Is it intoxicated, rambling or irrational? Has it a distinctive accent? Was the caller laughing? Did the caller have a speech impediment?
- Distraction
Is the call from a public call box or private phone? Is there background noise, such as a train, aeroplane, traffic or possibly conversations, music that may indicate a public house or other place of entertainment? In order to help with this task, the form (in Appendix A) sets out the points mentioned above. A copy should be kept, easily to hand, in the office. Make a note of the details shown on the caller display, if available, or use the '1471' facility afterwards if this service is available.

7. SEARCH

Searches may be undertaken as a matter of routine or in response to a specific warning. It is not always necessary to evacuate the premises before carrying out a search.

8. POLICE POLICY

It is helpful to know and understand Police Policy on 'Search and Evacuation' and the Police role in dealing with bomb threats.

Normally, the Police will not themselves search a building following receipt of a bomb threat.

This is for two good reasons.

Firstly, Police are unlikely to know the layout of the premises and the various places in which a device could be concealed. College staff will know the layout of the premises, and be able to search more quickly and more thoroughly

Secondly, the Police, unlike your staff, will not know what should be there. Consequently they will not so easily be able to spot anything which is out of place.

In all cases where a bomb threat is received, the Institute Director, or nominated Deputy should immediately inform the Police and advise them of what action is being taken.

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