

Explosives Post-Blast Response

Situational Awareness Considerations

Post-blast (or post-detonation) response takes place after an explosion has occurred. An explosives event has the potential to overwhelm first responders due to the large number of victims, fatalities and property destruction. Situational Awareness Considerations discusses what emergency responders and military personnel need to know in order to respond and operate safely at a terrorist or criminal bombing.

DISPATCH AND RESPONSE PHASE

- When responding get all the dispatch information available. Nature of the call and location are important.
- **Standard guidelines against the use of cell phones and radios may not be applicable during an actual "explosion". There will be an overriding need for a rapid and coordinated response. If possible do not use radios within 150 feet of the blast site and use other resources such as runners in the "hot zone".**

ARRIVAL ON SCENE

- Proceed with extreme caution for your own safety.
- Slow down when approaching the area and conduct a 360-degree scan during your scene-size up or "windshield survey".
- Look for objects and people that seem out of place for the location or time of the call - if it looks suspicious be cautious.
- Use Staging Areas to limit number of responders - don't stack up responders and resources in one location.
- Law enforcement should immediately disperse any crowds, establish an outer security perimeter and retain witnesses.
- Avoid entering blast impact areas (Hot Zone) unless it is necessary to save lives.
- ***ALWAYS BE AWARE OF SECONDARY DEVICES!***

APPROACHING THE AREA

- Rapidly implement the Incident Command System (ICS) and necessary components (Unified Command, Safety Officer, etc.)
- Establish hazard Control Zones around the incident (Hot, Warm, and Cold) blast site is the "hot zone".
- Always have an escape route open to leave the scene quickly if needed.
- All responders should wear all available Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
- Trained bomb technicians and explosive canines should search for secondary explosive devices during and after the response as soon as possible.
- Appropriate agencies – Fire, EMS, Law Enforcement, specialized bomb personnel, Emergency Management, and hospitals should be notified as

soon as possible if there is a report of an explosives incident or possible explosives incident.

- ***BE VERY CAUTIOUS OF ANY ITEMS THAT AROUSE YOUR CURIOSITY!***

RESPONSE OPERATIONS

- Law Enforcement will need to prioritize force protection resources around areas of critical operations and the scene.
- An explosives incident has the potential for large number of victims with very traumatic injuries.
- Searching beyond the immediate blast scene for victims unable to call for help. This may be especially needed in dense urban environments, where persons injured in upper stories of building or injured/affected (directly by the attack or others suffering a health condition).
- Some seriously injured victims may have no visible wounds and some victims may be beyond help.
- Quickly remove victims from the area and render aid in a secure location. Triage must be conducted outside the hazard area. The use of SKEDS, litters or backboards is recommended.
- EMS may need to implement disaster procedures such as triage tags, casualty collection points (CCP) and field treatment areas for minor injuries.
- Implement local mass-casualty/mass-fatality procedures.
- Triage will be conducted at least twice, once at the blast scene and again at the hospital.
- Expect numerous types of injuries from traumatic injuries, blast pressure or internal injuries, burns and shrapnel.
- Responders must immediately monitor for other hazards such as chemical agents, gases or radioactive materials.
- If a vehicle or structural fire is involved, Fire agencies should conduct a rapid knockdown while considering evidence.
- Be aware of secondary hazards such as unstable structures, damaged utilities, hanging debris, void spaces and other physical hazards.
- Consider the need for other assets such as Urban Search and Rescue, Hazardous Materials Teams, Incident Management Teams, etc.
- **If a suicide bombing incident and the suspect is neutralized and there is no explosion, DO NOT render aid to the suspect.** The suspect may only be injured and a handler or associate could still detonate the device. *Bomb squad personnel or a robot should be the first to approach a bomber or suspected bomber.*
- ***Be aware of the possibility of secondary devices and attacks. This type of event has targeted responders.***

CRIME SCENE CONSIDERATIONS

- Establish as large a crime scene perimeter as possible as rule of thumb for the perimeter is to extend the perimeter 50% from where the farthest piece of evidence is located.
- Make immediate notifications of local, state and federal resources.

- Ensure that responders preserve possible evidence for subsequent criminal and forensic investigations.
- Plan on an intensive media response and appoint a Public Information Officer (PIO) as soon as possible.
- Law enforcement will need to respond to hospitals as evidence can be recovered from victims living and dead.
- Plan on an extensive, multi-day crime scene investigation.
- Local **Emergency Operations Center (EOC)** should be activated as soon as possible for long term response, recovery, management, investigative and local, state and federal support efforts.
- Joint Information Center (**JIC**) should be established involving all key agencies and players to manage the local and national media efforts.

DO NOT ATTEMPT TO APPROACH, MOVE, HANDLE OR DISARM A CONFIRMED OR SUSPECTED IED; THIS IS A JOB FOR SPECIALLY TRAINED PERSONNEL.

All information is OPEN SOURCE and based on the latest reporting and assessments. Please remember this information should be used only as an educational guide and responders should always follow their local training, guidelines and procedures.

This awareness guide is designed to help responders understand the nature of ***current*** and ***emerging*** threats. It is for use by U.S. public safety agencies, military and special operations assets such as those with critical infrastructure protection, tactical teams, bombs squads, weapons of mass destruction, fusion centers and others.

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