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# SUSPICIOUS PACKAGE RESPONSE PLANNING GUIDE



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# **SUSPICIOUS PACKAGE RESPONSE PLANNING GUIDE**

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**March 2003**

## PURPOSE AND DISCLAIMER

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This document is intended to provide guidance and suggested responses to the threat of suspicious packages or envelopes that may be detected in the workplace. The guidelines and response protocols contained in this document may be used for planning and managing incidents involving a suspicious package and should be customized to deal with specific building requirements.

While federal legislation forms a basis for these guidelines, users of this document must ensure they also comply with provincial legislation and regulations. Local first responders should also be consulted with respect to local requirements.

Although every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the contents, response protocols continue to evolve. Anyone using the information contained in this document does so at their own risk and the Government of Canada shall not be liable for any damages, claims, costs or obligations arising from the use or misuse of the material in this document.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Solicitor General Canada would like to thank Health Canada for providing the base document from which a Government of Canada inter-departmental committee, and also including representatives of the National Capital CBRN Response Committee (fire, public health, emergency medical and base hospital services), developed the present document.

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# SUSPICIOUS PACKAGE RESPONSE PLAN

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## GENERIC MODEL

Name of building  
Street address  
City, Province, Postal Code

## APPROVAL

Responsible Building Authority (RBA):

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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## DISTRIBUTION

Responsible Building Authority (RBA)  
Building Suspicious Package Response Team Coordinator and Deputies  
Building Chief Fire Emergency Wardens and Deputy  
Local Facilities Management Division  
HAZMAT Spill Response Team Coordinator(s) (if applicable)  
Building's Management (if privately owned building)



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**ESSENTIAL INFORMATION PAGES  
(TO BE COMPLETED BY PLANNERS)**

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## SUSPICIOUS PACKAGE RESPONSE PERSONNEL

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<b>Title/Role</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Telephone (Office, Home Cellular, Pager)</b>
Suspicious Package Response Coordinator			
Deputy Coordinator			
Team Members			
Chief Fire Emergency Warden			
Building's Management			
Responsible Building Authority (RBA) or Alternate			
Safety and Security			

## EMERGENCY PHONE LIST

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Contact	Office	Home	Cellular	Pager
Ambulance	911			
Fire Department	911			
Police	911			
CANUTEC Dangerous Goods Emergency (HAZMAT spills)	996-6666			
Environment Canada, National Environmental Emergency Centre	997-3742			
Municipality				
Building's Chief Fire Emergency Warden				
Building's Deputy Fire Emergency Officer				
Building's Management Division				
Responsible Building Authority (RBA)  Name: Title/Branch: Work Location:				
Security Guard Desk				
Security Operations Centre				

## **BUILDING DATA**

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Type of Building: \_\_\_\_\_  
(specify, e.g., administrative, laboratory)

Building Height: The height of this building is \_\_\_\_\_ m / ft., \_\_\_\_\_ stories.  
(specify)

Occupant Load: During building core operational hours, the approximate building occupant load is \_\_\_\_\_  
(specify)

Parking: Location: \_\_\_\_\_  
(specify)

Number of underground parking levels in this facility: \_\_\_\_\_  
(specify)

Vehicle capacity: \_\_\_\_\_  
(specify)

## **CORE HOURS OF OPERATION**

The core hours of operation for this building are:

\_\_\_\_\_  
(specify, including days of the week)

The building's Fire Emergency Organization operates only during the core hours of operations. Outside of the core hours of operation, the method of evacuation will be immediate and total evacuation.

## **ACCESS KEYS AND CODES**

All the required keys and codes will be made available to the Police and Fire services on their arrival. All keys are to be properly identified. Keys and codes for Police and Fire service use are kept at the following location:

\_\_\_\_\_  
(location)

## **BUILDING SECURITY**

Contact the Safety and Security Office at: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Telephone number)





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## **PART ONE**

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### **SUSPICIOUS PACKAGE RESPONSE PLANNING**



## INTRODUCTION

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Threats are a fact of life in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century. They vary in scale from global to more localized threats and may be directed at corporate installations or at specific individuals. Whether real or perceived, threats pose serious safety concerns and have the potential to disrupt normal operations.

In every instance, the paramount consideration is the health, safety and security of occupants of the building. The *Canada Labour Code* and other Acts and Regulations stipulate the obligations of employers, and others responsible for building occupants, to plan for emergencies and to practice “due diligence” to reduce hazards and risks in the workplace. Thus, all possible actions and precautions must be taken. In case of doubt, the safest course is to err on the side of caution.

The procedures described in this document were established and implemented in compliance with *Part II of the Canada Labour Code*, *Part XVII of the Canada Occupational Safety and Health Regulations*, and the requirements of the *National Fire Code of Canada* regarding emergency planning. This document assumes that the following practices and procedures are implemented:

- The Responsible Building Authority (RBA), (the senior ranking official of the corporation, company, department or agency with the largest number of persons occupying space in a building or facility) is responsible for the preparation and administration of the building’s Fire Safety Plan. The RBA is to be located in the building;
- As part of the Fire Safety Plan, a Building Fire Emergency Organization (BFEO) is established, staffed by occupants of the building and headed by a Building Chief Fire Emergency Warden (BCFEW), usually appointed by the RBA. The BCFEW and his BFEO are responsible for fire emergency planning and response, and the safe evacuation of occupants from the facility in all emergency situations. It follows that all building-related emergency response planning, including those related to suspicious package response, should be either conducted by, or with the Building Fire Emergency Organization;
- To this end, the RBA appoints a Coordinator to oversee the preparation and implementation of a Building Suspicious Package Response Plan, and the staffing and training of a Building Suspicious Package Response Team. Rather than establishing a separate team, the Building Fire Emergency Organization could be trained in suspicious package response; and
- Local “First Responders” (police, fire, public health and emergency medical services) are consulted to ensure that any suspicious package response plans complement those of the local “First Response” teams.

Detailed direction will assist each employee to fulfill his/her obligation to be knowledgeable about the corporate procedures for safely responding to suspicious packages or envelopes, and to be

vigilant. They will also guide officials tasked with the preparation and implementation of emergency response procedures in the workplace (RBAs, security officers, emergency response teams and managers). Lastly, proper procedures will protect the scene to assist local First Responders in their work and in collection of crime-scene evidence.

An incident that involves a suspicious package or envelope may call for reactions that differ from normal security measures. For example, the traditional security response of going directly to the scene may be the wrong action to take, considering that suspicious packages may contain explosives or emit chemical's or other agents that could dissipate into the immediate area. Similarly, transporting a suspicious package may not be advisable because of the possibility of spreading contamination, even if it is felt that a more secure location would be preferable to minimize harmful effects. Therefore, plans for responding to suspicious packages must be well thought out and not merely a carbon copy of plans for other emergencies.

## TYPE OF SUSPICIOUS PACKAGES

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A suspicious package is just that—a package or envelope found or received, normally by mail or courier or delivered in person, which arouses the suspicion of the receiver because of some indicator or indicators. It may or may not be preceded by letter or telephone threats or warnings. It may simply be poorly addressed, or it may be a hoax. Conversely, it may contain an explosive device, a chemical agent, a biological agent or a radioactive substance. Each type of suspicious package poses separate difficulties.

### **Explosive Devices**

In the case of explosive devices, the suspicious package can take many forms. It may be in the form of a bulky letter, a small or large package, a briefcase, or a common item as large as a propane tank or as small as a lightbulb. Because triggering mechanisms for an explosive detonation are often connected to the act of opening the package or envelope, handling of the package should be minimized. Given that the package has survived intact to its point of destination, danger should not normally increase if it is left alone and kept still until appropriate authorities can deal with it.

### **Chemical Agents**

Chemical agents or toxic compounds contained in a suspicious package or envelope will frequently be disseminated simply by opening the package. Suspicious packages containing chemical compounds may be identifiable by unusual odours or stains caused by leaking liquid or powder. The onset of symptoms related to exposure to a chemical agent will normally be rapid (from seconds to minutes after exposure) and symptoms will manifest themselves in a number of observable ways: rash or sensitivity of the skin, blistering of exposed skin, nausea, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, dizziness or loss of consciousness. Prompt action is necessary to stop the spread of contamination and to treat affected victims.

### **Radiological Agents**

In the case of radioactive agents, there may be no overt sign that the package or envelope contains a threatening substance. Radioactive substances may be solid or liquid. These materials are not easily detected by the senses, e.g. smell, but they can be detected with radiation detection equipment. Often, symptoms will not occur until some days after exposure: they may include nausea, malaise or more dramatic effects, depending on the extent of exposure. In most cases, there will be no effective protection at hand; the best defence is to put distance between the radioactive agent and personnel at risk.

## **Biological Agents**

Suspicious packages containing biological agents may be more difficult to detect. The biological agent may be in a similar form to those normally handled—powder, liquids or aerosol sprays. Normally, biological agents are colourless and odourless, perhaps even invisible. Reaction to them may not be apparent until hours or even days after contact. Typically, victims feel the onset of influenza-like symptoms that may develop into a serious or fatal illness. Packages that are even remotely suspected of containing biological agents should not be handled.

## GETTING STARTED

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Proper planning can save lives, prevent injuries and assist with the proper investigation of incidents. An effective Building Suspicious Package Response Plan with clear directives for each building can limit the exposure of staff and the facility in the event that a suspicious package is received. It also helps to have a command-and-control structure in place that is prepared to deal with the receipt of a suspicious package. Knowing who does what is critical for effective management.

### **Developing a Building Suspicious Package Response Plan**

The RBA appoints a Building Suspicious Package Response Team Coordinator (usually with the assistance of the building's Chief Fire Emergency Warden), who will develop and maintain a plan to respond to any indication of a suspicious package. This plan will be reviewed and approved by all stakeholders (or their representative) in the workplace and by other interested or participating agencies, including local police, fire and emergency medical services. Specific attention should be paid to liaison with local bomb disposal units and Hazardous Material (HAZMAT) units.

In the event of an incident involving a suspicious package, the Building Suspicious Package Response Team Coordinator will assume responsibility and control of the building's suspicious package response until the arrival of the First Responders. At that time, the Incident Commander (the responsible member of the First Responder team) will assume responsibility.

The Building Suspicious Package Response Plan will be maintained at:

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*(specify location)*

The Building Suspicious Package Response Plan is issued under the authority of the RBA in accordance with the *Canada Labour Code*, Part II, the Canada Occupational Safety and Health Regulations, Part 17, and (insert relevant provincial legislation and regulations, and any relevant municipal requirements). It will be used with the Building Fire Emergency Plan. Regardless of the reason, the Building Chief Fire Emergency Warden (BCFEW) is responsible for control of all evacuations (emergency or precautionary) of the facility.

### **Training and Employee Awareness**

The Building Suspicious Package Response Team Coordinator will ensure the establishment and training of a Building Suspicious Package Response Team. Further, the Coordinator will also

ensure that all employees are informed of the procedures they are to follow should they encounter a suspicious package. The police service and other local emergency responders (Fire Services and Emergency Medical Response Services) are usually willing and able to assist in increasing employee awareness by providing information, advice and training. Ongoing education and frequent precautionary drills will help employees to remain alert for potential incidents and to be prepared to carry out their responsibilities smoothly should an emergency arise.

### **Threat and Risk Assessment (TRA)**

Before establishing a Building Suspicious Package Response Plan, a threat and risk assessment (TRA) should be conducted for each workplace. The TRA is an integral part of risk reduction that informs management of the overall status of mission-critical resources, including confidentiality, integrity and availability, and advises on security and risk-management strategies. A TRA should be done by Building Safety and Security Officials, in consultation with lead agencies such as local Police and Fire Services. It should take into account any incidents that have been recorded in the past and make a determination as to whether there will be a greater likelihood of hoaxes or actual threats. The TRA must be realistic; it should record the type of activity or business conducted in the building and adjoining areas, any identified threats and the potential impact on the building and its occupants, as well as on the provision of service to the public. It should also consider the effect of potential media response to an incident.

#### *Security Threat Considerations*

Threats to the physical security of the building should be assessed, including the vulnerability of environmental systems—heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC)—in the building. Public and service access points (public entrances, delivery docks and access doors to service elevators, etc.) and routine security surveillance measures currently in effect (cameras, patrols, locked doors, etc.) that cover these areas should also be assessed. In addition, the capability to communicate throughout the building may be a paramount consideration in cases where partial evacuation is desirable, or when announcements are required to inform employees about the situation.

Knowledge of the building's HVAC systems and access points is critical to evaluate areas at risk, to prohibit unauthorized entry and to prevent the dispersal of contaminants, particularly chemical and biological agents, from suspicious packages. These agents may disseminate quickly through building ventilation systems. In addition to HVAC systems, unintentional circulation systems such as utility pipes, cooling towers, sewer vent pipes, lavatory exhaust pipes, elevator shafts, stairwells and garbage chutes must be checked. Suitable notice should be taken of the building “stack effect,” the normal circulation of air via doors, lobbies and utility entrances, independent of formal HVAC systems.



### *Mail System Designs*

The optimal protection against the threat of suspicious packages involves restricting access to the internal system. Managers can minimize risk by:

- establishing a central reception area for parcels and deliveries;
- examining delivery systems to prevent couriers/deliveries from bypassing security checks;
- establishing control procedures for parcel pick-up/delivery;
- ensuring, where possible, that deliveries are expected and couriers/delivery persons are vetted;
- reviewing access points for potential weaknesses/vulnerabilities;
- assessing the location and design of mail and shipping/receiving areas (wherever possible, mail rooms should not be located in the same building as critical functions or systems, such as the Chief Executive Officer's office, or Information Technology [IT] Local Area Networks [LAN] room or intake vents for the HVAC); and
- constructing protective measures, such as reinforced walls or doors, that reduce the effect of potential threats.

### *Awareness of Previous Incidents*

For maximum awareness training of those with a need to know, (security, mailroom personnel) characteristics of any warnings received, previous attempts to insert suspicious packages or envelopes into a mail system, or descriptions of suspicious couriers should be made available. For instance, advise if:

- suspicious packages or envelopes have previously been hand-delivered or come by regular mail;
- certain delivery persons have shown a marked reluctance to remain in the area when delivering parcels;
- warnings have been received previously or other suspicious packages have come unannounced; and
- specific offices or individuals (for example, the Chief Executive Officer) have been targeted in the past or in a previous workplace.



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## **PART TWO**

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### **PLANNING AND PREPAREDNESS RESPONSIBILITIES**



## OVERALL RESPONSIBILITIES

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Risks surrounding the arrival of a suspicious package can be minimized by alert and vigilant staff even without the aid of special detection equipment. An employee can identify items that warrant closer investigation through a simple visual inspection, performed without handling the package. Vigilance and reporting of suspicious packages are the responsibilities of each employee. All reports of threats and suspicious packages should be taken seriously. Knowing and adhering to procedures for handling suspicious packages will protect the health, safety and security of employees and others in the surrounding area and will preserve intact the evidence relating to the package and its contents.

## INTERNAL RESPONSIBILITIES

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### **Responsible Building Authority (RBA)**

The main function of the RBA is to ensure that the workplace is safe and secure and that Emergency Response Plans are established and working according to legislative requirements.

Additionally, the RBA, can:

- appoint a Building Suspicious Package Response Team Coordinator;
- supervise the preparation of the Building Suspicious Package Response Plan in consultation with the Building Chief Fire Emergency Warden and the Workplace Occupational Safety and Health Committee;
- control the assignment of functions of Building Suspicious Package Response Team members;
- delegate appropriate authorities;
- authorize the full or partial evacuation of the building in situations that put employees at risk;
- time permitting, keep the Workplace Occupational Safety and Health Committee apprised; and
- be prepared to assist by closing down access to the building or re-routing or shutting down air circulation systems.

### **Managers**

Managers need to assess the risk for their employees. In most cases, the recipient of a suspicious package will be a central mailroom, handling facility or executive correspondence unit. Subsequently, the addressee or another individual working in the same area will be most likely to receive and open the suspicious package and most at risk to exposure from a released agent. Therefore, managers must ensure that all employees who may be exposed to such an incident are aware of the characteristics that identify a suspicious package and the appropriate procedures to follow should they encounter one. Managers must constantly remind employees of the proper action to take in incidents involving a suspicious package. Maximum use should be made of general notices, particularly in susceptible areas.

## **Employees**

To ensure proper action is taken when a suspicious package is detected, all employees must familiarize themselves with the immediate actions to take in such a situation. They must have a basic knowledge of the indicators of suspicious packages (see Part Three), the appropriate action to take to minimize danger to themselves and their colleagues, and whom to contact to report their suspicions. Finally, they should have a general knowledge of the effects of potential threats and what sort of treatment to seek in an incident.

Particular emphasis should be placed on training personnel in mailroom operations, shipping and receiving areas, executive correspondence units, and secretarial or administrative staff in offices of senior management.

Unidentified containers or work-related equipment (such as briefcases, gym bags, cardboard boxes, tool boxes, unused laboratory equipment and construction debris) are items that may be considered suspicious, especially when left unattended or without appropriate markings. Therefore, all employees must be aware that good housekeeping practices, appropriate storage of personal belongings and proper disposal of equipment and debris will reduce the likelihood of objects being incorrectly treated as suspicious.

## **Building Suspicious Package Response Teams**

All Building Suspicious Package Response Team members must have a copy of the plan and be aware of its contents and their commensurate responsibilities.

## **Planning Responsibilities of Building Suspicious Package Response Team Coordinator**

The Suspicious Package Response Team Coordinator is responsible for:

- preparing, establishing, administering, testing and reviewing the Building Suspicious Package Response Plan;
- advising the RBA and, where time permits, the Workplace Occupational Health and Safety Committee on matters relating to incidents involving suspicious packages, including the need to evacuate the facility;
- preparing, and if necessary, managing the Building Fire Emergency Event Control Centre, established in compliance with the Building Fire Emergency Response Plan;
- liaising with the Building Fire Emergency Organization to ensure that effective, rapid and smooth evacuation procedures are in place;

- being prepared to assist the police and other local emergency responders on their arrival for a suspicious package incident;
- selecting and submitting the name of a Deputy Building Suspicious Packages Response Team Coordinator to the RBA for approval;
- recruiting other Building Suspicious Package Response Team members;
- notifying the RBA, in writing, of the departure of team members and recommending suitable replacements;
- advising the RBA and Deputy Building Suspicious Package Response Team Coordinator of his/her absence from the building for more than one day including a briefing on any business continuity issues;
- ensuring that the Building Suspicious Package Response Team is aware of the chain of command and can act effectively when there are absences for any reason;
- ensuring that the Building Suspicious Package Response Team has the required equipment (Appendix B);
- ensuring the required building keys and door access codes are available and updated;
- ensuring emergency training is performed periodically;
- when requested, participating as a member of the building's Workplace Occupational Health and Safety Committee; and
- identifying, before an incident occurs, a designated meeting place for evacuees, a temporary shelter in case of inclement weather and a first aid post/nursing station.

### **Safety and Security Office**

The Safety and Security Office is a key element in assisting RBAs to prepare the Threat and Risk Assessment (see page 22). Safety and Security Officials will provide input from a variety of sources to help establish the level of threat or risk to the facility. They may be able to arrange physical security inspections. In the case of an incident involving a suspicious package, the Safety and Security Office should be informed and, if necessary, its advice sought concerning procedures and action to be taken. In many cases, Safety and Security Officials will not be “on site”—communication with them may be by telephone or via the First Responders (Fire, Police Services).



## **Facilities and Building Management Personnel**

Personnel, including contractors, who are responsible for facilities and building management are integral to the planning and execution of a response plan. They must be consulted during the formulation of the plan so they can advise on the technical feasibility of actions suggested. They must also be prepared to take the appropriate actions required to respond quickly to an incident, including:

- shutdown of HVAC systems;
- securing entrances and exits; and/or
- cutting or restoring power.

## **Media Relations/Communications Branch Personnel**

An integral part of the Building Suspicious Package Response Plan is the Communications Plan. The BSPR Coordinator in conjunction with Media Relations/Communications Branch should prepare a comprehensive plan including Generic Press Releases and Generic Question and Answer briefs.

If an incident involving a suspicious package attracts or is likely to attract media attention, the RBA will contact Media Relations/Communications Branch (a duty officer should be available after hours) so that staff there may handle the situation or offer appropriate advice.

In addition to keeping management informed, attention should be paid to occupant and employee communications. For example, a communications unit could be called on to inform employees, and their families as appropriate, about the scope of the threat, including possible long-term effects and the need for, and type of, treatment (short or long term) recommended by medical or health authorities. This information should include clear and simple indications about symptoms employees should watch for and the appropriate action to take or treatment to seek. Specific medical facilities may be designated. Information of this type may be critical for employees and their families. It may be necessary to broadcast this information widely to reach all people potentially affected who may be unaware that they are at risk because they left the incident scene before the nature of the suspicious package was determined.

## **Workplace Occupational Health and Safety Committee Members**

The Workplace Occupational Health and Safety Committee reviews and provides input to the plan in the first instance. The committee can communicate any employee concerns to management and is the medium through which management can explain potential problem areas and details of the plan to employees.

If a suspicious package is received, and time permits, the RBA will advise the Workplace Occupational Health Committee, whose members are entitled to participate in all inquiries and investigations affecting the health and safety of all employees.

After an incident involving a suspicious package, the Committee will review and provide an assessment of the circumstances of the incident and the actions taken from an occupational health and safety perspective, with a view to suggesting improvements.

All organizations in mixed-occupancy buildings should be encouraged to participate in the Building Suspicious Packages Response Team and the training drills, whenever possible.

## **EQUIPMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

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### **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

The use of, and reliance on, personal protective equipment (PPE) such as masks, gloves, goggles and protective suits is not generally recommended. It is up to each organization to determine whether they should be available. However, the use of PPE may engender a false sense of security when, in fact, the available equipment may not provide adequate protection against every type of unknown agent. Organizations considering the use of PPE should consult with local First Responders. They may also be required by applicable legislation to consult with their Workplace Health and Safety Committees.

### **Communications**

The first and normal method of communicating will be by telephone. Telephone lines may be supplemented by cell phones only when the cell phone call is being initiated from a position isolated from the incident site. All personnel must have a list of critical numbers applicable to their needs. As a minimum, workplaces need to have readily available emergency numbers for First Responders (911 in most urban centres), for the Building Fire Emergency Organization and for the local building Safety and Security authorities. Telephones may be supplemented by dedicated radio communications where these are available and it is safe (no danger of explosives) to use them.

### **Hazardous Materials Spill Kits**

Fire department responders and HAZMAT teams will oversee the cleaning of the area and will not allow access to the site until the clean-up has been completed to their satisfaction.

### **Emergency Response Kits**

In many instances the First Responders will have appropriate supplies on hand or know how to access them; however, it is recommended that emergency response (ER) kits be available. ER kits usually include items such as extra clothing, blankets, emergency medical (first aid) supplies, building floor plans, ventilation plans and specifications, and critical phone numbers and contact lists.



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## **PART THREE**

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### **RESPONDING TO SUSPICIOUS PACKAGE INCIDENTS**



# EMPLOYEE RESPONSE PROTOCOL

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## Indicators

Effective training is important in determining whether a package is to be considered suspicious. It is also important for employees to exercise sound judgement. A suspicious package or envelope received by mail or courier could include one or a combination of the following indicators:

- unexpected delivery;
- packages misaddressed or sent to a generic title (e.g., “The CEO,”) instead of an individual’s name;
- unusual or unexpected point of origin;
- unusually restrictive markings (e.g., “rush”, “do not delay delivery”);
- excessive stamp postage as opposed to metered postage;
- blurred or missing postal stamp cancellation marks;
- unrecognizable or no return address or one that is obviously wrong;
- cut-and-paste lettering, improvised labels, obviously disguised scripts, homemade labels, poor typing, poor handwriting or spelling;
- excessive size, weight or thickness of package or envelope;
- unbalanced or lopsided letters and parcels;
- discolouration in the packaging caused by some sort of leak;
- oily or greasy stains on packaging;
- unusual odours such as almond, marzipan, machine oil or excessive perfume used to mask other smells;
- noise of ticking, sloshing or buzzing;
- feel of springiness or unusual stiffeners;
- metallic components, wires, batteries or loose contents in letters;
- small holes, protruding wire, string or metal foil;
- people unconscious or obviously ill;
- placed near a ventilation system;
- excessive wrapping, tape, staples or string; and
- packages wrapped using string or filament tape and having only one way to open them.

## FINDING A SUSPICIOUS PACKAGE

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If an unopened package looks suspicious and you cannot verify the contents with either the addressee or the sender:

- ☒ IF UNOPENED, DO NOT OPEN THE ARTICLE.
- ☒ ISOLATE the package and assume control by:
  - LEAVING it alone (do not move or touch it); if you are holding it, put it down on a hard, flat surface;
  - ENSURING no one else comes in contact with it;
  - ADVISING anyone who has come in contact with the package or substance not to brush powder or liquid off of their clothing or person, keep their hands away from their face and wash their hands, if possible, without leaving the area. (Keep a list of these people.);
  - SECURING all doors and access points (stairwells, hallways) that lead to the area where the package is situated. Minimize contact with unnecessary objects as much as possible (Have someone else open doors for you if possible);
  - TURNING OFF any fans, heaters, or equipment that is circulating air inside the immediate area.
- ☒ EVACUATE the immediate area to a safe distance.<sup>1</sup>
- ☒ WASH your hands with soap and water immediately if you have been in contact with a suspicious package or its contents (avoid touching anything, especially your face).
- ☒ REPORT all incidents as soon as possible to the Safety and Security Office or the building's Security Coordinator at: \_\_\_\_\_

*Phone Number (refer to attached contact list)*

**WHERE DANGER IS IMMINENT AND IMMEDIATE  
INTERVENTION IS REQUIRED,  
CALL 911 OR YOUR LOCAL POLICE AUTHORITY.  
THEN ADVISE THE SECURITY OFFICE.**

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<sup>1</sup> "Safe distance" should be determined as part of the planning process, in consultation with police and fire officials.



- ☑ DO NOT USE RADIOS OR CELLULAR PHONES when near a suspicious package.
- ☑ REMAIN in a nearby but safe location until your security or emergency representative arrives and await further instructions. Do not share incident information with individuals not directly affected.
- ☑ After assessing the situation, the security or emergency representative will contact the necessary agencies/authorities.
- ☑ The Suspicious Package Document History Form (Appendix A) will be completed in consultation with the recipient of the suspicious package.

# SECURITY RESPONSE PROTOCOL

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## **Building Suspicious Package Response Team Coordinator and Deputy**

- Establish contact with personnel in the location of the suspicious package and direct the Emergency Response.
- Ensure the isolation of the scene of the incident so that no unnecessary personnel approach the area. The coordinator should obtain a detailed description of the scene from the individual who received the package, if possible (e.g. by telephone, but not a cellular phone or radio). The Coordinator and his team may then relay instructions to the affected employees.
- Assess the precise nature of the suspicious package incident, to determine whether the Building Suspicious Package Response Team or outside emergency responders will be required. Attempt to ascertain the following information:
  - Validate return address through contact with sender and intended receiver;
  - Compare postmark to that of location for return address;
  - Check with courier/delivery means and confirm with shipper;
  - Are there any related threats associated to the incident (real, implied, verbal, written);
  - History of threats related to subject or premises;
  - Substance visible;
  - Nature of substance (powder, liquid, gaseous);
  - Signs of illness of those in contact with the package/letter or contents;
  - Are there likely reasons for suspicion;
  - Is there a likely or explainable source for the substance;
  - Were similar packages, letters or substances received in other areas;
  - Where has the package been in the building.
- Keep the RBA fully informed of threat to personnel or assets posed by the incident, including advice on need for police, fire or emergency medical services and whether evacuation (full or partial) is recommended. If the incident involves a potential explosive gas, caution should be exercised when activating the fire alarm or building communication system.
- Determine how the building will be affected, and whether other buildings/areas are at risk and if so, how, and for how long.
- Liaise with First Responders, briefing them completely on the situation, actions already taken, suspected dangers, and number and location of victims, including those in need of assistance. This task may be delegated to a deputy or another responsible person. In that

event, it is mandatory that the Coordinator maintain constant communication with the Incident Commander through the deputy.

- Ensure that Media Relations/Communications Branch personnel are kept informed of the situation.
- Ensure the building's occupants are kept informed of the situation, especially with regard to any potential hazards to their health and safety.
- Maintain a record of the names of persons evacuated from the building.

### **Suspicious Package Response Team Members**

- Report to the area designated by the Building Suspicious Package Response Team Coordinator. Note: This may NOT be the same as the location of the package.
- Provide advice concerning procedures to employees in the immediate area as directed by the Coordinator. Reassure employees on the periphery of the incident and move personnel to facilitate the First Responders' work. Every effort should be made to avoid rumours or misinformation that may lead to panic or incorrect response actions.
- Ensure that employees are aware that critical incident stress debriefings are available to those in need. They should be made available through public health resources in the community, corporate teams or employee assistance programs if they exist, to provide comfort and solace to employees and to assist them in re-adjusting to a normal working environment.
- Proceed with specified duties in relation to suspicious packages, including providing assistance to First Responders.
- Assist in any evacuation of the immediate area or other areas as directed.
- Attend to any injured persons, until they can be moved to a safe place or other emergency responders arrive to assist them.
- Communicate regularly with the Building Suspicious Package Response Team Coordinator throughout the incident.
- In the event of evacuation of the building, ensure the physical safety of the area as far as is practicable (e.g., turn off ignition sources, secure hazardous materials).
- Where there is a danger of airborne release of possibly hazardous materials, evacuees should be positioned upwind from the site of the incident.

- Ensure that traffic in the area is kept to a minimum so that emergency and security personnel can operate efficiently and safely.
- Protect the scene of the incident. An incident involving a suspicious package, including a hoax, may be a criminal act requiring investigation. Therefore, care must be taken, consistent with safety and medical precautions, to protect the scene of the incident for evidentiary reasons, before the arrival of First Responders and, if necessary, after their departure. Personnel should be encouraged to make themselves available to police and other investigators, both at the scene and during follow-up investigations.
- Conduct a post-incident debriefing of employees to ensure that as much information as possible is gleaned about the effectiveness of response plans and procedures.

### **Coordination with the Incident Commander**

The Building Suspicious Package Response Team Coordinator will assume control of the corporate response once informed of the situation. If fire, police and emergency medical services are called to the scene, a First Responder will assume the role of Incident Commander and will establish an Incident Command Post. The Incident Commander must be fully briefed on the situation at the earliest opportunity so that quick and accurate decisions can be made. The Incident Commander must be given access to all Building Suspicious Package Response Team information and personnel, including facilities and building management information and all information from witnesses to the incident. The Building Suspicious Package Response Team Coordinator will work with the Incident Commander and First Responders to assist them in their work.

The RBA will be kept apprised of the situation by the Building Suspicious Package Response Team Coordinator and will respond to the needs of the First Responders in the areas of evacuation, communications and facilities requirements.

As soon as possible, the RBA should also inform Business Continuity Planning Coordinators, if such positions have been established, and senior management about how long the building closure and the disruption to services is expected to last so that Business Continuity Planning Coordinators can determine the best course of action regarding business continuity plans.

### **Investigating and Reporting**

In most cases, First Responders will report to the necessary agencies as part of their normal routine operations. The Building Suspicious Package Response Team Coordinator will ensure that close liaison is established and maintained with the First Responders to ensure that the appropriate government agencies are informed of the incident.

## **Sending Employees Home**

If a suspicious package is found, no one may return to the building until permission is given by the Incident Commander, who may be a police officer, the leader of the Explosives Disposal Team or a member of the fire department. There may be a long delay because the device must be rendered safe and removed, and the scene examined for forensic evidence. The RBA, in consultation with the Workplace Occupational Health and Safety Committee and police and fire authorities, will then make the decision to send employees home and instruct them to listen to public broadcasts for news as to when to return to work.

## **Building Decontamination Requirements**

Requirements for decontamination of buildings will be determined by First Responders (i.e., HAZMAT, Medical Officers of Health). It may take an extended period of time to decontaminate the building depending on the type of suspicious package and the area affected by the release of the contents. Activation of business continuity and contingency plans may be necessary.

## **Business Continuity Planning**

In the event of receipt of a suspicious package, any dissemination of suspicious substances and possible eventual cleanup of the scene will cause a disruption of service and normal work routine. Indeed, this disruption may be the objective of the perpetrator. Business Continuity Plans should be in place to allow operations to resume from another location or to be assumed by another entity in the organization to ensure that critical and essential services are maintained.

## **Returning to Work**

The decision to reoccupy an evacuated facility will be made and agreed on by the Building Chief Fire Emergency Warden, the Workplace Occupational Health and Safety Committee representative and the RBA, after consultation with officers in charge of the responding police and fire services.

Appropriate announcements will be made to have employees return to the building. If the delay in returning to work is such that employees have been sent home, Media Relations/Communications Branch will have to arrange for notices to be broadcast by radio and television.

## **Reporting and Recording**

All incidents involving suspicious packages should be reported to the recipient's immediate supervisor. These incidents will be reported by the supervisor to the Building Chief Fire Emergency Warden as a "hazardous occurrence" when completing a Suspicious Package Document History (Appendix A).

Reporting requirements are: (list requirements based on Canada Occupational Safety and Health Regulations, Part X, section 10.5 pursuant to the *Canada Labour Code*; and any relevant provincial and municipal requirements).

Where employee compensation is involved (if work-related injury or illness required an employee to seek medical attention after the incident), the immediate supervisor must initiate a Workers' Compensation Board (WCB) Claim by completing the appropriate provincial injury compensation reports.

Appropriate records (training, drills, incidents) should be maintained by the Building Suspicious Package Response Team for a minimum of two years. All incidents should be recorded with the appropriate information on the Suspicious Package Document History Form found in Appendix A.

After assessing an incident, the RBA may be required to inform occupants of the building about the incident and what action they should take. This is required under the *Canada Labour Code*, Part II, addressing the "Right to Know" about health and safety hazards in the workplace. Appendix C, Emergency Voice Communications Messages, contains different types of messages that may be used and/or customized should such an announcement be warranted.

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## **GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

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## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

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**Building Chief Fire Emergency Warden (BCFEW)** – Appointed by the Responsible Building Authority (RBA), the Building Chief Fire Emergency Warden is responsible for overseeing the building's fire emergency response, including establishment, maintenance and training of the Building Fire Emergency Organization. The BCFEW is responsible for the evacuation of the building, once it is ordered by the RBA, regardless of the nature of the emergency.

**Building Fire Emergency Organization** – Established by the Responsible Building Authority (RBA), the Building Fire Emergency Organization is a formal group of building occupants charged with preparing for, and responding to, fire and other emergencies within the building.

**Business Continuity Planning** – A type of strategic planning designed to ensure the availability of critical programs and resources under all circumstances.

**First Responder** – Those Emergency Services that would normally be the first to respond to 911 calls (i.e. Fire, Police or Emergency Medical Services).

**Fire Safety Plan** – Plan prepared under the purview of the Responsible Building Authority (RBA), which includes the establishment of procedures to be implemented in case of fire, and the appointment and training of designated staff to carry out those procedures.

**HAZMAT Team** – First Responder Team specializing in assessing, handling and disposing of hazardous materials.

**Incident Commander** – The ranking member of the first Emergency Response Service (First Responder) to arrive at the incident scene is the Incident Commander unless he/she relinquishes that responsibility to a more appropriate First Responder.

**Responsible Building Authority (RBA)** – The senior ranking official of the corporation, company, department or agency with the largest number of persons occupying space in a building or facility is designated the Responsible Building Authority. The RBA is responsible for the safety and security of building occupants and the preparation and administration of the building's Fire Safety Plan. The RBA is to be located in the building.



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## **APPENDIXES**

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## **SUSPICIOUS PACKAGE DOCUMENT HISTORY FORM**

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1. Caller's name and phone number: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Date and time of the incident: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Estimated time spent in the suspected area: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Distance from the point of impact or incidence: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Reason for report:
  - unexpected delivery;
  - packages misaddressed or sent to a generic title (e.g., "The CEO,") instead of an individual's name;
  - unusual or unexpected point of origin;
  - unusually restrictive markings (e.g., "rush", "do not delay delivery");
  - excessive stamp postage as opposed to metered postage;
  - blurred or missing postal stamp cancellation marks;
  - unrecognizable or no return address or one that is obviously wrong;
  - cut-and-paste lettering, improvised labels, obviously disguised scripts, homemade labels, poor typing, poor handwriting or spelling;
  - excessive size, weight or thickness of package or envelope;
  - unbalanced or lopsided letters and parcels;
  - discolouration in the packaging caused by some sort of leak;
  - oily or greasy stains on packaging;
  - unusual odours such as almond, marzipan, machine oil or excessive perfume used to mask, other smells;
  - noise of ticking, sloshing or buzzing;
  - feel of springiness or unusual stiffeners;
  - metallic components, wires, batteries or loose contents in letters;
  - small holes, protruding wire, string or metal foil;
  - people unconscious or obviously ill;
  - placed near a ventilation system;
  - excessive wrapping, tape, staples or string; and
  - packages wrapped using string or filament tape and having only one way to open them.

6. Incident location:

Street address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Province: \_\_\_\_\_

7. Temperature of the package:

☐ Hot ☐ Warm ☐ Cool ☐ Cold

8. Odour:

☐ None ☐ Irritating ☐ Garlic/horseradish ☐ Changing  
☐ Sweet ☐ Pepper ☐ Almond/peach ☐ Forest  
☐ Fruity ☐ Flowery ☐ New mown hay ☐ Rotten eggs  
☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

9. Visible emission:

☐ Smoke ☐ Mist ☐ Changing

10. Unexplained symptoms:

☐ None ☐ Tightness in chest ☐ Stinging of skin  
☐ Dizziness ☐ Blurred vision ☐ Reddening of skin  
☐ Runny nose ☐ Welts/blisters on skin ☐ Fever  
☐ Choking ☐ Difficulty breathing ☐ Nausea/vomiting  
☐ Cough ☐ Diarrhea ☐ Headache  
☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Time of onset: \_\_\_\_\_

11. Explosion:

☐ None ☐ Outside of building ☐ In building ☐ Underground

Describe location: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe device:

☐ Military munitions ☐ Improvised device  
☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ None

Describe container condition/size: \_\_\_\_\_

12. Describe where in the building the package has been: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

13. Name and phone number of person or organization to call: \_\_\_\_\_

14. Building/Floor Evacuated? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Specify times and areas: \_\_\_\_\_

15. Building census completed? ☐ Yes ☐ No

16. Police case number: \_\_\_\_\_

Responding officers: \_\_\_\_\_

17. Fire department case number: \_\_\_\_\_

Synopsis:

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Reported by: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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[illegible]



### **BUILDING SUSPICIOUS PACKAGE RESPONSE TEAM EQUIPMENT**

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The following equipment should be available to the Building Suspicious Package Response Team, as a minimum. This equipment should be kept centrally for easy access. The list can be amended and alternative items added to better accommodate each area, depending on what is required and availability.

- A copy of the Building Suspicious Package Response Plan, complete with information indicating telephone numbers, building plans and procedures.
- Communications equipment as available.
- Copies of applicable Building Evacuation, Bomb Threat and HAZMAT Spill Plans.
- Spare clothing to assist any victims who may have become contaminated and require decontamination. (Disposable paper coveralls are useful and easily stored.)
- Warm blankets.
- North American Emergency Response Guidebook.
- Notebook/writing pad and pen for record keeping.

## **EMERGENCY VOICE COMMUNICATIONS MESSAGES**

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### **GENERIC EVACUATION ANNOUNCEMENT**

ATTENTION, PLEASE, ATTENTION—THE POLICE AND FIRE DEPARTMENTS ARE INVESTIGATING A SUSPICIOUS PACKAGE THAT HAS BEEN FOUND IN (OR NEAR) THIS BUILDING. PLEASE REMAIN CALM. ALL OCCUPANTS ARE ASKED TO LEAVE THIS BUILDING NOW USING THE NEAREST EXIT. IF YOU SEE ANY SUSPICIOUS PACKAGES, DO NOT TOUCH OR ATTEMPT TO MOVE THEM. NOTE THE LOCATION AND CONTACT SECURITY IMMEDIATELY.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION.

### **EVACUATION USING SPECIFIC STAIRWELLS OR EXITS**

(Note: Voice Communicators must refer to exits by their names or references as indicated on building floor plans and/or as recognized by employees.)

#### **USING STAIRWELLS**

ATTENTION, PLEASE, ATTENTION—DUE TO THE THREAT OF A SUSPICIOUS PACKAGE, OCCUPANTS ARE BEING ASKED TO LEAVE THE BUILDING NOW USING STAIRWELL (A OR B OR BACK OR FRONT OR NORTH OR SOUTH OR EAST OR WEST). PLEASE REMAIN CALM AND MOVE QUICKLY TO THE EXITS.

DO NOT USE STAIRWELL (A OR B OR BACK OR FRONT OR NORTH OR SOUTH OR EAST OR WEST). I REPEAT DO NOT USE STAIRWELL (A OR B OR BACK OR FRONT OR NORTH OR SOUTH OR EAST OR WEST). IF YOU SEE ANY SUSPICIOUS PACKAGES, DO NOT TOUCH OR ATTEMPT TO MOVE THEM. NOTE THE LOCATION AND CONTACT SECURITY IMMEDIATELY.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION.

### **USING EXITS**

ATTENTION, PLEASE, ATTENTION—DUE TO THE THREAT OF A SUSPICIOUS PACKAGE, OCCUPANTS ARE BEING ASKED TO LEAVE THE BUILDING NOW USING THE (A OR B OR BACK OR FRONT OR NORTH OR SOUTH OR EAST OR WEST) EXIT. PLEASE REMAIN CALM AND MOVE QUICKLY TO THE EXITS.

DO NOT USE THE (A OR B OR BACK OR FRONT OR NORTH OR SOUTH OR EAST OR WEST) EXIT. I REPEAT DO NOT USE THE (A OR B OR BACK OR FRONT OR NORTH OR SOUTH OR EAST OR WEST) EXIT. IF YOU SEE ANY SUSPICIOUS PACKAGES, DO NOT TOUCH OR ATTEMPT TO MOVE THEM. NOTE THE LOCATION AND CONTACT SECURITY IMMEDIATELY.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION.

Voice messages should be modified to suit building requirements.

### **VENTILATION AND BUILDING PLANS**

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INCLUDE HERE ALL APPLICABLE BUILDING AND VENTILATION PLANS FOR THE USE OF EMERGENCY RESPONSE PERSONNEL.

The building and floor plans found in the Fire Safety Plan may be referenced here.

- Building site plan.
- Horizontal projection of the building.
- Floor plan.
- Other plans as required.
- Point of contact and procedures for shutdown.