

# Security operations essay



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Since the September 11 attacks against the United States, security has been a matter of grave importance not just in the country, but in the whole world as well.

Airports and other terminals imposed strict compliance to security measures such as baggage searches to ensure security. As a response to the growing cases of security breaches, the government and involved agencies released public warnings about suspicious packages and bombs. There have been many web sites which provide information about identifying suspicious packages and bombs and what to do with them. One of these is the University of South Florida's Police Department (USFPD), which can be found at <http://www.usfpd.usf.edu/packages.asp>. The website contains information about how a person should handle suspicious packages and letters and bombs by mails. Above all else, one must stay calm in dealing with the predicament so that he or she can think clearly on what should be done.

The website also gives information about how one can identify a suspicious letter. There are letters which bear a clue about its contents, such as "Anthrax. As this is very harmful, the envelope or container should not be emptied because it might contaminate other people. It is always important to inform the local police and not take matters into one's own hands ("How to Handle Suspicious Packages and Letters").

The website also contains information about the different suspicious packages. Envelopes can contain powder or letters can contain bombs. Each package is identified in the website and there are instructions about what to

do to prevent any contamination or accident. The USFPD website also listed characteristics of suspicious packages and letters such as excessive postage because the senders do not want the packages or letters to be returned because of lack of postage. Also, these packages and letters are addressed to specific individuals, bearing marks such as “ confidential” or “ private. ” Return addresses are usually not provided or missing.

Envelopes bearing bombs can be lopsided or uneven. There can also be protruding wires or aluminum foil, which are an indication of bombs. Moreover, these packages can be covered with excessive security material such as masking tape. Also, the website posted images of suspicious packages with labels to identify them. Lastly, the USFPD provided other helpful websites on the same subject matter (“ How to Handle Suspicious Packages and Letters”).

Another website that offers helpful information about suspicious packages and bombs is the Southern Connecticut State University (SCSU) which can be found at <http://www.southernct.edu/emergencypreparedness/suspiciousletterspackages/>. As this is a university website, it contains information on where to report in case one finds a suspicious package or bomb. The numbers of the University Police Department and the University Environmental, Health and Safety Officer (EHSO) are also provided (“ Suspicious Letters/Packages”). The SCSU also includes information on the specific roles of senior police officer and EHSO upon the notification of suspicious packages and bombs.

There are also other police departments which their respective contact numbers are provided in the website. Unlike the USFPD website, the SCSU website includes information about how the impact of suspicious packages and bombs can be minimized or prevented. It includes evacuation of the area where the package or bomb is found. Also, only the experts at such packages are required to do the cleanup.

In addition, the website also includes information on how one can identify suspicious packages and bombs. There are also instructions on how to handle suspicious and unopened letters or packages and how to handle envelop containing powder. Other information is provided on how to handle contamination by air or aerosolization, which was also included in the USFPD website. Furthermore, the SCSU website has information on how to handle radiological contamination and mail bomb.

Lastly, there is information on how to handle packages or letters that have contraptions (“ Suspicious Letters/Packages”). Both websites contain very useful information that anyone can use when he or she is confronted with suspicious packages or letters or bombs. However, it would be more helpful if the websites provided visual aids. On the other hand, the websites conveyed to the public what one should do first during these cases: Do not touch the package (Bolz, Dudonis and Schulz 140).

However, even with this information, the success of the emergency response depends largely on training. As police officers and law enforcement personnel are far more knowledgeable about these threats, they are responsible for responding in cases where suspicious packages and bombs

are reported. The public depends on them, thus they have to be prepared anytime to respond to the public's call. Training can provide these law enforcement personnel the necessary knowledge, skills, abilities and attitude to be able to recognize, manage and control these situations (" Safety and Health Training for Emergency Response Operations" 2). Lack of training will therefore put the public into danger. This is the very reason why law enforcement requires its police officers to undergo comprehensive training in preparation for situations that pose danger to the public.

Officers should know how to handle bombs, or how to respond during emergencies. Furthermore, training is the best way that these officers can put to action their emergency action plan (" Emergency Response Plan"). There are many websites that offer the public vast information on how to identify suspicious packages and bombs and how to handle them. The USFPD and the SCSU websites contain information about the description of these packages and bombs.

During situations where these packages contain harmful substances and bombs, police officers and law enforcement personnel who have been under comprehensive training should be the one to handle such cases. During training, these personnel are taught the right skills, knowledge, and abilities to manage and control these situations. Thus they are the right persons to be assigned when suspicious packages and bombs are identified.