

	RESOURCE LIBRARY - SWITCHBOARD Handling Bomb Threats	Code: 03.02.003
		Edition: 1
		Page 1 of 2

INTRODUCTION:

Handling procedures to protect the interests of XYZ Hotels & Resorts, its guests, staff and owners in the event of a bomb threat.

The Front Office Manager is responsible for ensuring that all switchboard staff is aware of the procedure to be followed in the event of a bomb threat.

Training to cover bomb threat and terrorist awareness should be organized in conjunction with the Civil Defense authorities at least once a year. A strong liaison with these authorities is highly desirable.

STATEMENT OF POLICY:

1. There are four ground rules when an emergency occurs in a XYZ Hotels
 - Be prepared
 - Act quickly
 - Follow procedures
 - Stay calm
2. Bomb threats are usually given via telephone, therefore the understanding and general preparedness of the switchboard staff is of vital importance.
3. As much information as possible must be obtained from the caller. To assist with this, a prompt card must be prepared (see guideline in appendix APP 13) and displayed prominently at the switchboard and at any other telephone where switchboard calls may be diverted to from time to time (e.g. the reception desk).
4. Upon receiving a bomb threat call the Switchboard Operator should:
 - Follow the directions on the bomb threat card and complete the card after the call
 - Inform the General Manager or Duty Manager in the absence of the General Manager
 - Call the Police – after receiving confirmation from the General Manager
5. If the General Manager is out of the hotel – the Duty Manager must contact him immediately.
6. The objective of the manager in this case is to ensure maximum safety of guests and staff, gain an early appreciation of the situation and reach a satisfactory conclusion without confusion without confusion or panic.
7. A decision to evacuate all or part of the building will rest with the senior manager on duty or, time permitting, the Police.

The following factors will influence that decision:-

- Origin of call
- Deadline given, if any
- Nature of call (see bomb threat card)
- Position of device, if declared by caller
- Recent history of threats against hotel
- Prevailing conditions in the area such as strikes, civil unrest, terrorism etc.
- Number of people in the hotel and the implications of a large scale evaluation

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		<i>Page</i> 2 of 2

8. In the event of a bomb threat evacuation, a safe assembly point away from the hotel should be identified. The fire assembly point must NOT be used. Guest and staff are to be evacuated far away from the building and in this respect an arrangement with another hotel should be part of the contingency plan.
9. The police will advise if a search party is required – it is usually carried out if there is an expected explosion time given which allows sufficient notice to safely conduct the search. Previously nominated managers will complete the zones identified in the contingency plan, or as instructed by the Police if a specific area was mentioned during the threat call.
10. If a suspicious package is found it should not be touched. The Police should be called to the area, the area sealed off and the doors and windows in the vicinity opened to reduce any ensuing blast.
11. If no bomb is located by the time indicated during the threat call, all remaining people are to be evacuated and the safety of people placed as the top priority.
12. In the event of an explosion, obviously the highest priority will be given to any casualties. In such cases the emergency teams are to follow the instructions of the Police and Emergency Services.
13. In addition, the media interest in the event of an explosion will be immense and must be anticipated and managed well. It will be important that the switchboard operators are given specific guidelines on what to say and who to direct enquiries to.