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"INTEGRITY...FAIRNESS...SERVICE"

SPECIAL ORDER # 2016-06

DATE: November 1, 2016

TO: All Police Department Personnel. To be Announced at Roll Call and a Copy Posted on the Department's Intranet Site.

RE: Suspicious Powder/Hazardous Materials (HAZMAT) Calls for Service.

EFFECTIVE: Immediately.

BACKGROUND: While the nation was still recovering from the events of September 11, 2001, a threat unseen before appeared in the form of a biological attack. During the week of September 18, 2001, letters containing anthrax began arriving via the United States Postal Service (USPS) to various locations throughout the country.

Unwitting victims handled and opened the mail without knowing there was a biological threat. This caused five victims to die and 17 other victims to become seriously ill. This event became the worst biological attack in United States history. The investigation conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) determined that the anthrax attacks were likely the result of a disgruntled biologist who worked at the Army's Fort Detrick biodefense laboratory located in Frederick, Maryland.

Calls for service involving suspicious powder and suspicious substances increased after the highly publicized attacks. Concerns for the safety of first responders initially sent to the scenes of these calls has also grown. As a result of these concerns, the Baltimore County Police Department, Baltimore County Fire Department, Baltimore County Department of Health (BCDH), and other agencies have partnered to provide procedures for the safe response to calls for service of this nature.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this Special Order is to establish procedures for the safe response to suspicious powder/HAZMAT calls for service.

RELATIONSHIP TO DEPARTMENTAL VALUES: This Special Order demonstrates the Department's commitment to **SERVICE** by providing members with procedures to follow when handling potential hazardous materials. These procedures will ensure the safety and security of the community and Department members.

POLICY: It is the policy of the Department to ensure its members are trained in the proper procedures for handling calls for service involving potentially hazardous materials.

PROCEDURES:

GENERAL

- The BCDH will be the lead agency for all biological incidents.
- The 9-1-1 Communications Center will conduct an initial assessment with the complainant prior to dispatching the Police Department and Fire Department to an incident scene involving hazardous substances and bio-hazards.

SPECIAL ORDER #2016-06 (Continuation)

- The Fire Department, with the assistance of the Homeland Security Team and the BCDH, will assess and classify HAZMAT incidents into one of two categories:
 1. Non-credible - no criminal merit and no clinical hazard present.
 2. Credible - potential crime present and/or potential clinical hazard present.
- If the Fire Department is not at the scene, members of the Police Department will consider scene safety and shall request a HAZMAT response, if needed.
NOTE: The HAZMAT unit will normally be requested by the Fire Department Supervisor after he/she makes an assessment of the scene and feels the response is justified.

INVESTIGATING OFFICER

- Ensures scene safety and security.
- Ensures notifications are made by the 9-1-1 Communications Center to the:
 1. Homeland Security Team.
 2. Hazardous Devices Team, only when the
 - a. HAZMAT Team determines they are needed; or
 - b. Incident requires investigation by the Criminal Investigation Bureau (CIB).

NON-CREDIBLE INCIDENT PROTOCOLS

- The Police Department, and Fire Department HAZMAT Team if present, will conduct interviews.
- The Fire Department will make the determination for classification of the event.
- The Fire Department will determine the appropriate method of disposal.
NOTE: Members of the Police Department may assist, if needed.
- If the HAZMAT Team is called to the scene, they will issue discharge information to the complainant/victim. The complainant/victim will sign the discharge sheet and the HAZMAT Team will forward it to the BCDH.

CREDIBLE INCIDENT PROTOCOLS

- The Police Department and Fire Department HAZMAT team will conduct interviews.
- Once a credible incident has been determined, the primary investigating officer must:
 1. Consider the possibility of a crime scene should there be a criminal act.
 2. Ensure all evidence is properly collected and submitted to the Evidence Management Unit.
- The primary investigating officer will:
 1. Initiate an Incident Report in the Field-Based Reporting (FBR) system:
 - a. Using the appropriate offense code(s).
 - b. Containing the names, addresses, phone numbers, and dispositions of individuals that could be affected by the substance/material.
 - c. Directing report distribution to the BCDH, Homeland Security Team, Criminal Intelligence Team, Hazardous Devices Team, Maryland Coordination and Analysis Center (MCAC), Federal Bureau of Investigation, the precinct commander, and the precinct Investigative Service Team (IST).
 2. Ensure the Incident Report is submitted and approved prior to the end of his/her tour of duty.

SUPERVISORS

- Ensure the Homeland Security & Criminal Intelligence Section is notified.
- Coordinate scene security and investigation with the Homeland Security Team and representatives from the Fire Department.
- Consult with the Homeland Security Team to arrange for transport of the substance to the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) laboratory for testing, if the threat is deemed credible.
- Review Incident Reports regarding suspicious powder/HAZMAT for accuracy, completeness, and required report distribution.

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HOMELAND SECURITY TEAM

- Consults with the on-scene Police Department supervisor to gather information about the incident.
- Contacts the BCDH in coordination with the Fire Department HAZMAT Team.
- Makes notifications as needed after consulting with the Fire Department and the BCDH to determine if the threat is credible or non-credible.
- Coordinates with on-scene personnel for the transportation of the powder/substance to the DHMH laboratory.
- Receives examination results (i.e., preliminary within 24 hours and final within 72 hours).
- Contacts the Safety Officer if there is positive confirmation by the DHMH lab of a clinical hazard.
- Responds to incident scenes involving extreme or unusual circumstances upon approval of the Homeland Security & Criminal Intelligence Section Commander, or designee.

NOTE: Most of the coordination will be conducted via telephone unless on-scene presence is approved.

INVESTIGATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES

- The precinct where the incident occurred will be responsible for the investigation of non-credible incidents where no clinical hazard is present (e.g., letter, threat, hoax, etc.).
- The CIB will be responsible for the investigation of:
 1. Credible incidents involving a clinical hazard or threat to a public official.
 2. Any other incident deemed appropriate by the CIB Commander.

NOTE: Members responsible for these investigations will contact the Fire Department HAZMAT Team to ensure that all investigative information has been obtained, if applicable.

- The FBI will investigate all terrorist threats.

IMPLEMENTATION: This Special Order will be distributed electronically to all Department members. Shift/Unit supervisors will be responsible for the posting and referencing of this Special Order.

By order of,

James W. Johnson
Chief of Police