

# **The University of Southern Mississippi Gulf Coast Emergency Operations Plan**



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**SOUTHERN**  
**MISSISSIPPI**<sup>®</sup>  
GULF COAST

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**AA/EOE/ADA**

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## **Introduction and Objectives**

The emergency operations plan set forth in this document is designed to be a guide to the activation of The University of Southern Mississippi Gulf Coast's Emergency Operations Plan. The Emergency Operations Plan, once activated, remains in effect until the pending or an actual critical situation has passed and the appropriate authority deactivates the Plan. This plan will be reviewed annually by the Emergency Operations Staff for verification of business processes and contact information.

### **Objectives**

The Emergency Operations Plan is designed to:

1. Enable quick evaluation of an emergency condition
2. Coordinate informed individual divisions of the university to provide a unified response
3. Provide for rapid and necessary mobilization of personnel and material resources
4. Assure for the health and safety of the university community
5. Preserve lives and property
6. Lessen the impact potential of emergency situations
7. Enable orderly and timely lockdown or evacuation of personnel when necessary
8. Provide for the dissemination of accurate information

## **Emergency Situations Defined**

An emergency should be considered a condition or occurrence which overtakes the resources, both material and personnel, and routine of any one division of the University. The following incidents are examples of emergency situations which may need to be addressed at Southern Miss Gulf Coast:

- Air Crashes
- Barricaded Suspect/Hostage Situations
- Bomb Incidents
- Campus/Civil Disorders
- Earthquakes
- Electrical Outages
- Flood
- Freeze
- Gas Rupture/Explosion
- Hazardous Material Incidents
- Hurricanes
- Structure Fires
- Tornadoes

## **Activation of Emergency Operations Plan**

In the event the Southern Miss Gulf Coast is confronted with potential or declared emergency, The Vice President for Southern Miss Gulf Coast, or his/her designee, under the authority and direction of the University President acting within the guidelines of the Emergency Operations Plan, is authorized to implement whatever measures are legal and necessary to cope with the emergency.

In the absence of the Vice President for Southern Miss Gulf Coast, the below listed alternates are authorized to activate the Emergency Operations Plan and should be contacted in listed order.

1. University President
2. Director of Physical Plant
3. Director of UPD Dispatch and UPD Gulf Coast Division Commander
4. Gulf Park Associate Provost
5. Associate V.P. for Facilities Planning & Management

The Vice President for Southern Miss Gulf Coast or his/her alternate will be designated the Director of Emergency Operations and will be responsible for notifying those members of the Emergency Operations Staff necessary to meet the emergency.

## Emergency Operations Staff

The person identified as the Emergency Operations Staff will be responsible for formulating programs and coordinating their subordinate personnel in responding to an emergency situation as defined in this document. The Southern Miss Gulf Coast Emergency Operations Staff includes the following personnel:

Gulf Park Vice President Dr. Steve Miller	Office: 228-865-4531 cell: 601-329-1729
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Gulf Park Associate Provost (currently vacant)	Office: cell:
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Director of Physical Plant Jason Bigelow	Office: 228-214-3486 cell: 228-671-0350
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University Communications Jenny Tate	Office: 228-865-4574 cell: 662-316-1809
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University Police Department Ben Dedwylder	Office: 228-214-3238 cell: 228-669-4632
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Vice President of Business and Finance Dr. Douglas Vinzant	Office: 601-266-4074 cell: 307-760-2864
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Director of Gulf Park Enrollment Services Ann Billings	Office: 228-865-4545 cell: 228-860-3101
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Director of iTech David Sliman	Office: 601-266-4227 cell: 228-697-7096
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**Specific Duties and Responsibilities**  
**Director of Emergency Operations**  
**Vice President for Southern Miss Gulf Coast**

Throughout the duration of any campus-wide emergency, the Director of Emergency Operations, or their designee, will be responsible for making command decisions and/or coordinating decisions with university administration to meet the emergency.

**Duties and Responsibilities**

1. Liaison with the office of the President of the University.
2. Suspending, resuming, continuing operational activities of the University.
3. Coordination with the (Harrison County) Director Civil Defense.
4. Authorizing evacuation of university personnel.
5. Coordinating and/or approving activities and decisions of the Emergency Staff.
6. Select and/or approve appropriate strategies to meet the emergency.
7. Coordinate the joint planning and implementation of tactical operations.
8. Determine overall objectives to meet emergency.

**Coordinator of Emergency Information Services**  
**Director of GC University Communications**

The Director of GC University Communications will coordinate pertinent information from the members of the Emergency Operations Staff and make appropriate releases to the local media under the authority of the Director of Emergency Operations.

**Duties and Responsibilities**

1. Release information to university community and media pertaining to opening/closing of university, call back of vital personnel, and other information as necessary.
2. Develop and maintain a list of local newspaper, and radio and TV contact persons.
3. Initiate phone tree process.
4. Contact Director of Web Based Marketing to update web sites with emergency information.
5. Record announcement to GC Switchboard for emergency notification.
6. Initiate setup of Gulf Coast Campus Donations Center, depending on the scale and severity of the disaster.
7. Coordinate all activities with the Incident Commander or the ICS Public Information Officer, if staffed. Alternatively, provide a staff number to serve as ICS PIO as required.

## Director of Physical Plant

The Director of Physical Plant will be the coordinator of transportation, grounds, utilities, building services, and maintenance. The Director of Physical Plant will work with the other members of the Emergency Operations Staff and report to the Director of Emergency Operations.

### Duties and Responsibilities

1. Develop and maintain an intra departmental plan to meet emergencies as well as a call out list of vital personnel.
2. Develop and maintain a list of equipment, supplies, tools and machinery on hand as well as those needed to meet particular emergencies.
3. Coordinate provision of emergency supply of fuel for all emergency response vehicles.
4. Mobilize forces to assist in coping with preparation, response, and securing from an emergency.
5. Coordinate requests for gathering and delivery of personnel and supplies, in coordination with the Incident Commander or the ICS Logistics Section Chief, if staffed.
6. Assure isolation of emergency area via control of gas, water, power, and sanitation.
7. Clear and maintain access routes as required.
8. Have access to building floor plans, schematics and mechanical drawings of buildings.
9. Provide for emergency power (**generators**) to areas requiring such to maintain operation during an emergency.
10. Provide cost estimate of damage.
11. Determine extent of damages.
12. Assist in preparing and securing buildings.
13. Assist with rescue efforts, if requested by Incident Commander.
14. Provide for clean-up effort after emergency.
15. Care for utility emergencies (e.g. down power lines).
16. Provide custodial services to shelters and buildings maintaining operations during emergency event.
17. Assist in barricading and physically isolating designated areas.
18. Provide additional vehicles and vehicle maintenance as required.
19. Provide personnel to serve under the Incident Commander in Logistics Branch as required.

## **University Police Department**

The Superintendent of Security and Safety will make determination of the nature and extent of the emergency situation and report to the Director of Emergency Operations throughout the duration of the event.

### **Duties and Responsibilities**

1. Serve as Incident Commander or on ICS Command Staff, as required.
2. Undertake all actions below in coordination with the Incident Commander.
3. Determine initial condition and extent of emergency situation, response criteria, and potential for escalation
4. Collect and disseminate intelligence information
5. Control effected areas until relieved by proper authority
6. Provide radio and telephone communications to Command Staff
7. Conduct any necessary searches of area
8. Preserve law and order
9. Maintain public safety
10. Provide for crowd control and movement of personnel
11. Control vehicular traffic at evacuation routes as well as ingress/egress to emergency location
12. Securing and continuous security of buildings
13. Preservation of emergency scene and evidentiary materials
14. Maintain up-to-date lists of emergency response agencies and personnel
15. Monitor weather conditions
16. Provide continuous updates of emergency conditions as situations escalate or de-escalate
17. Report localized hazardous conditions as they develop in order to limit further damage/injury
18. Determine tactical response criteria
19. Make recommendations for action by other Emergency Operations Staff divisions
20. Provide initial first aid to injury victims
21. Provide or assist with rescue efforts
22. Develop and maintain list of equipment and supplies on hand and those needed for particular emergencies

## **Emergency Operations Centers** **Primary / Secondary**

The Primary Emergency Operations Center will be located in the Vice President's office, Gulf Park Campus, Hardy Hall, Room 219.

In the event that the emergency makes the primary location unsafe, the Temporary Operations Center will be First Baptist Church, 12190 Highway 605. In Gulfport. Take exit 38 from I-10, drive north approximately one mile on Highway 605 (also Cowan/ Lorraine Road). Point of contact is Ann Billings (cell 228-860-3101). Scheduled meeting times are 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.

Upon declaration of an emergency alert, members of the command staff will be notified and, if accessible, will report immediately to the Operations Center. It will be necessary to communicate command functions to all locations and teaching sites.

### **Incident Commander, Command and General Staff**

The Incident Commander will be in tactical command of the response to the emergency. In conjunction with the Command and General Staff (when those positions are filled), the IC will direct the response to the emergency as well as plan for future operations.

Particular duties and responsibilities of the Incident Commander, the Command Staff and the General Staff may be found in standard ICS documentation.

The Incident Commander will be responsible for briefing the Emergency Operations Staff at least once each Operation Period.

The Incident Commander will be the highest-ranking command officer of the agency with direct responsibility for addressing the particular emergency. For example, for an active shooter emergency, the IC will come from the University Police Department. For a structure fire, the IC will come from the Long Beach Fire Department. For a mass casualty incident, the IC will come from American Medical Response or from LBFD.

### **Keesler Center**

Sablich Center building 701, room 219, will be the Keesler Operations Center during the day. During the evening hours, in the occasion of emergency class cancellations, the Night Monitor will be contacted by the Keesler Operations Center Coordinator.

### **Stennis Space Center (SSC)**

Department of Marine Sciences – Monty Graham  
Center for Higher Learning (CHL) – Keith Long

### **Gulf Coast Research Laboratory (GCRL)**

Refer to Gulf Coast Research Laboratory Hurricane Preparedness Plan.  
Contact: Director of Physical Plant – David Taylor

### **Incident Command Post**

The Incident Command Post will be established in a location close enough to the incident scene to allow the Incident Commander to achieve situational awareness, while maintaining sufficient safety and security for the Command Post function.

### **Staging Areas**

Staging areas will be determined by the Incident Commander or the Planning or Logistics Section Chiefs, if staffed, based up the anticipated resource needs and the amount and timeframe of in-bound resources.

## Community Contacts

**Emergency** ..... 911  
**University Police Dispatch**.....228-214-3430

### Harrison County

Gulfport City Hall .....228-868-5700  
Long Beach City Hall.....228-863-1556  
Civil Defense (Director) .....228-865-4002  
Gulfport Police Department .....228-868-5959  
Long Beach Police Department.....228-863-7292  
Sheriff's Department .....228-863-0042  
Gulfport Fire Department .....228-868-5959  
Long Beach Fire Department.....228-863-7292  
Mississippi Highway Patrol .....228-539-4881  
Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College .....228-896-3355

### Utilities

Mississippi Power Co. ....800-532-1502  
Coast Electric Power Association .....800-624-3348  
Entex .....228-896-7500

### Medical Emergency

Memorial Hospital (Emergency).....228-865-3120  
A.M.R Dispatch. ....228-897-1192

### Keesler Air Force Base

Emergency Management.....228-377-2655  
Base Command Post Center .....228-377-4330

### Jackson County

Gautier City Hall .....228-497-8000  
Civil Defense .....228-769-3111  
Gautier Police Department.....228-497-2486  
Gautier Fire Department .....228-497-1656  
Sheriff's Department .....228-769-3063  
Mississippi Highway Patrol .....228-769-3266  
Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College .....228-497-9602

### Healthmark Center

Canon Hospice, .....228-575-6251  
Select Specialty Hospital, .....228-867-4820

## University Contacts

Gulf Park Vice President, Steven Miller.....	228-865-4531
GP Assoc Provost.....	Vacant
Cedar Point.....	228-872-4204
Gulf Coast Research Lab	
Pam Moeller.....	228-818-8847
Gulf Park Campus	
Director of GP Enrollment Services, Ann Billings.....	228-865-4545
iTech, David Sliman.....	228-214-3403
University Communications, Jenny Tate.....	228-865-4574
Physical Plant, Jason Bigelow.....	228-214-3479
University Police, Ben Dedwylder.....	228-214-3238
Shipping & Receiving, Pam Chain.....	228-214-3487
Courier, Steven Stout.....	228-214-3483
Keesler Teaching Site	
Coordinator.....	228-376-8479
Night Monitor.....	228-377-8847
Stennis Space Center	
CHL, Keith Long.....	228-688-3824
Marine Science, Monty Graham.....	228-688-3177
University Research Foundation, Jerrilyn Neumaier.....	228-575-6279

## **Guidelines to Emergency**

Response to any critical situation or emergency involves pre-planning. The following pages are guidelines covering immediate considerations, necessary notifications, and tactical considerations for preparing and responding to several possible disasters.

These guidelines are not designed to be all inclusive and the thoroughness of advance planning and attention to organizational considerations and support may well determine the success or failure of emergency response.

## **Employee/Department Responsibilities**

Print and have available two copies of the Emergency Operations Plan, one for the office and one for home.

Print Community Contact and University Contact pages and have readily available in the event of an emergency.

Assess the urgency of the situation and make the appropriate call:

- 911
- Your Supervisor
- Security

Secure office equipment, files and furniture.

Make a backup of essential electronic data and keep in a secondary location.

Unplug electrical outlets.

Cover equipment (desktop computers, printers, monitors, copiers, fax machines)

Laptop computers should be taken with you when you evacuate.

Make final bank deposits of currency and checks.

Secure hazardous chemicals.

Each academic department is responsible for securing materials according to standard industry practices and university policies.

Prepare emergency kit, which should contain items necessary to carry on business in event of an emergency.

### **Emergency Plan Payroll Issues**

Should the University be closed on payday due to an emergency, every effort will be made to make paychecks available as quickly as possible.

#### **The Gulf Coast Human Resources Manager will perform the following tasks:**

1. Contact payroll in Hattiesburg to determine availability of checks.
2. Contact Shipping & Receiving to discuss delivery of checks from Hattiesburg to the Gulf Coast.
3. Contact the Security Office at Southern Miss Gulf Coast to determine the possibility of entering the campus to distribute checks, and notify security of the time and place that checks will be distributed. Should damage at the campus be too extensive for employees to enter the campus, the Human Resources Manager in conjunction with the Command Staff will determine an alternate location for check distribution.
4. Contact the Director of University Communications to notify media of the time and place that checks will be distributed.
5. Contact Human Resources staff regarding distribution of checks.

## Hurricanes

### Advisories, Bulletins, Hurricane Watch, Hurricane Warning and Hurricane Conditions

Plans and procedures are applied immediately in the area where an impending hurricane is estimated to arrive within three days.

Advisories and Bulletins are issued by the National Weather Services stating location, wind speed and expected path of the storm.

Hurricane watch is set when a hurricane moves toward the mainland. As soon as forecasters determine that a particular section of the coast will feel the effects of a hurricane, they issue a hurricane warning specifying coastal areas that are in imminent danger within the next 24 hours.

## **University Police**

### Hurricane Watch:

1. Assist in informing the campus
2. Checks the emergency equipment inventory to ensure an adequate supply of flashlights, spare batteries, rain suits, barricades, and fire extinguishers
3. Reviews emergency plans and procedures.

### Hurricane Warning:

1. Coordinates with the City of Long Beach Police and Fire departments
2. Has all patrol cars serviced and fueled
3. Inspects the campus to check for objects that could become airborne in high winds
4. Assists with evacuations, if required
5. Provides crowd & traffic control
6. Takes all necessary precautions to prevent looting or vandalism

## **University Police (cont'd)**

### Hurricane Impact:

1. Assist in search and rescue operations
2. Assesses damage
3. Blocks off all damaged or potentially dangerous areas
4. Assists emergency vehicles
5. Secures the campus against looters and sightseers

## **Physical Plant**

### Pre-Hurricane Watch (Hurricane force winds expected within 72 hrs):

1. Check the emergency inventory to ensure an adequate supply of flashlights, spare batteries, rain suits, heavy-duty trash bags, polyethylene, rope, duct tape, masking tape, plywood, buckets, burlap bags, and a truckload of sand
2. Check roofs for loose gutters, down spouts, other objects, and verify all roofs are free of debris
3. Prepare frames for any glass to be protected
4. Inspect and services all emergency equipment: portable generators, pumps (discuss rental of extra pumps, if needed), backhoes, tractors, trucks, chainsaws, saw sharpeners, and wet-vacs
5. Check vehicles for fuel
6. Check supply of containers for water
7. Take down banners

### Hurricane Watch (Hurricane force winds expected in an area within 48 hrs):

1. Check campus to verify that all windows are closed
2. Board windows as necessary
3. Begin sandbagging operation, if needed
4. Position generators
5. Provide temporary feeder to pumps. Position pumps. Provide extra extension cords
6. Check for loose objects on campus such as trash cans, benches, awnings, dumpsters, etc., and secure or remove loose objects

7. Survey construction sites for debris
8. Put scoop on tractor and make sure fuel is full
9. Turn off gas to all grills
10. Fill water containers for post disaster clean-up & ensure that there is an adequate supply

Hurricane Warning (Hurricane force winds expected in an area within 24 hrs):

1. Close front main entrance to campus and rear on Beach Park
2. Make final campus check for debris
3. Prepare for additional sandbagging
4. Make sure all storm drains are clear of debris
5. Verify that all vehicles have adequate fuel

Hurricane Impact:

1. Shut off gas to buildings, if necessary
2. Stay in communication with University Police
3. Assist with search-and-rescue missions
4. Assess damage

Hurricane Post Disaster/ Recovery:

1. Assists with search-and-rescue missions.
2. Inspect campus for broken glass and other safety hazards
3. Assess damage and provide an estimated damage report to the Director of Emergency Operations
4. Work to clear the campus roads and secure any buildings damaged in the storm

## **Individual Action**

Hurricane Watch:

Upon notification of a hurricane watch status, all University personnel will attempt to accomplish the following on an individual basis:

1. Clear desk tops completely of paper and other articles.

2. Protect books, valuable papers, and equipment by covering with plastic sheeting and masking tape or heavy-duty trash bags.
3. Where necessary and possible, move desks, file cabinets, etc. away from windows. Close and latch both windows and doors.
4. Turn off or disconnect all electrical equipment including lights, window air-conditioners, hot plates, etc.
5. Clear any laboratory table and areas of all possible apparatus and glassware and place the items in a protective location.

\*\*\*NOTE\*\*\*

Departments are responsible for having necessary materials to protect equipment as noted above.

## **Essential Personnel**

### **University Police**

All security personnel will report to work for their shift immediately following the hurricane unless otherwise instructed. Scheduled days off will be cancelled until further notice.

### **Physical Plant**

All maintenance, grounds and custodial personnel will immediately report to work following the hurricane, unless otherwise instructed.

***NOTE: Temporary repairs made to homes must be completed in an expeditious manner and report to work immediately thereafter. Immediate supervisors must be notified.***

## **Tornadoes**

### **Immediate Considerations**

1. Move to hallway, closets, or go to corner of room
2. Keep away from windows
3. Do not go outside
4. Evacuation measures
5. Shelter preparation
6. Securing of loose objects exposed to condition
7. Securing of buildings and laboratories
8. Vehicle preparations
9. Dissemination of information to University community

### **Tactical command considerations to be undertaken after consultation with Incident Commander**

1. Update weather reports
2. Coordination with Civil Defense
3. Clearing and maintaining access routes
4. Communications
5. Damage evaluation and reporting
6. Preserve law and order
7. Clean up effort
8. Downed power lines

## **Structure Fires**

### **Immediate Considerations**

1. Depending on degree of seriousness, call 911 or security
2. Location
3. Close door to area that has fire
4. Evacuation of building
5. Notification and evacuation of surrounding buildings
6. Hydrant locations
7. Attempts to extinguish
8. Cancellation of classes
9. Building contents
10. Scene security
11. Securing gas and electricity at location

### **Tactical Command Considerations to be undertaken after consultation with Incident Commander**

1. Identification of cause
2. Injuries/deaths
3. Extent of damages

## **Earthquake**

### **Immediate Consideration**

1. If you are indoors, protect yourself, drop down to the floor and take COVER under a desk or table. Hold the furniture above you until the tremors have passed. If there is not furniture around, seek COVER against an interior wall.
2. If you are outdoors, move to a clear area away from trees, signs, buildings, etc. If you are driving, pull over on the side of the road and stop in a clear area. Stay in the car until the tremors have passed. After the tremors, the biggest concern we will have will be broken underground gas lines. In the event of a gas leak, the following is recommended:

DO NOT go into a room and turn on lights. The switch may generate a spark.

DO NOT strike a match or light any type of flame if the power goes out.

DO NOT use any room or enclosed space until after it has been checked for gas leaks.

### **Tactical command considerations to be undertaken after consultation with Incident Commander**

1. Evacuation/Shelter
2. First Aid
3. Utilities (gas, water, electricity, sanitation)
4. Clearing and maintaining access routes
5. Communications
6. Preserve law and order
7. Security of buildings
8. Damage evaluation and reporting
9. Down power lines
10. Rescue efforts
11. Cancellation of classes

## **Gas Rupture/Explosion**

### **Immediate Consideration**

1. Call 911
  2. Location
  3. Threat to campus personnel/structures
  4. Evacuation measures
  5. Establish perimeter and secure area
  6. Securing of ignition sources
  7. Cancellation of classes
- 

## **Electrical Outage**

### **Immediate Consideration**

1. Location
  2. Threat to campus personnel/structures
  3. Length of outage
  4. Cancellation of courses
- 

## **Freeze**

### **Immediate Consideration**

1. Securing of buildings and laboratories
2. Vehicle preparations
3. Dissemination of information to University community
4. Cancellation of classes

## **Hazardous Material Incidents (Nuclear, Biological, Chemical)**

### **Immediate Considerations**

1. Call 911
2. Identify nature of incident/material from distance
3. Evacuation
4. Establish perimeter and secure area
5. Securing of ignition sources
6. Cancellation of classes

### **Tactical command considerations to be undertaken after consultation with Incident Commander**

1. Specific material identification
2. Wind and weather conditions
3. Evacuation routes
4. Personnel to remain upwind and out of immediate area
5. Decontamination area
6. No open flames, ignition sources
7. Shelter areas
8. Media involvement

## Campus/Civil Disorders

### Immediate Consideration

1. Depending on the degree of seriousness, call 911 or Security.
2. Location
3. Nature and size of incident
4. Firearms/weapons involved
5. Cause and objectives
6. Chances for escalation
7. Isolation/containment
8. Who is involved

### Tactical command considerations to be undertaken after consultation with Incident Commander

1. Strategies to cope with incident
2. Dispersal methods
3. Injuries
4. Involvement of drugs, alcohol, weapons
5. Negotiations

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## Barricaded Suspect/Hostage Situation

### Immediate Consideration

1. Call 911
2. Location
3. Nature of incident
4. Firearms/weapons involved
5. Isolation of scene and evacuation
6. Number of persons involved
7. Establish communications
8. Cancellation of classes

## **BOMB THREAT PROTOCOL**

### **A. Introduction**

This protocol has been based upon the Department of Homeland Security and the Energetic Materials Research and Testing Center at New Mexico Tech version 2.03 of the Incident Response to Terrorist Bombings program. These protocols represent significant experience over thousands of incidents and best practices developed from lessons learned from those incidents. Additional information has been provided by the police departments of the University of Texas at Austin and Louisiana State University.

In all situations involving first responders there are three component actions: notification, response and on-site actions. Throughout an incident, as these actions play out, continual assessment and flexibility are essential.

### **B. Notification**

Notification can come in the form of a call to a targeted location (typically for bomb threats) or calls to 911 emergency numbers.

### **C. Continual Assessment**

Assessment considerations will vary depending on the situation. For a pre-detonation incident, the following must be considered:

- Credibility of the notification (recent incidents vs. hoaxes)
- Environment at threatened location (such as academic building vs. warehouse, number of personnel, or critical infrastructure in vicinity or directly threatened.)

### **D. Response**

Response considerations vary depending on the type, complexity and magnitude of the situation:

- Which agencies respond? (such as University PD, Fire, EMS, EOD.) A normal response will involve only UPD, with additional personnel being dependent upon the continuing assessment demanding additional expertise or resources.
- Where and how to respond? (such as alert notification only, respond to vicinity of threat

location or respond to threatened location)

- Decision on whether to evacuate
- Decision on whether to search

### **E. On-site Actions**

On-site actions also vary in response to the type, complexity and magnitude of the situation:

- Establish a perimeter
- Control site access (ingress and egress)
- Protect physical evidence
- Establish command and communications
- Collect physical and testimonial evidence
- Identify witnesses
- Emphasize life safety

### **F. Pre-detonation Sequence**

Pre-detonation incidents can begin when a bomb threat is received, or when a suspicious item is identified, even without any prior threat. Remember that information received in phone calls or threat letters is also evidence.

### **G. How to Handle Threats**

- Letter
  - Upon determination of a threat cease handling the letter or envelope
  - Notify UPD, provide letter to investigator
- Telephone or fax (See Appendix B)
  - Do not hang-up, notify UPD
  - Complete bomb threat form (if received by fax, attach copy of fax)
- E-mail
  - Notify UPD and print message
  - Do not close e-mail message
- Person-to-Person (including Second Party)
  - Notify UPD
  - Document conversation and person's description

- o Endeavor to keep track of person; only law enforcement should attempt to physically restrain individual

## **H. Evaluating the Threat**

Each pre-blast incident must be evaluated on its own merit to determine the appropriate actions for emergency response agencies. The task of evaluating the bomb threat is accomplished by validating the individual aspects of the threat and the scene. The information that is collected is then used to formulate a plan of action specific to the incident.

To validate the threat, a face-to-face interview should be conducted with the person who actually received the threat. This interview may provide information that may or may not have been noted on the bomb threat checklist, important in the evaluation process. If the telephone conversation was recorded, it will be beneficial to listen to and review the actual conversation prior to, or during the interview.

To validate the security posture at the scene of a threat, an interview with the person in charge of the facility can often supply important information concerning the status of the facility. In most cases, the building liaison, or person in charge, is a central source of information for the entire facility. This person may reveal information, such as a door being found unsecured, that could prove important to the evaluation and investigation of the incident. If available, security video can be viewed to identify suspicious activity in the facility.

One of the most important people to interview at a facility is the maintenance custodian; while individual occupants of the facility may provide good information on their areas of responsibility, a maintenance custodian probably has the most information concerning common areas such as building perimeters, halls, stairways, lounges, restrooms, and any other part of the facility where a potential bomber could visit without being discovered or challenged by an occupant.

## **I. Suspicious Item Incidents**

Pre-detonation incidents can also begin when a suspicious item is discovered. Suspicious item reports generally increase as the perceived threat to the public increases. Citizens report items

that would otherwise go unnoticed when their awareness has been heightened by news media attention or warnings from government or private sector experts. Most suspicious item reports are false alarms; however, suspicious activities at bombing incidents often go unreported. Suspicious items can vary in size from an envelope to a large truck.

The initial first responder at a suspicious item incident is typically a University Police Officer. He/she should immediately evacuate persons from around the suspected item. In no case should anyone other than a certified EOD specialist or bomb technician attempt to handle or render safe the suspected explosive device. Typically, the actions of first responders at a suspicious item incident should not be observed or recorded by personnel who do not have a legitimate requirement to document such actions. Written summaries and audio or video recordings can be used by terrorists in planning subsequent attacks. All suspicious items should be treated as a bomb until proven otherwise.

#### **J. Responding to Suspicious Items**

These basic rules must govern responses to pre-detonation situations:

- Do not touch an item that could contain explosive material.
- Always move people away from a suspicious item-never try to move the item away from people.
- Never use a radio, cellular telephone, or other transmitter within a minimum of 300 ft. of a location where there is a suspected or actual explosive device.
- If you can see a suspicious item, it can "see" you. Never position yourself where you can observe a suspicious item and do not let others do so.
- Pay close attention to appropriate evacuation distances.
- Be aware of the potential for secondary devices.

#### **K. The Decision to Evacuate**

The decision to evacuate a facility, or in extreme cases the entire university, can be a costly decision. Instructors will lose precious time for presentation of lessons; copycat bomb threats, encouraged by automatic evacuation policies, can have widespread impact on students.

In addition, the decision to evacuate can move potential victims from a location of relative safety to

a more dangerous location. Criminals have been known to use bomb threats, fire alarms, or other similar ruses to cause evacuation of building occupants to exterior locations where they can be targeted more easily. At the same time, a decision not to evacuate can be costly. If faculty, staff or students are directed to remain in place and a bomb subsequently explodes, injuries and deaths may occur. Everyone will second-guess the decision. Such losses can have significant and long-lasting impact on emergency response agencies and their supported communities.

In most cases, emergency responders should not make evacuation decisions, particularly in bomb threat situations where there is no information to confirm the validity of the threat. Rather, senior administrative officials of the university should make evacuation decisions. They will often ask for advice from law enforcement officers or firefighters concerning whether to evacuate. First responders should explain the options and potential consequences, but be aware that the administration reserves the authority to make the actual decision.

When a suspected explosive device has been identified, the evacuation decision is more "clear-cut" than in situations involving only a bomb threat. In fact, the presence of a suspected device may create an obligation to evacuate the area.

In some cases, citizens are safer if they do not evacuate. For example, if the threat states the bomb will explode in a short period of time, then sheltering in place for those not clearly in harm's way may increase their survivability due to the shielding of the building they are occupying. Obviously, those in the immediate vicinity of a suspected device should evacuate regardless of other circumstances. However, citizens in other buildings might be safer inside than on the streets outside of their buildings. Building structures can often furnish protection (shielding) unavailable to evacuees in the open when an explosion occurs. Evacuation to parking lots is almost always inadvisable because of the risk of potential explosive devices in parked vehicles. Open areas, where explosive devices would be difficult to hide, offer the best locations for evacuation, if evacuees have sufficient standoff distance and some protection (shielding) from potential or actual explosive devices. When selecting an evacuation location, consideration should be given to establishing and maintaining line-of-sight security. In all cases, assembly or evacuation areas should be searched thoroughly for suspicious items immediately before they are occupied, or as soon as possible after they are occupied by evacuees.

#### **L. The Actual Evacuation Process**

Any evacuation should be done only when there is a safer destination prepared to receive the evacuees. This may be another building that has not been the subject of a threat, or it may be an open area with little possibility of a secondary device being concealed, or it may even involve the use of mass transit to remove evacuees from the campus entirely to some off-site reception center, such as the Lake Terrace Convention Center or the Forrest County Multi-Purpose Center.

The actual order to evacuate should be given by voice announcement over the building public address system. It should be followed up with a sweep of the building by the persons in charge. It is recommended that the use of the fire alarm be avoided due to the chance of non-compliance by individuals assuming it to be a false alarm. The voice announcements and sweep should recommend that inhabitants remove their personal belongings such as purses, backpacks, etc. Removing these items will reduce the number of potentially suspicious items.

#### **M. Control of Site Access**

Control of access to a single building may be accomplished by means of UPD and/or DPM personnel blocking walkways with POLICE LINE tape and blocking roads with barricades. Control of access to the entire campus may become necessary in the event of a campus-wide evacuation. This will require substantial amounts of personnel and resources from outside agencies. As buildings are cleared for occupancy it may be necessary to restrict access to some areas of campus while allowing access to others.

#### **N. Post-Evacuation Searches**

In cases where an evacuation has been ordered of one or more buildings a search must be done to determine if the building is safe for occupancy. This search must be carried out by persons familiar with the building and its contents. First responders will be unable to determine if briefcases, backpacks, or other items belong in particular areas or if their presence is unusual or suspicious. Those buildings where building liaisons, staff and faculty are unable or unwilling to assist in performing searches will require the most time to declare safe for occupancy, and those buildings will remain unusable for the longest periods of time.

Searches of buildings are generally performed in teams of two persons each. At least one member of each two-person team must be familiar with the rooms or areas to be searched. The following search protocol is used:

- Upon first entering the building or room, stand still, remain silent and listen for any unusual sounds. Be alert to any unusual odors.
- Upon entering the room to be searched, it is divided vertically into four zones:
  - o First, search the area from the floor to waist level. This includes the floor, baseboard air vents and furniture.
  - o Second, search the area from waist to eye level. This includes bookcases, pictures on walls, wall-mounted lights, etc.
  - o Third, search from eye level to the ceiling. This includes ceiling fans, lights, and air vents.
  - o Finally, search above false or dropped ceilings.
- Any suspicious item is cause to stop searching and notify UPD.

In cases where the entire university is being searched, the following levels of priority will be established for searches:

- Public safety locations (i.e., UPD, plus any areas used for staging incoming law enforcement, Firefighting and EMS units)
- Residence Halls (searches must include living spaces)
- Dining Facilities
- Health Clinic
- Administrative facilities
- Academic facilities
- Support facilities
- Athletics facilities
- Recreational facilities

## **O. Dealing with Suspicious Items**

In incidents where a suspicious item has been located as a result of a search, EOD or bomb squad personnel will be dispatched to evaluate the item. If they determine the item to be

dangerous, the bomb squad or EOD will likely conduct the remainder of the building search. If the item is determined to be non-threatening, the existing search teams may continue the search.

#### **P. Re-occupancy**

After a building has been cleared by search it will be safe for re- occupancy. The search team will notify UPD by telephone, and the building will be marked as safe. In some cases it may be advantageous to clear multiple buildings in one area to allow for better access control in areas not yet cleared. In other cases it may be advantageous to await the clearing of related buildings prior to re- occupancy, as where a dining facility must be cleared before residence halls can be re- occupied.

In cases where large numbers of buildings must be searched and cleared, UPD will establish a landline telephone bank to receive these calls without delay.

## **Bomb Incidents**

### **Immediate Consideration**

1. Time of detonations considered, either call 911 or notify Security.
2. Location of device
3. Time of detonation
4. Time call received
5. Cancellation of courses
6. Additional information (see attached)

### **Tactical Command Considerations**

1. Evacuation and securing of premises and surrounding area
2. Establishing perimeter
3. Suspension of all electronic communications within location
4. If located:
5. Leave for disposal team
6. Evacuation of search personnel
7. Preservation of scene/evidence
8. If not located:
9. Duration of evacuation beyond detonation time
10. Return to normal operations

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## **Air Crashes**

### **Immediate Consideration**

1. Call 911
2. Location
3. Injuries/fatalities
4. Potential for fire/explosion
5. Evacuation
7. Site security including landing/crash path

## **Mail Safety**

The U.S. Postal Service constantly monitors mail entered into the postal stream, and mail delivered through the Southern Miss. Post Office is inspected for suspicious-looking markings before being placed in mailboxes. This information is presented in an effort to educate and reassure personnel who handle unopened mail.

The following mail safety procedures have been developed by the CDC health professionals, the FBI and the Emergency Management Services.

These procedures give advice on how to identify suspicious mail:

- Excessive postage
- Handwritten or poorly typed address
- Incorrect titles
- Title, but no name
- Misspelling of common words
- Oily stains, discoloration or odor
- No return address
- Excessive weight
- Lopsided or uneven envelope
- Protruding wires or aluminum foil
- Excessive security material such as masking tape, string, etc.
- Visual distractions
- Ticking sound
- Marking with restrictive endorsements, such as "Personal" or "Confidential"
- Shows a city or state in the postmark that does not match the return address

If you think you have a suspicious package dial 911 “DO NOT PANIC” follow these basic rules:

- Do not shake or empty the contents of any suspicious envelope or package. Place the envelope or package in a plastic bag or some other type of container to prevent leakage of contents.
- If power is present or spills out onto surface DO NOT try to clean up the powder. Cover the spilled contents immediately with anything (e.g., clothing, paper, trashcan, etc.) and do not remove this cover!
- Then leave the room and close the door, or section off the area to keep others away.
- Wash your hands with soap and water to keep from spreading the powder to your face.
- Call the campus Police at 911.
- Remove heavily contaminated clothing as soon as possible and place in a plastic bag, or some other container that can be sealed. This clothing should be given to the emergency responders for proper handling.
- Shower with soap and water as soon as possible.
- If possible, list all people who were in the room or area, especially those who had actual contact with the piece of mail or powder. Give this list to both the local public health authorities so that proper instructions can be given for medical follow-up, and to law enforcement officials for further investigation.

## Active Shooter Response

The objective of this plan is to provide guidance in the event there is an active shooter on campus.

### **Communications:**

The person who has identified an active shooter should notify University Police Department by dialing 911 or 228-214-3430. Give all available information regarding location, descriptions of suspect(s), weapons, and any other requested information. The campus community will then be kept updated with EagleAlert messages.

### **How to Respond:**

Quickly determine the most reasonable way to protect your life.

- If an active shooter comes into your area and you are able to:  
**GET OUT**
  - Move away from the active shooter or the sound of gunshots
  - Have an escape route and plan in mind
  - Leave your belongings behind
  - Call 911, Be prepared to calmly, quickly, and accurately provide:
    - Name of shooter (if known)
    - Number of shooters
    - Description of shooter
    - Location of shooter
    - Number and types of weapons carried by shooter
  
- If an active shooter comes into your area and you are not able to leave the area safely: **HIDE OUT**
  - Remain calm
  - Warn other staff, students, and visitors to take immediate shelter

- o Go to a room that can be locked or barricaded
  - o Lock and barricade doors and windows
  - o Close blinds
  - o Block windows
  - o Turn off radios or other devices that emit sound
  - o Keep yourself out of sight and take adequate cover/protection (i.e., concrete walls, thick desks, filing cabinets)
- As a last resort and only when your life is in imminent danger:
    - TAKE OUT**
    - o As a group attempt to incapacitate the active shooter
    - o Act with physical aggression and throw items at the active shooter

**Active Shooter is defined as:**

- An armed individual who has used deadly force and continues to do so with unrestricted access
- Can involve:
  - o Single shooters, multiple shooters
  - o Close encounters, distant encounters
  - o Targeted students, random victims
  - o Single-room confrontations, mobile confrontations

**Interacting with Law Enforcement Responder**

- **DO NOT** expect officers to assist you as you get out
  - o Primary job is to locate the shooter and neutralize the threat
  - o Medical assistance will follow once the threat is neutralized
- Law Enforcement must assume everyone is a threat to their safety.
  - Be prepared to:
    - o have weapons pointed in your direction
    - o be subject to search
    - o be handcuffed

- When Law Enforcement officers enter the room, do not present a threat to them
- **DO NOT**
  - Point at them or the shooter
  - Make quick movements
  - Run towards them or attempt to hug them
  - Scream or yell
- **DO NOT**
  - Have anything in your hands; officers are taught that "hands kill"
- **DO**
  - Raise your arms
  - Spread your fingers
  - Show hands as you drop to the floor
  - Spread arms and legs

**BOMB SCARE FORM**

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Time call received \_\_\_\_\_

Time caller hung up \_\_\_\_\_

Exact words of person placing call:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Questions to ask:

1. When is bomb going to explode?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Where is the bomb right now?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. What kind of bomb is it?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. What does it look like?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. Why did you place the bomb?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Person receiving call \_\_\_\_\_

Department \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address \_\_\_\_\_

Home Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

DESCRIPTION OF CALLER'S VOICE

Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_

—

Young \_\_\_\_\_ Middle Age \_\_\_\_\_ Old \_\_\_\_\_

Tone of  
Voice \_\_\_\_\_

Accent \_\_\_\_\_

Background  
Noise \_\_\_\_\_

Was Voice  
Familiar \_\_\_\_\_

If so - who did it sound like \_\_\_\_\_

Remarks: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_