

Alarm Response

Session Materials

Alarm Types

Audible Alarms

- Most common type
- Often not monitored
- Sometimes discovered during patrol
- Designed to draw attention to the in progress crime and scare away suspects
- High frequency of false alarms may lead to lackadaisical approach

Silent Alarms

- Designed to alarm the police, not the offenders
- Affords the officer the tactical advantage of surprise
- Increases likelihood that suspect(s) will still be on scene when officers arrive
- Sonitrol and silent panic alarms

Panic Alarms

- Activated by:
 - Citizen at residence
 - Business owner or employee at business
- Sometimes referred to as “robbery alarms”

Alarm Response & Tactics

General

- Usually a two-officer call
- Determine the type of alarm, silent or audible
- Determine what part(s) of the building have shown alarm activations
- Determine if a “subscriber” or “key holder” has been notified

Ask Dispatch or Key-Holder:

- Are there any weapons stored in the building?
- Are there any guard-dogs on the premises?
- Layout and possible hiding locations?
- Any previous history at that location?
- What type of building is it?



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Using Silent & Invisible Deployment

- Turn off your vehicle lights
- Park so that you are not visible from the building
- Turn down radio (portable/mobile)
- Don't slam car door
- Silent radio and equipment on uniform

Are Lights and Siren Appropriate?

- Are there extenuating circumstances that lead you to believe life is at risk?
- If not, alarms are not generally considered an "emergency call"
- *Follow your department protocol!*

Look for Fleeing Vehicles/Suspects

- Note license plates and descriptions of vehicles
- Decide whether or not to stop and detain subjects
- Be alert to lookouts

Approaching

- Approach on foot using cover and concealment
- Approach from the sides
- Use your light sparingly
- One officer checks the building while the other officer provides cover

Checking the Building

- For most building checks you will check with your firearm holstered; however, there are exceptions to this guideline
- Check all doors and windows
- Use a flashlight to check for damage to doors
- Go under windows if possible
 - If not, conduct a quick-peek before passing them

Checking the Building

- Clear and run license plates on all suspicious vehicles on or near the property:
 - Is the engine warm?
 - Are the windows fogged over?
 - Is there water from rain under the vehicle?
 - Tire tracks?
- Check the entire perimeter of the building.



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Signs of Break-In

- Broken windows or forced exterior doors
- Open or unlocked doors. Many burglaries are committed by known subjects
- Valuable merchandise stacked outside
- Cuts or breaks in any fences
- Dust disturbed outside windows
- Items that would allow entry from the roof (ladder, etc.)
- Pry-marks on doors; mark them for future reference
- If any signs of a break-in are discovered retreat to cover and begin building search tactics

Panic (Hold-Up) Alarms

- Involve an immediate threat to life
 - Respond in an expeditious manner
- Be sure to turn off your lights/siren well before arrival
 - Prematurely alerting any suspects of your arrival may cause a hostage situation
- Do not have dispatch put a call into the business until you have containment set and a visual on the building
- Restrict all radio traffic; channel secured
- This is a minimum two-officer call
- Plan your route and be vigilant
 - The average robbery takes only 2 minutes
 - Think about likely escape routes
- If you are the primary officer, coordinate the response of the other units so that there is response from all directions
- Set up concealed containment on the business
- Be sure that you have a visual on the main entrance
- Upon arrival, watch for:
 - Visible signs that a robbery is in progress
 - Is business being carried out as usual?
 - Are customers coming and going freely?
- Be alert for lookouts and getaway cars



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False-by-Phone Alarms

- If dispatch verifies that an employee inside the business has stated that the alarm is false, arrange to have an employee meet you outside
- Assume it's a trick
- Be cautious by reasonable!
- Be certain that dispatch gets the employee's name and full description
- Have dispatch advise the employee to keep their hands in plain view and not to run
- Have the employee bring their picture ID
- Advise dispatch to have the employee exit and walk toward a cover officer (away from the main entrance)
- All units should remain behind cover while this is taking place
- Two patrol officers should contact the employee and verify their identity via photo ID and confirm with the info you have from dispatch
- Quickly interview the employee:
 - Ask them if everything is okay inside
 - Verify that a robbery is not happening and they are not being force to lie
 - Check for deception indicators

