



AIG Crisis Solution  
Prevention Management

## Suspect mail



High net worth individuals and businesses may receive suspect letters or packages that could contain explosives or harmful substances from terrorists, deranged individuals, disgruntled former employees or criminals (for the purpose of extortion).

### Suspect mail

The majority of threats are hoaxes or false alarms and are intended merely to cause disruption. However, all threats should be treated as genuine until they are proved to be otherwise.

Individuals and organisations can take a number of steps to protect themselves against postal bombs and other forms of attack using the postal service:

- Train staff in how to recognise potential threats and test their awareness and reactions.
- Encourage regular correspondents to include their details on the outside of their letters and packages.
- Display warning posters in all post rooms and supervise post room procedures carefully.
- Require couriers delivering mail to remove motorcycle helmets.
- Consider installing X-ray machines and explosive detection equipment if the risks are high.

Specialists are available to talk you through this booklet and provide any additional information that you require.

Get in touch on  
**[pcprevention@aig.com](mailto:pcprevention@aig.com)**  
to arrange a telephone appointment.

## Identifying suspect items

The sender of a postal bomb or a package containing a dangerous substance normally takes great care to make its appearance as innocuous as possible. For example, the packaging may be professionally embossed and the recipient's address typed.

There are no clear rules for identifying suspect mail, but the following circumstances may give rise to suspicion:

- If the package is not expected.
- If the point of origin gives cause for concern.
- If there are visible signs of leakage of an unknown substance.
- If the handwriting is poor or contains spelling errors.
- If there is no return address.
- If stamps are used instead of metered postage (if it is meant to be a piece of business mail).
- If there are too many stamps for the weight of the package.
- If the balance of the package is uneven.
- If the package seems very heavy for its size.
- If there is excessive packaging.
- If there is any springiness in the top, bottom or sides of the package (but do not bend it excessively to check).
- If a wire protrudes from the package or tin foil is evident.
- If there are grease marks on the envelope or wrapping.
- If the package smells of almonds, marzipan or machine oil.
- If there are restrictive markings, such as 'personal', 'private' or 'to be opened by addressee only'.
- If the package has a postmark that differs from the return address.

## Taking action

If you decide that an item of mail is suspicious, take the following actions:

### If your suspicions are not allayed by taking these steps, consider the following:

- Notify your supervisor, security representative and/or the police.
- Follow any instructions from the police.
- Alert others in the area about the suspicious item of mail.
- If appropriate, calmly evacuate the area, leaving all doors and windows open.
- List all of the people who may have touched the suspicious package.
- Make a detailed note of any markings and characteristics, including the size and postmark, without handling the item further.

### In addition, make sure that you and your employees:

- Do not attempt to open the package.
- Do not shake or bump the package.
- Do not carry the package or envelope, show it to others or allow others to examine it.
- Do not sniff, smell, taste or look closely at any material that may have spilled from the package.
- Do not attempt to carry the object out of the building.
- Do not place the object in a bucket of water.
- Do not attempt to cover the object with sand or put sandbags around it.
- Do not surround the object with steel cabinets or other furniture,

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