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STEPHEN D. COAN
STATE FIRE MARSHAL

MEMORANDUM

To: Heads of Fire Departments

From: Stephen D. Coan
State Fire Marshal

Date: December 2, 2014

RE: “Defusable Clock” Hoax (Bomb) Device Warning

This advisory is to inform you of a recent incident involving a hoax (bomb) device that required the response of my office.

On November 4, 2014, the Danvers Police Department, Danvers Fire Department, the Massachusetts State Police Bomb Squad and the FBI Bomb Squad responded to a bomb threat call at a Comfort Inn in Danvers, Massachusetts.

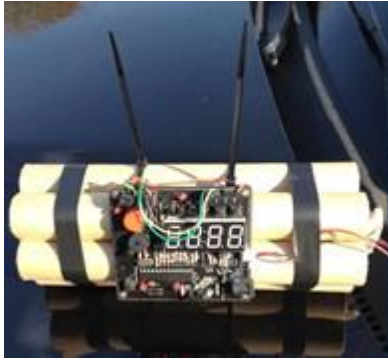
The manager of the Comfort Inn had sounded the fire alarm to evacuate hotel guests after housekeeping discovered an explosive device consisting of six to eight sticks of dynamite taped together with a digital clock attached. The State Police and FBI Bomb Squads were making preparations to enter and defuse the threat when the room’s occupant was located. He informed the officials at the scene that the device was a hoax device, known as a “defusable clock” that he had purchased on the internet.

As you know, my office drafted and the Governor signed into law, Chapter 266, s. 102A½, the hoax device law effective January 12, 2001. The law criminalizes the possession, use, transport or placement of any hoax device, with the intent to cause anxiety, unrest, fear or personal discomfort to any person or group. The punishment for violations is 2½ to 5 years imprisonment and/or a fine of up to \$5,000 or both. Unfortunately, these devices are not illegal per se, rather, it is the intent of how they are placed to incite fear that is punishable by law.

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At this time, it does not appear that the individual who owned this clock intended to cause fear or unrest. However, I did want to make you aware that these hoax device alarm clocks are widely available online and can be configured in numerous ways. You may view website photos of configured hoax devices at the following website:

<http://www.nootropicdesign.com/defusableclock/index.html>.



Picture of Actual Danvers Device

As always, you must treat all devices as potentially lethal. To that end, if you come across such a device, please contact the Massachusetts State Police Bomb Squad immediately at (978) 567-3310 or at (508) 820-2121 (24 Hour Emergency number). If you have any other questions regarding this memorandum, please contact the Lt. Paul Zipper, Massachusetts State Police, Fire & Explosion Investigation Section, at (978) 567-3310.