



NEW ORLEANS POLICE DEPARTMENT OPERATIONS MANUAL

CHAPTER: 46.19

TITLE: AIRCRAFT ACCIDENTS

EFFECTIVE: 01/14/2018

REVISED: Replaces Policy 434

PURPOSE

This Chapter describes situations involving aircraft accidents and the responsibilities of members.

DEFINITIONS

Aircraft Accident—An occurrence associated with the operation of an aircraft which takes place between the time any person boards the aircraft with the intention of flight and all such persons have disembarked, and in which any person suffers death or serious injury, or in which the aircraft receives substantial damage (49 CFR § 830.2).

OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Officers should treat an aircraft accident site as a major crime scene until it is determined that such is not the case.
2. If a military aircraft is involved, additional dangers, such as live ordnance or hazardous materials, may be present. The scene may also require additional security due to the potential presence of confidential equipment or information.
 - (a) The duties of the responding officer at the scene of an aircraft accident include the following:
 - (b) Implement Incident Command System (ICS).
 - (c) Determine the extent of the accident.
 - (d) Notify his/her immediate supervisor.
 - (e) Advise Communications Services to notify the district commander.
 - (f) Request additional officers and other resources to respond as needed.
 - (g) Provide assistance for any injured parties until the arrival of NOFD or EMS.
 - (h) Cordon off and contain the area to exclude unauthorized individuals as soon as practicable.
 - (i) Provide traffic and crowd control and other assistance until directed otherwise by a supervisor.
 - (j) Ensure the Coroner's Office is notified if a death occurs.
3. Entering an aircraft or tampering with parts or debris is only permissible for the purpose of removing injured or trapped occupants, protecting the wreckage from further damage or protecting the public from danger.

4. If reasonably possible, the investigating authority should first be consulted before entering or moving any aircraft or any accident debris. Photographs or sketches of the original positions should be made whenever practicable.
5. The NOFD will be responsible for control of the accident scene until the injured parties are cared for and the accident scene has been rendered safe for containment.
6. Once rendered safe for containment, NOPD will be responsible for preserving the scene until relieved by the principal investigating authority, such as the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB).
7. Once the scene is relinquished to the principal investigating authority, NOPD may assist in containment of the scene until the investigation is completed or assistance is no longer needed.
8. An airport service worker or the airport manager may respond to the scene to assist the on-scene commander with technical expertise, should it be needed during the operation.

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

9. The National Transportation Safety Board has the primary responsibility for investigating accidents and making notifications involving civilian aircraft, including aircraft of foreign registry.
10. In the case of a military aircraft accident, the appropriate branch of the military will be involved in the investigation. The NTSB is concerned with several aspects of an accident as described in this section.
11. Every effort should be made to **preserve the scene** to the extent reasonably possible in the condition in which it was found until such time as the NTSB or other authorized personnel arrive to take charge of the scene.
12. Military personnel will respond to take charge of any military aircraft involved, regardless of any injury or death.
13. If the accident did not result in a death or injury and the NTSB elects not to respond, the pilot or owner may assume control of the aircraft.
14. Removal of the wreckage shall be done under the guidance of the NTSB or military authorities. If the NTSB is not responding for an on-site investigation, it will be removed at the discretion of the pilot or the owner.

COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES RESPONSIBILITIES

15. Communications Services and the NOPD Liaison are responsible for making notifications as directed once an aircraft accident has been reported. The notifications will vary depending on the type of accident, extent of injuries or damage and the type of aircraft involved. Generally, Communications Services or the NOPD Liaison will need to notify the following agencies or individuals when an aircraft accident has occurred:
 - (a) New Orleans Fire Department
 - (b) The appropriate airport tower
 - (c) Closest military base if a military aircraft is involved
 - (d) EMS or other assistance as required
 - (e) Public Information Officer
 - (f) District Commander

(g) Field Operations Bureau Deputy Chief

16. Communication Services will notify the Traffic Division Commander of the incident.
17. If requested, the Communications Services shall provide a dedicated channel for management of the incident.
18. When an aircraft accident is reported by the airport tower personnel, Communications Services shall verify that the tower personnel will contact the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Flight Standards District Office and the NTSB. In the event that airport personnel are not involved, the dispatcher shall notify the FAA and the NTSB.

RECORDS MANAGER RESPONSIBILITIES

19. The Records Division Commander or his/her designee shall:
 - (a) Forward and maintain an approved copy of the NOPD report to the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development, Aviation Section.
 - (b) Forward a copy of the NOPD report to the Deputy Chief of Field Operations Bureau.

PRESS INFORMATION OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES

20. The New Orleans Police Department Public Information Officer's responsibilities include:
 - (a) Obtaining information for a press release from the on-scene commander or the authorized designee.
 - (b) When practicable, coordinating with the FAA or military Press Information Officer on preparing a press release and distributing it to the media.
21. Information released to the press regarding any aircraft accident should be handled by the Department Public Information Officer or in accordance with existing policy.
22. Officers on scene shall not give information to the media and direct all media related questions to the Public Information Officer.

COMMANDER RESPONSIBILITIES

23. When notified of an aircraft incident commanders have the following responsibilities:
 - (a) The **Traffic Division Commander** will send personnel to the scene to conduct an investigation and determine whether to request additional aid to the scene to contain the area of the accident from civilians and others that should not be present at the scene.
 - (b) The **Special Operations Division Commander** or designee will determine whether to send personnel to assist the traffic division if needed. Factors to consider in this determination include the location of accident, size of aircraft and number of passengers involved.

DOCUMENTATION

24. Any aircraft accident within the city, regardless of whether injuries or deaths occur, shall be documented in an incident report (EPR). The Traffic Division will be responsible for completing the initial incident report.