

Fauquier County Department of Fire Rescue

OPERATING PROCEDURE

No. 702

Vehicle Accident Investigation

Effective Date: Dec. 1, 2017

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Revision Date:

Forms:

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PURPOSE

To establish a uniform policy for reporting and investigating accidents or collisions involving fire rescue vehicles.

SCOPE

This regulation pertains to all fire rescue vehicles (county and volunteer owned) assigned to operations, individual staff members, and division vehicles.

I. PROCEDURE

Whenever a fire rescue vehicle is in a collision of any type, regardless of the severity, one of the following procedures shall be followed.

- A. Vehicle collision during response involving personal injury.
 1. Report situation immediately to Emergency Communications Center (ECC) giving a brief description of what has occurred, location, assistance required, and size-up of damage (i.e. significant / minor damage, extent of injuries, etc).
 2. Provide necessary incident stabilization and patient care as needed.
 3. Place unit out of service, request that an on-duty battalion chief respond, and remain on scene until relieved by a battalion chief or higher.
 4. The law enforcement department from the jurisdiction wherein the accident occurred shall be requested to respond to the accident scene. An investigation report shall be requested from the police.
 5. The vehicle driver will comply with the documentation required by the responding law enforcement officer and the department.
 6. Immediately upon returning to quarters, the following shall be completed:
 - a. IndustrySafe report initiated by the vehicle operator and supervisor.

Desire to Serve

Ability to Perform

Courage to Act

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b. A complete written statement of facts by the vehicle operator and any other members/witnesses with appropriate facts shall be entered in IndustrySafe. This shall be done prior to the involved employees going off duty.

7. Other documents shall be attached to the IndustrySafe report electronically.

B. Vehicle collision during response with property damage only:

1. Report situation immediately to ECC giving a brief description of what has occurred, location and assistance required. If no injuries are found, the unit may, at the officer's discretion based on the original emergency incident information, proceed to the emergency incident after requesting the law enforcement department from the proper jurisdiction and an on-duty battalion chief to respond to the accident scene. Any persons involved in the accident shall be instructed to wait at that location for further assistance. The driver of the involved fire department vehicle shall provide involved persons with his/her name, driver's license number, the unit designator and work location telephone number. ECC shall be advised of the situation and unit actions.

2. Upon clearing the original emergency incident, the involved unit shall be placed out of service and report back to the accident scene, if deemed appropriate by the on-duty battalion chief.

3. The law enforcement department in the jurisdiction wherein the accident occurred shall be requested to provide an investigative report.

4. The fire department vehicle driver shall comply with the documentation required by the responding police officer and the department.

5. Immediately upon returning to quarters, the following shall be completed:

a. IndustrySafe report initiated by the vehicle operator and supervisor.

b. A complete written statement of facts by the vehicle operator and any other members/witnesses with appropriate facts shall be entered in IndustrySafe. This shall be done prior to the involved employees going off duty.

6. Other documents shall be attached to the IndustrySafe report electronically.

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- C. All vehicle accidents occurring in non-emergency or routine driving situations.
1. Report situation immediately to ECC giving a brief description of what has occurred, assistance required, and size-up of damage (i.e. significant / minor damage, extent of injuries, etc...).
 2. Provide necessary incident stabilization and patient care as needed.
 3. Place unit out of service, request that an on-duty battalion chief respond, and remain on scene until relieved by a battalion chief or higher.
 4. The law enforcement department in the jurisdiction wherein the accident occurred shall be requested to the accident scene. An investigation report shall be requested from the law enforcement department.
 5. The vehicle driver will comply with the documentation required by the responding law enforcement officer and the department.
 6. Upon returning to quarters, the following shall be completed:
 - a. IndustrySafe report initiated by the vehicle operator and supervisor.
 - b. A complete written statement of facts by the vehicle operator and any other members/witnesses with appropriate facts shall be entered in IndustrySafe. This shall be done prior to the involved employees going off duty.
 7. Other documents shall be attached to the IndustrySafe report electronically.
- D. After being notified, the battalion chief may permit the unit to leave the scene and complete the preliminary accident investigation elsewhere if the following criteria are met:
- a. The accident is considered minor with little or no property damage
 - b. Waiting at the scene may not be practical due to the location or other reasons.
 - c. The accident does not involve other property.
 - d. The accident does not involve private property.

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II. DUTIES OF THE INVESTIGATING BATTALION CHIEF:

- A. It shall be the responsibility of the on-duty battalion chief (or his/her designee) to investigate all accidents involving any fire rescue vehicle.
- B. It shall be the on-duty battalion chief's responsibility to notify the chief of the volunteer department of all vehicle accidents (except as stipulated in section I, D.) involving volunteer owned vehicles.
- C. The battalion chief investigative report should include statements from any and all involved employees, members and/or witnesses. Photos should be included, where applicable, showing relative positions of vehicles, signs, damage, etc. Copies of any pertinent law enforcement reports should also be included. All reports, including law enforcement reports, documentation, and photographs shall be entered in IndustrySafe within 24 hours of the accident.
- D. In certain cases, such as injuries and/or extensive property damage, the battalion chief may consult with the assistant chief or volunteer chief who may require a fitness for duty evaluation (drug and alcohol testing). Procedures for testing shall follow the established County policies.

III. DRIVER STATUS:

- A. The on-duty battalion chief, volunteer chief, safety officer, or higher-ranking officer shall determine if the incident is serious enough to temporarily relieve the operator from driving duties and shall be initiated based on the following criteria:
 - 1. Severity of the accident.
 - 2. The recommendation of the company officer based on observations of the involved driver before, during, and after the accident.
 - 3. Significant findings of the investigating law enforcement officer and/or battalion chief.
- B. The reauthorization and restoration of driving duties shall be determined by the department's chief or their designee after review of the investigative report.