

Aircraft Accidents

415.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to provide department members with guidelines for handling aircraft accidents.

This policy does not supersede, and is supplementary to, the Redding Municipal Airport Emergency Plan, the applicable portions of the Crime and Disaster Scene Integrity, Emergency Management Plan and Hazardous Material Response policies.

415.1.1 DEFINITIONS

Definitions related to this policy include:

Aircraft - Any fixed wing aircraft, rotorcraft, balloon, blimp/dirigible or glider that is capable of carrying a person or any unmanned aerial vehicle other than those intended for non-commercial recreational use.

Aircraft Accident - An occurrence associated with the operation of an aircraft which takes place between the time any person boards that aircraft with the intention of flight and the time such person disembarked; and in which any person suffers death or serious injury; or in which the aircraft receives substantial damage. The term substantial damage means damage or failure which adversely affects the structural strength, performance, or flight characteristics of the aircraft and which would normally require major repair or replacement. This does not necessarily include such things as engine failure or damage to a single engine of a multi-engine aircraft, bent fairings or cowling, puncture holes or dented skin or the aircraft, ground damage to rotor or propeller blades, and damage to landing gear, wheels, ties, flaps, engine accessories, brakes or wingtips.

Aircraft Incidents - An aircraft incident is an occurrence other than an accident, associated with the operation of an aircraft, which affects or could affect the safety of operation and is normally considered less serious than an aircraft accident.

415.2 POLICY

It is the policy of the Redding Police Department to provide an appropriate emergency response to aircraft accidents. This includes emergency medical care and scene management.

415.3 ARRIVAL AT SCENE

Officers or other authorized members tasked with initial scene management should establish an inner and outer perimeter to:

- (a) Protect persons and property.
- (b) Prevent any disturbance or further damage to the wreckage or debris, except to preserve life or rescue the injured.
- (c) Preserve ground scars and marks made by the aircraft.

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- (d) Manage the admission and access of public safety and medical personnel to the extent necessary to preserve life or to stabilize hazardous materials.
- (e) Maintain a record of persons who enter the accident site.
- (f) Consider implementation of an Incident Command System (ICS).

NOTE: If an accident or incident takes place inside the perimeter security fence of the Redding Municipal Airport, proceed no further than Fire Station 7 and contact Redding Fire Department for assistance in gaining permission to access the field

415.4 NOTIFICATIONS

When an aircraft accident is reported to this department, the responding supervisor shall ensure notification is or has been made to NTSB, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), and when applicable, the appropriate branch of the military.

If an accident or incident has occurred, and it is on City property, notify the Airport Manager immediately. In his absence, notify the Assistant Airport Director, or in his absence the Assistant City Manager. If the accident or incident is not on city property, the Airport Manager should be notified and can provide technical assistance.

When on City property, the Airport Manager or his designee will notify the FAA. In their absence, this agency shall notify the FAA. Provide the FAA with the number and extent of injuries and the extent of damage to the aircraft.

Supervisors shall ensure other notifications are made 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. When an aircraft accident has occurred, it is generally necessary to notify the following:

- (a) Fire department
- (b) Appropriate airport tower
- (c) Emergency medical services (EMS)

415.5 CONTROLLING ACCESS AND SCENE AUTHORITY

The primary function of police personnel is to support the Fire Department and the Airport Manager. This will normally involve crowd control and scene security. Prior to NTSB arrival, scene access should be limited to authorized personnel from the:

- (a) FAA.
- (b) Fire department, EMS or other assisting law enforcement agencies.
- (c) Coroner.
- (d) Air Carrier/Operators investigative teams with NTSB approval.
- (e) Appropriate branch of the military, when applicable.

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- (f) Other emergency services agencies (e.g., hazardous materials teams, biohazard decontamination teams, fuel recovery specialists, explosive ordnance disposal specialists).

The NTSB has primary responsibility for investigating accidents involving civil aircraft. In the case of a military aircraft accident, the appropriate branch of the military will have primary investigation responsibility.

After the NTSB or military representative arrives on-scene, the efforts of this department will shift to a support role for those agencies.

If NTSB or a military representative determines that an aircraft or accident does not qualify under its jurisdiction, the on-scene department supervisor should ensure the accident is still appropriately investigated and documented.

415.6 INJURIES AND CASUALTIES

Members should address emergency medical issues and provide care as a first priority.

Those tasked with the supervision of the scene should coordinate with the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) before the removal of bodies. If that is not possible, the scene supervisor should ensure documentation of what was disturbed, including switch/control positions and instrument/gauge readings.

415.7 DANGEROUS MATERIALS

Members should be aware of potentially dangerous materials that might be present. These may include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Fuel, chemicals, explosives, biological or radioactive materials and bombs or other ordnance.
- (b) Pressure vessels, compressed gas bottles, accumulators and tires.
- (c) Fluids, batteries, flares and igniters.
- (d) Evacuation chutes, ballistic parachute systems and composite materials.

415.8 DOCUMENTATION

All aircraft accidents occurring within the City of Redding shall be documented. At a minimum the documentation should include the date, time and location of the accident; any witness statements, if taken; the names of RPD members deployed to assist; other City resources that were utilized; and cross-reference information to other investigating agencies. Suspected criminal activity should be documented on the appropriate crime report.

415.8.1 WRECKAGE

When reasonably safe, members should:

- (a) Obtain the aircraft registration number (N number) and note the type of aircraft.

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- (b) Attempt to ascertain the number of casualties.
- (c) Obtain photographs or video of the overall wreckage, including the cockpit and damage, starting at the initial point of impact, if possible, and any ground scars or marks made by the aircraft.
 - (a) Military aircraft may contain classified equipment and therefore shall not be photographed unless authorized by a military commanding officer (18 USC § 795).
- (d) Secure, if requested by the lead authority, any electronic data or video recorders from the aircraft that became dislodged or cell phones or other recording devices that are part of the wreckage.
- (e) Acquire copies of any recordings from security cameras that may have captured the incident.
- (f) If on City property, the Airport Manager will assist in coordination with the FAA for aircraft removal.
- (g) If on private property the aircraft owner has the responsibility of aircraft removal. The FAA must be notified of the owner's permission to remove the aircraft.
- (h) If on private property, it is the owner's responsibility to provide security of the aircraft. This agency is not to authorize the removal of any aircraft. RPD shall provide security for the aircraft only until the aircraft owner or agent has their own security in place.

415.8.2 WITNESSES

Members tasked with contacting witnesses should obtain:

- (a) The location of the witness at the time of his/her observation relative to the accident site.
- (b) A detailed description of what was observed or heard.
- (c) Any photographs or recordings of the accident witnesses may be willing to voluntarily surrender.
- (d) The names of all persons reporting the accident, even if not yet interviewed.
- (e) Any audio recordings of reports to 9-1-1 regarding the accident and dispatch records.

415.9 MEDIA RELATIONS

The Public Information Officer (PIO) should coordinate a response to the media, including access issues, road closures, detours and any safety information that is pertinent to the surrounding community. Any release of information regarding details of the accident itself should be coordinated with the NTSB or other authority who may have assumed responsibility for the investigation.

Depending on the type of aircraft, the airline or the military may be responsible for family notifications and the release of victims' names. The PIO should coordinate with other involved entities before the release of information.