




## ARLINGTON COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT DIRECTIVE MANUAL

<b>Chapter: 5</b> Procedures	<b>Effective Date:</b> May 25, 2018	<b>Amends/Supersedes:</b> March 1, 2005	<b>By Authority of the Chief of Police</b>   Charles A. Penn
<b>Accreditation Standard(s):</b> OPR.05.01, OPR.07.06			

### 573.01 Aircraft Accidents

#### I. Policy

The primary responsibility for investigating an aircraft accident rests with the Virginia State Police and the National Transportation Safety Board. The police department will provide assistance as necessary or when requested.

#### II. Definitions

- A. Aircraft – A device that is used or intended to be used for flight in the air.
- B. 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.
- C. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) – A division within the Department of Transportation responsible for the regulation and oversight of civil aviation in the U.S.
- D. National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) – An independent federal agency that investigates all civil aviation accidents.

III. **Code Requirement** – The [Code of Virginia §5.1-23](#) provides that the State Police shall have jurisdiction to investigate any aircraft accident and that in the exercise of such jurisdiction, the State Police and officers of the department of law enforcement of any city or county may enter with immunity and without a warrant upon private property for the purpose of conducting such investigations.

#### IV. Procedure

##### A. Initial Response

1. Approach the crash site with caution and from an up-wind direction to avoid contact with any toxic smoke or fumes. Military aircraft may be carrying live ammunition, bombs, nuclear warheads or other explosive or radioactive materials.
2. Be alert for wreckage or survivors that may have been ejected along the crash path and thrown clear of the aircraft and explosive hazards that could be triggered by fuel, oxygen, tires, batteries, de-icing, and anti-icing equipment.

3. Determine the extent of the accident scene and the need for additional police assistance, medics, and firefighting equipment.
  4. Take necessary steps to protect life and property.
  5. Secure the scene to prevent unauthorized entry.
- B. FAA Notification - As soon as possible, responding officers should collect the following information and relay it to the ECC for FAA notification:
1. Time of crash.
  2. Brief description of the severity of the crash, including the number of injured or deceased.
  3. Best possible geographic location.
  4. Type of aircraft, hull number, manufacturer's name, single engine, multi-engine, jet, helicopter, military, civil or air carrier.
  5. Nearest suitable landing area for a helicopter.
- C. Scene Management
1. Officers should ensure that the accident scene is safe and secure for additional emergency personnel.
  2. Arrange care for injured persons.
  3. Establish an inner and outer perimeter and secure the area. If the accident involves military aircraft, secure the area and wait for military investigators.
  4. Do not disturb the bodies of deceased victims, but leave the scene as is and notify the medical examiner.
  5. Except for the protection or preservation of life, officers shall not cause or allow the aircraft or its contents to be moved unless authorized by federal investigators. Do not move wreckage without FAA approval with the following exceptions:
    - a. Removal of injured or trapped persons.
    - b. Protection of wreckage from further damage.
    - c. Protection of public from injury.
  6. If necessary, nearby roads should be closed and access routes secured to allow ingress and egress of additional responders.
- D. Notification Procedure - The dispatcher shall initiate the following actions:
1. Notify and direct the Watch Commander and necessary units to the scene.
  2. Contact the fire department to assist in rescue work or to stand by for firefighting operations.
  3. Contact the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), Aviation Accident Division and provide the same information relayed to the FAA.
  4. Contact the Virginia State Police.
  5. Notify military authorities, if applicable.

6. Notify the U.S. Postal Service Inspection Office if it is known that U.S. Mail was on board.
  7. Notify the medical examiner in the event of fatalities.
  8. Alert County officials, department and agency heads identified in the Emergency Call Procedures.
- E. Establish Incident Command - The Watch Commander or ranking supervisor on the scene shall establish incident command and manage the incident in accordance with Manual directive *570.01 Incident Command System*. The Incident Commander shall be responsible for the following:
1. Provide the fire department with resources to assist in the rescue and care of the injured.
  2. Establish controlled routes into and out of the accident area for emergency equipment and authorized personnel.
  3. Establish and maintaining an inner and outer perimeter.
  4. Evacuate the area if necessary.
  5. Secure the area and preserve the accident scene for investigation by NTSB and FAA. No one is to be allowed in the wreckage area other than those necessary for occupant removal, firefighting and the possible removal of mail and cargo when necessary to protect it from further damage.
  6. Protect baggage, freight, mail and personal valuables
  7. Provide traffic and crowd control at the incident scene
  8. Arrange staging areas for the following:
    - a. Mutual aid response vehicles and equipment.
    - b. Relatives/friends assembly area.
    - c. Non-injured care area.
    - d. Morgue.
    - e. News media.
- F. Investigative Procedures
1. Federal - The National Transportation Safety Board is responsible for the investigation of aircraft accidents. Certain field investigations, however, are conducted by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). A team of investigators will be dispatched to the accident. Upon their arrival, they will assume local field control and establish functions of security, identification communication and investigation. The federal investigator in-charge is responsible for the supervision and co-ordination of all resources and activities of all personnel involved in the onsite investigation.
  2. State - The Virginia State Police must also investigate all aircraft accidents. The investigation would be in conjunction with the federal investigation rather than a separate one.

3. Local - The Scene Commander will respond to the request of the investigating team, federal or state, and continue security and rescue operations as required.