1. PURPOSE

This policy provides Mesa Police Department (MPD) members with guidelines for investigating traffic related collisions.

2. DEFINITIONS

Collision: A situation, which unintentionally results in death or bodily injury or damage to any property.

- If the death, bodily injury, or damage to any property was a result of an intentional act, the situation is a crime.
- Report criminal incidents with a GO.

Reportable Motor Vehicle Traffic Collision: An unstabilized situation, occurring on or originating on a trafficway, involving one or more motor vehicles, at least one of which is in transport.

- The unstabilized situation must involve death or bodily injury or damage to any property and must not be a direct result of cataclysm.

Delayed Collision Report: A delayed collision report is a collision reported to the Department after the parties involved in the accident have left the scene.

3. GENERAL

3.1 Collisions are investigated to:

A. Protect the public.
B. Educate the public.
C. Enforce the transportation laws of the state and city.
D. Protect the rights of the citizens involved.
E. Collect engineering data.

3.2 Enforcement Protocols [ALEAP 23.2]

Members will issue a citation in most cases where a civil or misdemeanor violation can be established.

A. However, in cases where a clear violation cannot be established, members have discretion to cite or not.

B. If elements of a criminal nature exist in connection with an automobile collision, file appropriate charges.
C. Take action justified and in accordance with state law and city ordinances.

4. COLLISION INVESTIGATIONS

4.1 Reportable Collisions

A. Complete the current edition of the Arizona Traffic Collision Report electronically in MRE and EMVA in its entirety. [ALEAP 23.1B]
B. Traffic collisions occurring on private property do not meet the definition of "Reportable Motor Vehicle Traffic Collision."
   1. Normally, they are not investigated by MPD (unless they meet the criteria in the next section of this order).
   2. If a report is required, complete a GO in MRE.
   3. If a report is not required, assist citizens in exchanging information. Do not update these collisions to a 424. Keep CAD call coded as a 961 and close with a DC5.
C. If a report is written on an incident which does not meet the definition of a "Reportable Motor Vehicle Traffic Collision," complete a GO in MRE. [ALEAP 23.1B]

4.2 Private Property Collisions [ALEAP 23.1F]

A. Complete a GO in MRE in its entirety for all private property accidents which involve the following: [ALEAP 23.1B THRU #4]
   1. Death or injury to any person.
   2. Reckless driving.
   3. Impairment of an operator due to alcohol and/or drugs. [ALEAP 23.1D]
   4. Property damage in excess of $5,000.00.
   5. Hit and run.
   6. A vehicle required to be carrying a placard for hazardous materials, per Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Title 49 Transportation.
   7. If the collision involves a Department or City of Mesa (COM) owned vehicle.
B. Private property collisions, other than as listed above, normally are not investigated by MPD. [ALEAP 23.1B]
C. Members taking calls will question reporting parties to determine if any of the conditions listed above exist.
D. If not, advise complainants to exchange the required information.

E. Call takers may dispatch an officer to the scene if there is potential for a disturbance between the involved parties or other serious extenuating circumstances exist.
F. If dispatched and no accident report or GO is taken, record the disposition of the accident by making brief descriptive comments in the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD). Do not update these private property collisions to a 424. Keep CAD call coded as a 961 and close with a DC5.

4.3 Hit and Run Collisions [ALEAP 23.1C]

A. Complete the current edition of the Arizona Traffic Collision Report in RMS in its entirety for hit and run accidents which:
    1. Result in damage to a vehicle.
    2. Result in injury to or death of any person.
    3. Occur on a roadway or a public alley.
    4. Where liability to the city may exist.
B. Complete a collision report in MRE and EMVA.
    1. Include any hit and run accident diagrams created in Faro and uploaded to the EMVA.
C. Hit and Run collision reports in MRE will be titled using the appropriate Arizona Revised Statutes (ARS) code to reflect the elements of the offense (e.g.; ARS 28-661, ARS 28-662, ARS 28-663, etc.).
D. Ensure the details of the investigation, witness information/statements, and vehicle information is contained in the narrative for follow up by the Vehicular Crimes Unit.

4.4 Delayed Collision Reports

A. If the report is delayed **less than two hours** from the time of occurrence and is a reportable collision, a member is dispatched to take a report.
B. If the report is delayed **longer than two hours**, the call will remain in Communications awaiting a member to take the report with the following conditions:
    1. If the collision is reportable, a report is taken.
    2. No diagram or measurements are required.
    3. Generally, no enforcement action is taken, except in the case of a Hit and Run or other extenuating circumstances.
C. Complete Hit and Run Supplemental Report and attach to the Arizona Traffic Collision Report.
D. Provide Hit and Run Brochure.

4.5 Investigation

The member assigned a collision investigation is in charge of the scene until the investigation has been completed.

A. In general, misdemeanor Hit and Run cases will be completed by the investigating officer/PSO and will not be assigned to a detective.
B. If the investigation requires a greater knowledge or specialization, the investigation is turned over to a member of the Vehicular Crimes Unit.

4.6 Notifying Parents or Legal Guardians

A. When investigating a collision, in which a juvenile has been injured, ensure that the juvenile's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) is/are notified.
B. Make notification by telephone or in person within a reasonable time.

4.7 License Re-Examination Referral

A. Members may request that the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) re-examine an individual for the following reasons:
    1. Suspected incompetence.
    2. Physical or mental disability.
    3. Disease.
    4. Other inabilities deemed to prevent the safe operation of a motor vehicle.
B. Re-examination forms are available in the Traffic Section.
    1. Mail to the Motor Vehicle Division (MVD), Medical Review Program.

4.8 Jurisdictional Questions

A. Occasionally, a question or dispute may arise over which law enforcement agency is responsible for reporting and investigating a collision.
    1. This generally occurs at or near the Mesa City limits.
B. MPD handles the investigation of a collision whenever:
    1. The first harmful event occurs within the City of Mesa limits.
    2. The movement of the traffic unit originated within the City of Mesa, but the first harmful event occurs within an adjoining jurisdiction (must be directly related).
C. Avoid jurisdictional disputes with other agencies.
    1. In emergency situations, provide all needed assistance.
    2. Clarify non-emergency jurisdictional disputes with assistance from Communications and the City of Mesa Transportation Department.