15.260 – Collision Investigations

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15.260-POL

1. SECTOR-Trained Officers Complete an E-Collision Form to Document Collision Investigations, As Appropriate

(See manual section 15.380 - SECTOR)

2. Officers Take Collision Reports for All Mandatory Reportable Collisions

Officers report all accidents that occur on a "highway" (SMC 11.14.245), "roadway" (SMC 11.14.530) or "way open to the public" (SMC 11.14.715), and there is:

- Injury or death of any person
- Damage to the property of any one person to an apparent extent of $1,000 or more
- A hit-and-run is involved
- Enforcement action is taken against one or more of the parties involved
- The collision resulted in the release of hazardous material
- The operator of any involved vehicle is suspected of being under the influence of alcohol or drugs

Officers only complete a Washington State Police Traffic Collision Report (PTCR) or E-Collision (SECTOR) form for collisions meeting the above criteria.

- Officers complete a sketch of the collision scene and document the investigation in the narrative on the collision report.

Officers provide an incident number to the involved parties to include the sworn employee's name and serial number. Involved parties are

referred to the Public Request Unit to obtain a copy of the collision report.

3. Officers May Assist Motorists in Non-Reportable Collisions

Officers may provide the Exchange of Traffic Collision Information (Form 5.9) to facilitate the exchange of information between motorists.

When either party in a non-reportable collision requests a report, officers may either:

- Complete an incident report, or
- Provide information about completing a Civilian Report on the Washington State Patrol's Collision Reports website (Washington State Patrol Online Motor Vehicle Collision Reporting (OMVCR)).

4. Officers Take Enforcement Action in Reportable Non-Felony Collision Investigations

If the on-scene investigation yields evidence of a traffic violation, officers will issue a Criminal Citation or Notice of Infraction to the violator(s).

- If no enforcement action is taken, the officer will document the reason for no enforcement on the collision report.

Exception: If the collision involves a department vehicle during an emergency response, refer to manual section 13.030 - Emergency Vehicle Operations.

5. Officers Refer Felony Collision Investigations to Traffic Collision Investigation Squad (TCIS)

Officers do not issue tickets in a felony collision investigation.

Investigations that require no TCIS response at the time of on-scene investigation, but may develop into a felony, are referred to TCIS.

6. TCIS Responds to Certain Collisions

Serious Bodily Injury – involves a temporary but substantial disfigurement, or which causes a temporary but substantial loss or impairment of the function of any bodily part or organ, or which causes a fracture of any bodily part.

Special consideration should be given for a TCIS response for serious injuries to persons over 70-years-old or under 5-years-old.

TCIS is called for any collision involving:

- Death or injury likely to cause death
- Collisions where there is probable cause for vehicular homicide, vehicular assault, or hit-and-run investigations with serious bodily injury
- Collision during a police pursuit that results in serious injuries to any party
- Collisions involving City equipment with serious bodily injury

A sergeant may screen any incident with TCIS. Officers will document if TCIS was contacted and what direction was provided.

Sworn employees will try to protect the scene and secure evidence.

7. Officers Impound Vehicles in Certain Collisions

Officers will use a Washington State Tow/Impound and Inventory Record form to impound vehicles when:

- The driver is arrested during the investigation (mandatory for DUI arrests).
- The driver is injured and unable to move the vehicle.
- The vehicle is disabled and unable to be legally parked.

Officers document the tow company, storage location, and any holds placed on the vehicle in the collision report.

Officers may only place a TCIS hold on the suspect vehicle involved in a hit-and-run investigation when these conditions are met:

- An involved party has sustained serious bodily injury, and
- The suspect has not been identified.

(See manual section 6.120 – Impounding Vehicles)

8. Sworn Employees Do Not Recommend Tow Companies

Officers impound vehicles related to investigations through Communications.

9. Light Rail Vehicle (LRV) or Streetcar Collisions Require Additional Reporting

Policy regarding mandatory reportable collisions and TCIS call out applies to LRV or streetcar collisions.

(See 15.260-TSK-1 Officers Investigating an LRV Collision)

15.260-TSK-1 Officers Investigating an LRV or Streetcar Collision

When investigating and reporting a collision involving LRVs or streetcars and a vehicle, officers will:

1. **Report** collisions on a PTCR or SECTOR form.
    - Collisions with pedestrians are reported on an incident report and not on a PTCR or SECTOR form.
2. **List** the LRVs or streetcar's identifying number, located on the side of the coach, in the narrative.
    - Do not list the LRV or streetcar as either unit #1 or unit #2.
3. **List** the LRV or streetcar operator as a witness.
    - Do not list the LRV or streetcar operator as a driver.
4. **Record** in the narrative:
    - The operator's King County DOT Streetcar Certification card and King County Metro Insurance card.
5. **List** all passengers on the Collision Report, Multi-Passenger Vehicle Continuation Sheet (Form 19.4)
6. **Complete** a sketch of the collision.