

	LANE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE POLICY	Number: G.O. 7.49
		Issue Date: September 8, 2022
		Revision Date:
CHAPTER: Patrol	Related Policies:	
SUBJECT: Aircraft Accidents	Related Laws: NTSB, FAA, ORS 837	

POLICY: This policy describes situations involving aircraft accidents including responsibilities of personnel, making proper notification, and documentation. Aircraft accidents occurring at the Eugene Airport will generally be handled in accordance with the Eugene Airport Emergency Plan. This policy is designed to deal primarily with aircraft accidents occurring elsewhere in the county.

DEFINITION:

Aircraft: Any contrivance now known, or hereafter invented, used or designed for navigation of or flight in the air, including a balloon, which is designed for maneuvering in airspace at an altitude greater than two feet above ground or water level, and which is designed to carry one or more person(s) and/or which is a military aircraft. A hang glider is not included in this definition.

Aircraft accident: An occurrence associated with the operation of an aircraft which takes place between the time any person boards the aircraft with intention of flight and the time at which all such persons have disembarked, and in which any person suffers death or serious injury, or in which the aircraft receives substantial damage. In the case of an unmanned military aircraft, this would include any incident resulting in substantial damage to the aircraft which occurs between the time the aircraft becomes airborne and the time it safely lands at its destination.

RULE:

PROCEDURE:

I. Responding Deputy

Officers should treat an aircraft accident site as a crime scene until it is determined that such is not the case.

The duties of an aircraft accident include the following:

- A. Determine the nature and extent of the accident.
- B. Request additional personnel and other resources to respond as needed.

- C. Provide assistance for the injured parties until the arrival of fire department personnel and/or other emergency personnel.
- D. Cordon off and contain the area to exclude unauthorized individuals as soon as practicable.
- E. Provide crowd control and other assistance until directed otherwise by a supervisor.
- F. Ensure the Medical Examiner's Office is notified if a death occurs.
- G. If there appears to be a large number of fatalities, consider contacting the County Health Department for mass casualty assistance. In addition, implement provisions of other department policies relevant to mass casualty incidents.
- H. Interview witnesses. Document their contact information, and as well as their observations regarding such things as:
 - 1. Weather conditions (including wind) at the time of the accident
 - 2. Whether the aircraft was on fire in flight
 - 3. Whether there was an explosion in the air prior to the accident
 - 4. Any sounds heard (e.g., engine noise, or lack thereof)
 - 5. Whether objects were seen falling from the aircraft
- I. Entering an aircraft or tampering with parts or debris is only permissible for the purpose of removing injured or trapped occupants, protecting the wreckage from further damage, or protecting the public from danger. If possible, the investigating authority should first be consulted before entering or moving any aircraft or any crash debris. Photographs or sketches of the original positions should be made whenever feasible.
- J. The Fire Department will be responsible for control of the accident scene until the injured parties are cared for and the accident scene has been rendered safe for containment. Thereafter, law enforcement personnel will be responsible for preserving the scene until relieved by the investigating authority.
- K. Once the scene is relinquished to the investigating authority, personnel from this agency may assist in containment of the scene until the investigation is completed or assistance is no longer needed.

- L. The Eugene Airport Director or designee may respond to the scene to assist the on-scene commander with technical expertise, should it be needed during the operation.

II. National Transportation Safety Board

- A. The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) has the primary responsibility for investigating accidents involving civil aircraft. In the case of a military aircraft incident the appropriate branch of the military will be involved in the investigation. The NTSB is concerned with several aspects of an accident as described in this section.
- B. Every effort should be made to preserve the scene to the extent possible in the condition in which it was found until such time as NTSB or other authorized personnel arrive to take charge of the scene.
- C. Military personnel will respond to take charge of any military aircraft involved, whether or not injuries or deaths have occurred.
- D. If the accident did not result in a death or injury and the NTSB elects not to respond, the pilot or owner may assume control of the aircraft.
- E. Removal of the wreckage shall be done under the guidance of the NTSB or military authorities or, if the NTSB is not responding for an onsite investigation, at the discretion of the pilot or the owner.

III. Reporting

- A. Dispatchers are responsible to make notifications as directed 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. Generally, the dispatcher will need to notify the following agencies or individuals when an aircraft accident has occurred:
 - 1. Fire Department
 - 2. The affected airport tower
 - 3. Closest military base if a military aircraft is involved (Air Traffic Tower will assist)
 - 4. Ambulances or other assistance as required
 - 5. FAA Seattle Center (if Eugene Air Traffic Tower is closed)

- B. When an aircraft accident is reported to the Sheriff's Office by airport personnel, the dispatcher receiving such information should verify that the airport personnel will contact the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Flight Standards District Office and the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB). In the event that airport personnel are not involved, the dispatcher should notify the FAA and the NTSB.
- C. The Records Division is responsible for the following:
 - 1. Forward an approved copy of the accident report to the Oregon Department of Aviation.
 - 2. Forward a copy of the report to the Patrol Division Captain, the Eugene Airport Director, and the manager of any other affected airport.

IV. Response Procedures

- A. Assess the scene and advise dispatch:
 - 1. Type of aircraft involved, hull number, and whether civilian or military
 - 2. Safe avenues of approach, and areas to be avoided
 - 3. Number of persons on board (estimated or actual) and condition
 - 4. Whether any buildings are involved and, if so, the building type and whether the building is on fire
 - 5. Additional personnel and/or equipment needed
- B. Establish inner and outer perimeters.
- C. Maintain security of the scene, including the crash site and the debris field, which may encompass a large area.
- D. When practical, approach the aircraft with the wind at your back, to avoid any toxic smoke or fumes.
- E. Be alert for explosions that could occur from such sources as fuel, oxygen, tires, de-icing equipment, and batteries. Some of these may be a delayed reaction. In addition, metal at the crash site may retain heat from friction or fire in sufficient amount to cause injury.
- F. If approaching along the crash path, be alert for wreckage or survivors that may have been thrown clear of the aircraft or ejected.

V. Military Aircraft

- A. Armament and other equipment installed on a wide variety of military aircraft may present significant hazards to response personnel. Safety devices may have been rendered inoperable following a crash, making weapon systems unsafe or unstable. Assume the aircraft is armed with ammunition, rockets, or other explosive devices.
- B. Fighter aircraft danger areas include the canopy, jet intakes, jet exhaust, and armament areas. Some aircraft carry an extremely hazardous fuel cell.
- C. Avoid approaching from the front, as weapons could discharge in that direction. There is also the possibility that the radar system could be active on the nose of the aircraft. Conduct rescue or firefighting operations from the sides.
- D. Ejection seats, present in certain military aircraft, are very dangerous. Don't raise, move, or tamper with arm rests, or with crew member seats or harnesses. What you don't know about ejection seats can kill you. Seek the assistance of trained personnel (fire/rescue or military) if it is necessary to remove someone from an ejection seat. (These may be marked with a triangle, indicating "Danger – Ejection Seat.")
- E. Parachutes, which may be affixed to crew members or equipment, may be equipped with devices that forcefully eject the parachute material from the pack. When it is necessary to remove or transport a person wearing a parachute, care should be taken not to activate the ejection mechanism (e.g., rip cord).
- F. Emergency exits are indicated by orange-yellow markings. Arrows will indicate rescue points; instructions are stenciled near the arrow markings.
- G. Stay clear of intakes and exhausts of operating jet engines (at least 25' from the intake and 330' from the exhaust).
- H. Radar, often located in the nose of the aircraft, can represent a danger area extending to 30' unless the equipment has been shut down.
- I. A minimum perimeter of 2500 feet should be established as soon as practical.
- J. Military aircraft may contain classified information and/or equipment, which should be protected until custody is assumed by military authorities. Prevent the taking of photographs of such classified information/equipment by civilians to the extent feasible.
- K. If the aircraft is on fire keep clear of the smoke due to it being highly toxic due to the aircrafts materials. For fighter aircraft do not attempt to move pieces of the

aircraft unless for life safety reasons. There is inhalation hazards with many of the materials on a fighter aircraft.