

Aircraft Accidents

416.1 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 applicable portions of the Crime and Disaster Scene Integrity or Hazardous Material Response policies.

416.1.1 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.

416.2 POLICY

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

416.3 ARRIVAL AT SCENE

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

- (a) Establish radio communications with the Easton Tower to allow access to airfield (if applicable.)
- (b) Protect persons and property.
- (c) Prevent any disturbance or further damage to the wreckage or debris, except to preserve life or rescue the injured.
- (d) Preserve ground scars and marks made by the aircraft.
- (e) Manage the admission and access of public safety and medical personnel to the extent necessary to preserve life or to stabilize hazardous materials.
- (f) Maintain a record of persons who enter the accident site.
- (g) Consider implementation of an Incident Command System (ICS.)

416.4 INJURIES AND CASUALTIES

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

416.5 NOTIFICATIONS

When an aircraft accident is reported to this department, the responding supervisor shall ensure notification is or has been made to the Maryland State Police and the Easton Airport.

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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) Talbot Center.
- (b) Easton Airport (if accident occurred at this location.)
- (c) Fire Department.
- (d) Appropriate airport tower (Easton Tower.)
- (e) Emergency Medical Services (EMS.)
- (f) Maryland State Police (Preliminary Investigation.)
- (g) Talbot County Sheriff's Office (Traffic Control.)

416.6 CONTROLLING ACCESS AND SCENE AUTHORITY

Prior to Maryland State Police or NTSB arrival, scene access should be limited to authorized personnel from the following:

- (a) FAA.
- (b) Fire department, EMS or other assisting law enforcement agencies.
- (c) Medical Examiner.
- (d) Appropriate branch of the military, when applicable.
- (e) Other emergency services agencies (e.g., HAZMAT teams, biohazard decontamination teams, fuel recovery specialists, explosive ordinance disposal specialists.)
- (f) NTSB

The Maryland State Police and 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 Maryland State Police or military representative arrives on scene, the efforts of this department will shift to a support role for those agencies.

416.7 DANGEROUS MATERIALS

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

- Fuel, chemicals, explosives, biological, radioactive materials, bombs or other ordnance.
- Pressure vessels, compressed gas bottles, accumulators and tires.
- Fluids, batteries, flares and igniters.

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- Evacuation chutes, ballistic parachute systems and composite materials.

416.8 DOCUMENTATION

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

416.8.1 WITNESSES

Members tasked with contacting witnesses should obtain the following:

- (a) Witness location at the time of his/her observation relative to the accident site.
- (b) A detailed description of what was observed or heard.
- (c) The names of all persons reporting the accident, even if not yet interviewed.
- (d) Audio recordings of reports to 9-1-1 regarding the accident and dispatch records.

416.9 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 referred to the NTSB and Maryland State Police.

The Maryland State Police will generally be responsible for any family notifications and the release or victims' names. The NTSB generally will not assume these tasks.