

# 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, Emergency Operations Plan and 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 University of Maryland, Baltimore 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) Protect persons and property.
- (b) Prevent any disturbance or further damage to the wreckage or debris, except to preserve life or rescue the injured.
- (c) Preserve ground scars and marks made by the aircraft.
- (d) Manage the admission and access of public safety and medical personnel to the extent necessary to preserve life or to stabilize hazardous materials.
- (e) Maintain a record of persons who enter the accident site.
- (f) Consider implementation of an Incident Command System (ICS).

## 416.4 INJURIES AND CASUALTIES

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

Those tasked with the supervision of the scene should coordinate with the Baltimore Police Department (BPD) and National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) before the removal of bodies. If that is not possible, the scene supervisor shall ensure documentation of what was disturbed, including switch/control positions and instrument/gauge readings.

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### **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 Baltimore Police Department, which will assume responsibility of the accident scene and will notify the applicable federal agencies (e.g., NTSB, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), and appropriate branch of the military if necessary.

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) Fire department
- (b) Appropriate airport tower
- (c) Emergency medical services (EMS)

### **416.6 CONTROLLING ACCESS AND SCENE AUTHORITY**

Prior to BPD and NTSB arrival, scene access should be limited to authorized personnel from the:

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

The 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 BPD, NTSB or military representative arrives on scene, the efforts of this department will shift to a support role for those agencies.

If NTSB or a military representative determines that an aircraft or accident does not qualify under its jurisdiction, BPD will be the primary agency responsible for handling and investigating the incident.

### **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 department's jurisdiction shall be documented. An incident report shall be submitted by the primary officer for the assistance provided to the Baltimore Police Department and other government agencies to capture this incident. The incident report shall, at minimum, include the date, time and location of the incident; any witness statements, if taken; the names of UMBPD members deployed to assist; other 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 WRECKAGE**

When reasonably safe, members should:

- (a) Obtain the aircraft registration number (N number) and note the type of aircraft.
- (b) Attempt to ascertain the number of casualties.
- (c) Obtain photographs or video of the overall wreckage, including the cockpit and damage, starting at the initial point of impact, if possible, and any ground scars or marks made by the aircraft.
  1. Military aircraft may contain classified equipment and therefore shall not be photographed unless authorized by a military commanding officer (18 USC § 795).
- (d) Secure, if requested by the lead authority, any electronic data or video recorders from the aircraft that became dislodged or cell phones or other recording devices that are part of the wreckage.
- (e) Acquire copies of any recordings from security cameras that may have captured the incident.

##### **416.8.2 WITNESSES**

Members tasked with contacting witnesses should obtain:

- (a) The location of the witness at the time of his/her observation relative to the accident site.
- (b) A detailed description of what was observed or heard.
- (c) Any photographs or recordings of the accident witnesses may be willing to voluntarily surrender.
- (d) The names of all persons reporting the accident, even if not yet interviewed.
- (e) Any audio recordings of reports to the Communications Section regarding the accident and dispatch records.

#### **416.9 MEDIA RELATIONS**

The Public Information Officer (PIO) should coordinate with the BPD PIO a response to the media, including access issues, road closures, detours and any safety information that is pertinent to the

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surrounding community. Any release of information regarding details of the accident itself should be coordinated with the NTSB or other authority who may have assumed responsibility for the investigation.

Depending on the type of aircraft, the airline or the military may be responsible for family notifications and the release of victims' names. The PIO should coordinate with the BPD PIO before the release of information.