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OPERATIONS MANUAL

STANDARD INSTRUCTION 02 SPECIAL RESPONSE GUIDELINES

SECTION 22: VEHICLE INCIDENT PROCEDURE (INCLUDING PRIVATE VEHICLES  
ON CITY BUSINESS)

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<b>TITLE</b> O P E R A T I O N S M A N U A L	<b>STANDARD</b> I N S T R U C T I O N 02		<b>DEPARTMENT</b> F I R E - R E S C U E
<b>SUBJECT:</b> SPECIAL RESPONSE GUIDELINES VEHICLE INCIDENT PROCEDURES (INCLUDING PRIVATE VEHICLES ON CITY BUSINESS)	<b>SECTION</b> 22	<b>PAGE</b> 2 of 6	<b>EFFECTIVE DATE</b> 1 October 2021

**I. PURPOSE**

Any San Diego Fire-Rescue Department (SDFD) employee, uniformed or non-uniformed, who is involved in a vehicle or industrial incident while operating a SDFD vehicle, or a privately-owned vehicle on authorized City business, shall follow the vehicle incident reporting procedures listed in this standard instruction.

**II. SCOPE**

This policy shall apply to all San Diego Fire-Rescue Department (SDFD) L145/L911 personnel.

**III. AUTHORITY**

The fire chief authorizes the information within this policy.

**IV. POLICY**

**A. Driver/Operator or Officer Report**

When involved in a vehicle incident, the driver/operator or officer in charge of a fire vehicle shall notify the Emergency Command & Data Center (ECDC), and Lifeguards will notify the Lifeguard Communications Center (LCC), providing the following details:

1. Nature of incident
2. Injury or non-injury, nature of injuries and the number of injured
3. Equipment involved, including apparatus number
4. Exact location of the incident
5. Type of assistance needed (ambulance, tow truck, duty mechanic, etc.)
6. Exact time of incident
7. Extent of damage

**B. ECDC Notifications (for fire personnel)**

ECDC will initiate an incident and notify the following personnel:

1. Battalion chief in whose district the incident occurred
2. Logistics battalion chief
3. Immediate supervisor of person(s) involved in the incident
4. Department safety officer
5. On-duty deputy chief of operations
6. Ambulance medical coordinator/supervisor if the incident involves an ambulance
7. Law enforcement shall be notified if:
  - a. Incident resulted in injuries
  - b. Incident didn't occur on City property
  - c. Incident damage isn't limited to City property

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C. LCC Notifications (for lifeguard personnel)

LCC will initiate an incident and notify the following personnel:

1. On-duty marine safety lieutenant (LT)
2. Marine safety captain
3. Immediate supervisor of person(s) involved in the incident
4. Law enforcement shall be notified if
  - a. Incident resulted in injuries
  - b. Incident didn't occur on City property
  - c. Incident damage isn't limited to City property

D. Deputy Chief of Operations/Marine Safety Lieutenant Responsibilities

The on-duty deputy chief of operations or marine safety lieutenant shall respond to any incident involving serious injury, or major damage to City property, to assist in documentation and incident investigation.

E. Battalion Chief Responsibilities

1. Respond to all Fire vehicle incidents in their respective district, in which SDFD Fire personnel, vehicles or equipment are involved, to assist in documentation, pictures and the incident investigation.
2. Any/all investigations will be conducted, and be consistent with, the Firefighters Procedural Bill of Rights Act ("FBOR") or the Public Safety Officers Procedural Bill of Rights Act ("POBOR").
3. Review and forward all department required vehicle incident reporting forms to the Professional Standards Unit.

F. Marine Safety Lieutenant Responsibilities

1. Respond to all Lifeguard vehicle incidents in which SDFD Lifeguard personnel, vehicles or equipment are involved, to assist in documentation, pictures and the incident investigation.
2. Any/all investigations will be conducted, and be consistent with, the Firefighters Procedural Bill of Rights Act ("FBOR") or the Public Safety Officers Procedural Bill of Rights Act ("POBOR").
3. Review and forward all department required vehicle incident reporting forms to the marine safety captain.

G. Supervisor Responsibilities

1. Complete supervisor sections for all Department required vehicle incident reporting forms.
2. Review and forward all Department required vehicle incident reporting forms to their respective Battalion Chief or Marine Safety Lieutenant incident within seven calendar days.

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3. If the circumstances of the incident are suspected to involve alcohol or substance abuse, the supervisor's first duty is to notify law enforcement if they are not already present. If the incident is determined by law enforcement to not fall under criminal scrutiny, and the driver is still suspected of being under the influence of alcohol or drugs, then the supervisor shall determine which of the following apply and follow the process and procedures therein:
  - a. A.R. 97.00 (Substance Abuse Policy) for drug and alcohol testing
  - b. If the driver is a commercial driver, refer to RM-1694 for instructions related to drug and alcohol testing requirements

H. Driver/Operator Responsibilities

1. Make no statements, verbal or written to anyone except investigators from Compliance Department (CD), Law Enforcement assigned to investigate the incident and SFD officials.
2. Submit all department required vehicle incident reporting forms to their immediate supervisor within 72 hours.
3. Any/all statements made by the Driver/Operator will be obtained, and be consistent with, the Firefighters Procedural Bill of Rights Act ("FBOR") or the Public Safety Officers Procedural Bill of Rights Act ("POBOR").

I. Vehicle Incident during Emergency Response – Major Damage or Injuries

In the event an emergency response vehicle is involved in a vehicle incident while responding to an emergency in which there is major damage, injuries and/or the apparatus is unable to continue to respond, the company officer or lifeguard shall:

1. Assess all crewmembers and civilians involved in the incident for injuries
2. Ensure care is initiated for those that are injured
3. Take all necessary precautions to ensure the safety of the crew and public
4. Notify ECDC or LCC of vehicle status and provide the required vehicle incident information
5. Request additional resources, ALS or BLS units and initiate new incident as needed
6. Ensure a replacement unit be added to the original response

J. Vehicle Incident during Emergency Response – Minor Damage

In the event an emergency response vehicle is involved in a vehicle incident while responding, in which there is minor damage and the vehicle can continue the response, the company officer or lifeguard shall:

1. Assess all crewmembers and civilians involved in the incident for injuries.
2. Determine whether to continue the response based on incident scene factors (i.e. injuries, liability, etc.) and if unable to respond, ensure replacement unit added to original response.
3. Notify ECDC or LCC of vehicle status and provide the required incident information.

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4. Exchange information if the other party is available or drop off one employee and proceed to the emergency if the party is not available.
5. When the emergency is terminated, return to the incident scene to complete the required Department vehicle incident reporting procedures.
6. In reference to AR 75.12, 4.1.3, this SI serves as the practice of the Fire-Rescue Department.

**K. Vehicle Incidents in Which Involved Parties are Refusing Care or Treatment**

1. Requests should be made through ECDC or LCC to have another ALS unit respond to the location of the incident.
2. Assessments should be done by ALS personnel not involved in the incident.
3. Crewmember(s) shall initiate care if able to do so but shall relinquish this care when properly relieved.
4. Patients shall receive full appropriate assessments to determine injuries or care that may be necessary.
5. Patients meeting the criteria set forth in San Diego County EMS policies, shall sign an Against Medical Advice (AMA) form.
6. Patients refusing to sign the AMA:
  - a. It shall be noted on the AMA form that the patient refused to sign
  - b. An impartial witness should sign the form as a witness
7. Each patient's assessments and/or care shall be documented on an individual patient care report.

**L. Vehicle Incident Documentation Procedures**

1. The responding battalion chief or marine safety lieutenant shall be responsible to take photographs at any vehicle incident involving SDFD vehicles equipment or on duty personnel.
  - a. When taking incident photographs, the following guidelines should be utilized:
    - 1) Photograph all four sides of each vehicle involved in the incident
    - 2) Ensure license plate and apparatus numbers are photographed for each vehicle
    - 3) Photograph the intersection and/or approach areas that are directly involved with the incident scene
    - 4) Photograph any physical factors involved in the incident scene that may relate the cause of the incident
    - 5) Photograph any visible skid marks or tire tracks of the primary vehicles involved in the incident
    - 6) Include all photographs with the Vehicle Incident Documentation envelope

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2. The Driver/Operator and immediate supervisor shall ensure the following required department vehicle incident reporting forms are completed and included in the Vehicle Incident Package envelope:
  - a. **CD-1551** – Employee Vehicle Incident/Industrial Incident Damage Report
  - b. **CD-1555** – Supervisors Vehicle Incident/Industrial Incident Investigation Report
3. The immediate supervisor shall forward the Vehicle Incident Package envelope to their respective Battalion Chief or Marine Safety Lieutenant within seven calendar days from the incident notification date
4. The Battalion Chief or Marine Safety Lieutenant shall ensure all department vehicle incident reporting procedures are completed, including:
  - a. Ensure all required vehicle incident forms are submitted within the required time frame
  - b. Review all reports and for accuracy and required signatures
  - c. Include all photographs in the Vehicle Incident Package envelope
  - d. Email the Vehicle Incident Package envelope to SDFD Vehicle Incidents ([SDFDVehicleAccidents@sandiego.gov](mailto:SDFDVehicleAccidents@sandiego.gov)) and forward the envelope to the Professional Standards Unit.