

## Aircraft Accidents

### 705.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to provide office deputies 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.

#### 705.1.1 DEFINITIONS

Definitions related to this policy include:

**Aircraft** - Any fixed wing aircraft, rotorcraft, balloon, blimp/dirigible, drone or glider that is capable of carrying a person, or any unmanned aerial vehicle other than those intended for non-commercial recreational use.

### 705.2 POLICY

It is the policy of the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office to provide an appropriate emergency response to aircraft accidents. This includes emergency medical care and scene management.

### 705.3 ARRIVAL AT SCENE

Deputies 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 the Incident Command System (ICS).

### 705.4 INJURIES AND CASUALTIES

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

Those tasked with the supervision of the scene should coordinate with the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) prior to the removal of any decedents. If that is not possible, the scene supervisor should ensure documentation of what was disturbed, including switch/control positions and instrument/gauge readings.

# Montgomery County Sheriff's Office

## Policy Manual

### *Aircraft Accidents*

---

#### **705.5 NOTIFICATIONS**

When an aircraft accident is reported to this office, the responding supervisor shall ensure notification is or has been made to NTSB, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and when applicable, the appropriate branch of the military.

- a. NTSB Emergency contact info 1-844-373-9922
- b. FAA Emergency contact info 1-866-835-5322
- c. Fort Bragg Provost Marshall 1-910-396-1179

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)

#### **705.6 CONTROLLING ACCESS AND SCENE AUTHORITY**

Prior to 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 if needed
- (d) Appropriate branch of the military, when applicable
- (a) Other emergency services agencies (e.g., hazardous materials 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 NTSB or military representative arrives on scene, the efforts of this office 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, the on-scene office supervisor should ensure the accident is still appropriately investigated and documented.

# Montgomery County Sheriff's Office

## Policy Manual

### *Aircraft Accidents*

---

#### **705.7 DANGEROUS MATERIALS**

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

- Fuel, chemicals, explosives, biological and radioactive materials, bombs or other ordnance
- Pressure vessels, compressed gas bottles, accumulators and tires
- Fluids, batteries, flares and igniters
- Evacuation chutes, ballistic parachute systems and composite materials

#### **705.8 DOCUMENTATION**

All aircraft accidents occurring within the County 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 MCSO deputies deployed to assist; other county resources that were utilized; and cross reference information to other investigating agencies. Suspected criminal activity should be documented on the appropriate crime report.

##### **705.8.1 WRECKAGE**

When reasonably safe, Deputies should obtain the following:

- (a) Aircraft registration number (N number)
- (b) Number of casualties
- (c) Photographs or video of the overall wreckage, including the cockpit and damage, starting at the initial point of impact, if possible
- (d) Photographs or video of any ground scars or marks made by the aircraft

##### **705.8.2 WITNESSES**

Deputies tasked with contacting witnesses should obtain the following:

- (a) Witness location at the time of his/her observation relative to the accident site
- (b) Detailed description of what was observed or heard
- (c) 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

#### **705.9 MEDIA RELATIONS**

The Sheriff or his designee 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 coordinated with the NTSB, if it is assuming responsibility for the investigation or other entity such as the military.

# Montgomery County Sheriff's Office

Policy Manual

## *Aircraft Accidents*

---

The Montgomery County Sheriff's Office will generally be responsible for any family notifications and the release of victims' names. The NTSB generally will not assume these tasks.