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- I. General Procedures
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- I. General Procedures

- A. One or more officers will be assigned by Communications personnel to respond to the scene of any collision on Commission property or roadways involving:
  - 1. Death or injury;
  - 2. Hit and run;
  - 3. Impairment of an operator due to alcohol or drugs;
  - 4. Damage to public vehicles or property;
  - 5. Hazardous materials;
  - 6. Disturbances between principals;
  - 7. Major traffic congestion as a result of a collision; or
  - 8. Damage to vehicles to the extent towing is required.
- B. Officers coming upon or being notified of collisions at any location will immediately notify Communications *and directly notify the police department with jurisdiction.*
- C. The primary officer assigned to a collision by Communications or a supervisor will be the officer in charge at the collision scene, unless a collision reconstruction specialist takes over the scene.
- D. After a supervisory evaluation of the situation, one or more collision reconstruction specialists will be notified and respond to the scene of any collision involving death or life threatening injury, or significant damage to an occupied Commission vehicle. A supervisor or watch commander may request that a collision reconstruction specialist respond to any collision involving unusual situations or circumstances. All officers are encouraged to consult directly with one of these officers concerning questions or problems relating to any phase of a collision investigation.
  - 1. When a collision reconstruction specialist responds to a collision scene and is to conduct a reconstruction, that officer will be in charge of the collision scene and subsequent investigation. The initially assigned officer will be responsible for the preliminary investigation, interviewing witnesses and completing the MSP MAARS report, as well as any associated activities.
  - 2. Whenever a collision reconstruction specialist is requested at a collision scene, pending their arrival, the scene is not to be disturbed or altered in any manner other than for those measures necessary for safety, extrication, rescue and life saving.
  - 3. A collision reconstruction specialist may utilize other expert and technical assistance during their investigation in those instances where it would be beneficial to the investigation. Requests will be approved by the reconstruction coordinator.

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- E. Whenever the investigating officer detects a traffic law violation during a collision investigation and evidence exists to satisfy all of the elements of the particular violation, enforcement action may be taken.
- F. In all fatal collisions **and** all serious injury collisions where death may result, the *Division's accident reconstruction specialist will investigate the collision jointly with the Montgomery County Police (MCP). MCP will be responsible for submitting the MAARS report for all such accidents. Officers will contact the State's Attorney's Office prior to making any charges.*
- G. In the case of civilian collisions, which occur on private property, as defined in the MAARS Manual, no reports will be made or investigations conducted.
- IV. At-Scene Stabilization Activities
- A. It is the responsibility of the first officer(s) at the scene of a traffic collision to position the police vehicle to protect the scene and provide adequate notice to approaching traffic.
- B. Other duties will be carried out as required, including:
1. Administer emergency medical care and provide basic life support;
  2. Summons necessary fire/rescue assistance;
  3. Notifying Communications for the containment and removal of any hazardous materials;
  4. Summons additional police assistance;
  5. Protect the collision scene;
  6. Preserve any short-lived evidence;
  7. Establish a safe traffic pattern around the scene;
  8. Locate witnesses; and
  9. Protect and assist fire/rescue personnel.
- C. Officers arriving at a collision scene and detecting a hazardous material will immediately request fire/rescue assistance, if it is not already en route. It is the responsibility of arriving officers to isolate the hazard area and evacuate non-essential personnel (See also the Division Directive on "Evacuation"). Officers on the scene prior to fire/rescue are also responsible for preliminary hazard identification (spill, leak, fire) and identification of vehicle and container placards.
- NOTE: Only properly trained and equipped officers will attempt to enter areas where hazardous materials may be encountered.
- D. The investigating officer will ensure that all property belonging to collision victims transported from the scene is protected from theft or pilferage and is removed for safekeeping if the owner is unable to care for it. Vehicles being towed, where the owner or operator is not present, will be inventoried and all valuables removed (see the Division Directive on "Towing Motor Vehicles/Marine Vessels"). These valuables, as well as any other property belonging to persons transported from the scene, will be listed on a Property Report and turned over to the Property Specialist.

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- V. Collision Reports and Records
- A. An investigation will be conducted and a written report will be made of all collisions where an officer responds to the scene and the collision involves:
1. Death or injury;
  2. Property damage (other than to involved vehicles);
  3. Property damage hit and run where a striking vehicle description is available;
  4. Impairment of a driver due to alcohol or drugs;
  5. Damage to any vehicle which necessitates towing; or
  6. Hazardous materials (other than normal vehicle-use fluids).
- B. Officers responding to or coming upon collisions on park property which do not meet the reporting criteria will advise the operators that it is their responsibility to exchange information required by state law.
1. The officer will make a license and registration check of each operator and vehicle involved. Any violations may be cited without conducting a collision investigation.
  2. The officer will ensure that the scene is cleared from the roadway and may remain at the scene to ensure that the information exchange is done peacefully.
- C. All reportable collisions will be documented on the MSP Maryland Automated Accident Reporting System (MAARS) report utilizing the procedures outlined in the MAARS Instruction and Reference Manual. A Park Police *Incident Report* will be used for the narrative continuation and any follow-up investigation or information. *In addition to* the diagram on the MSP MAARS report a detailed diagram may be done on a separate page and attached to the report. Every continuation and attachment page must reference the MAARS form report number (upper left corner in red).
- D. No report or investigation is required in instances where the vehicles have been ~~moved~~ *removed* from the scene and no death or injury resulted from the collision.
- E. Collision Reconstruction Reports
1. All collision reconstruction reports will contain a face sheet containing the following information; the statement at the top of the page "COLLISION RECONSTRUCTION REPORT", the type of collision (Fatal, Serious Injury, Commission Vehicle, etc.), location, date and time, case number, MAARS report number, name *and signature* of officer(s) conducting the investigation and preparing the report, a signature and date line for supervisor review and a signature and date line for coordinator review.
  2. All reconstruction reports will contain the following sections and information, at the least: pre-collision information and vehicle description(s), a description of the scene, the collision sequence, post-collision information including participant and witness statements and actions, scene analysis and investigation, investigating officers conclusion, a copy of the MAARS report, a scale diagram and photographs and negatives. Other information which may be attached includes; teletype copies, formula worksheets, etc.

3. The completed report of investigation, to include the reconstruction report, will be reviewed by the Assistant Chief, *Patrol Operations Branch*.
- F. The Park Police Records Section will be the official repository for all MAARS reports and reconstruction reports.

NOTE: All reconstruction reports will be placed in a folder or other container, which keeps all of the materials together and secure. These reports will be filed separate from the MAARS reports.

- G. Officers will document any present or potential traffic way hazard involving engineering design, defects or other deficiencies in their report and request that a copy be sent to Risk Management.
- H. If the investigator develops evidence that a defect in a vehicle was a primary cause of a collision, which resulted in death or serious injury, the vehicle **will be** towed to Park Police Headquarters for safekeeping. A memorandum will be submitted to the Chief, Park Police Division, via the chain of command, requesting an investigation by the Maryland State Police Automotive Safety Enforcement Division. Upon approval of the request, the Chief, Park Police Division, will submit a written request to MSP for their services stating the location where the vehicle is stored and attaching a copy of the collision report.

## VI. Commission Vehicle Collisions

### A. Collisions Involving Division Vehicles

1. Officer/Driver Responsibilities
  - a. Whenever a Division employee is involved in a traffic or non-traffic collision, the employee will immediately notify the Communications Section and provide the following information: exact location of the collision, severity of the collision - property damage or personal injury and request fire/rescue if necessary.
  - b. Employee will safeguard the collision scene until an investigating supervisor arrives.
  - c. Employee will not move involved vehicles until instructed to do so by investigating supervisor.
2. Communication's Responsibilities
  - a. Upon notification of collision will immediately request fire/rescue, as necessary.
  - b. Will notify employee's immediate supervisor and watch commander, if on duty.
3. Investigating Supervisor's Responsibilities
  - a. Will respond to the scene.

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- b. On Park Property or Off Park Property
    - (1) Will investigate and complete MAARS report for traffic collisions or Incident report for non-traffic collisions.
    - (2) Will respond to the scene and be responsible for preparation of Commander's Report and Division Vehicle Collision report.
    - (3) *Will document details of collision in Division Vehicle Collision Report.*
    - (4) *Will submit a Commander's Report and Incident Report and forward copies to the employee's supervisor.*
    - (5) Will be responsible for taking photographs of collision. Photographs will include the entire collision scene, its surroundings, any areas damaged on property or vehicles, as well as, other items/areas pertinent to the investigation.
    - (6) Will obtain automobile insurance information from all non-commission drivers involved in collision.
    - (7) Investigating Supervisor may assist primary police agency's collision investigator.
    - (8) Will review appropriate reports (MAARS, Division Vehicle Collision Report, Commander's Report or Incident Report) and make recommendation to Chief, Park Police Division prior to issuing any performance or disciplinary actions
  
  4. In collisions involving death or life threatening injury, or significant property damage, a Division collision reconstruction specialist will respond to the scene of the collision and assist the supervisor with their investigation. The watch commander, or the officer in charge on the scene, will, when necessary, authorize the call-out of one or more collision reconstruction specialists.

#### B. Collisions Involving Commission Vehicles

1. When officers investigate either a traffic or a non-traffic collision involving vehicles owned by the Commission occurring on Commission property, the following procedures will be followed:
  - a. Complete a MAARS report for each traffic collision involving a motor vehicle owned by the Commission, where there is personal injury or damage to property; **OR**
  - b. Complete an Incident report for each non-traffic collision involving a motor vehicle owned by the Commission, where the collision can be classified as a non-traffic collision, there is no personal injury and damage is confined to Commission-owned vehicles or property.

#### Examples:

- (1) A Commission truck runs off Sligo Creek Parkway and strikes a tree. MAARS report submitted.
- (2) A Commission truck backs into a light pole in the Shady Grove maintenance yard parking lot and there is damage to the pole or the truck only. Incident report submitted.

- (3) A Commission vehicle strikes a parked motor vehicle while driving through the Cabin John athletic area parking lot. MAARS report submitted.
2. The investigating officer will observe the following special instructions when completing the MAARS report:
  - a. Indicate ownership of the Commission vehicle as M-NCPPC and include the division or unit to which the vehicle is assigned.
  - b. Include the automobile insurance information from the drivers of all non-Commission vehicles involved. Enter self insured for the Commission vehicle.
3. *Records will forward report copies to Risk Management.*
4. *On scene Officers will advise Commission drivers of the post accident testing policy and supervisory notification requirements, however, Officers are not responsible for ensuring compliance.*

**Approved Park Police Document  
Signed Original on File**

**End of Directive**