



Directive 13.3 Annex 6

AIRCRAFT CRASH

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I. REFERENCES:

Code of Virginia 5.1-23
Alexandria Police Department Incident Command System

II. PURPOSE:

The purpose of this annex is to provide operational guidelines and procedures to be followed in the event of an aircraft crash in the City of Alexandria.

III. DISCUSSION

The proximity of Reagan National Airport and military airports to the City of Alexandria increases the probability of an aircraft crash occurring in the city. A disaster of this type would involve numerous city agencies with the major responsibility being on police and fire operations. The police must be able to handle the situation while continuing to provide emergency services to the public.

IV. COMMAND AND CONTROL

- A. In the event of an aircraft disaster, the primary function of the police operation is to isolate and secure the area.
 - 1. The first responding officers must approach the scene with care; and
 - a. be alert for survivors or wreckage that may have been thrown clear of the aircraft;
 - b. be alert for explosions that might occur from fuel, oxygen, tires, etc.
 - 2. After arrival on the scene, officers will:
 - a. Secure the area;
 - b. Close access roads;
 - c. Rope or tape off the area as soon as possible;
 - d. Ensure that the wreckage and deceased victims are not moved without approval of the responsible investigators from Virginia State Police,

- NTSB (National Transportation Safety Board), FAA, or the military (if U.S. Armed Forces aircraft is involved).
- e. Ensure that deceased victims are not moved or removed from the crash scene without the approval of the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME) and that clothing and personal effects are not separated from the bodies.
3. The on-duty Watch Commander will respond and initiate the police Incident Command System; and will:
 - a. Report to the ranking Fire Department official for coordination. The Fire Department operations officer has primary responsibility for command and control as long as fire fighting and rescue operations are ongoing. Once these activities have concluded, command and control for the scene shifts to the Police;
 - b. Ensure that notification and response of appropriate personnel is made;
 - c. Establish access and exit routes for emergency vehicles;
 - d. Provide assistance as requested by federal and state authorities;
 - e. Authorize callback of off-duty officers as necessary; and
 - f. Select a helicopter landing area, if needed.
 4. The on-duty Watch Commander will also ensure that the following notifications are made:
 - a. Virginia State Police - primary jurisdiction to investigate aircraft accidents in Virginia (District 7, [REDACTED]);
 - b. National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) – Communication Center has 24 hour-seven day a week access: [REDACTED]. The on-call investigator will respond. The NTSB designates other organizations or corporations as parties to the investigation. The FAA, by law, is designated as a party.
 - c. The FAA (will be contacted to respond by the NTSB investigator) ;
 - d. USAF Rescue Coordination Center, Langley AFB, Virginia, if military aircraft are involved call [REDACTED];
 - e. Virginia Office of the Chief Medical Examiner call [REDACTED]; and
 - f. Alert surrounding jurisdictions of the possibility that mutual aid may be needed.
 5. Even though by Virginia State Code 5.1-23 Virginia State Police have primary responsibility for aircraft crash investigations and contact with the agency should be made, in reality the first responding Alexandria police officers will secure the scene. The NTSB will be the lead agency to investigate commercial aircraft crashes and the FBI will assist them by providing evidence technicians. By written MOU the NTSB immediately notifies the FBI if the crash is due to a criminal act and the FBI will become the lead investigative agency with the NTSB providing any requested support. If a military aircraft is involved the relevant service will lead the investigation and the NTSB will provide any requested support.

V. PROCEDURES

- A.** All officers dispatched to assist will report to the staging area unless directed to a specific post. No officer will respond to the scene unless directed to do so by the dispatcher or other competent authority.
- B.** All officers will safeguard property and evidence coming to their attention as required by departmental procedures.
- C.** Rescue and first aid is the responsibility of Fire Department operations and all police officers are to concentrate their efforts on scene security and maintaining order. The scene will be guarded until it has been cleared or until the incident commander is assured that federal or state agencies have assumed the responsibility for the task.
- D.** No officer will release information to unauthorized persons or the press, except as provided in department procedures.
- E.** Members of the Crime Scene Investigations Section and Criminal Investigations Division will assist in tagging dead bodies and marking the location of the bodies, wreckage or debris.
- F.** Officers will report to the safety officer for decontamination prior to going off duty.
- G.** The safety officer will coordinate debriefing sessions for all on-scene personnel.