
**NEVADA COUNTY
SHERIFF'S OFFICE**



CORONER'S DIRECTIVE

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Effective Date ~~05/30/99~~
2/6/18

SUBJECT **AIRCRAFT ACCIDENTS**

POLICY To set standard procedures for the handling of aircraft accident deaths

PURPOSE To provide the investigator with basic information necessary for proper investigation of deaths in aircraft accidents

CODE REFERENCE

CASE LAW

DEFINITIONS

PROCEDURE

A. General Information

The investigation of aircraft accidents entails the cooperation and coordination of several government agencies. When the report of an aircraft accident is received, the investigator will ensure the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) have been notified--This will be done **prior to** responding to the scene. In the case of a military aircraft accident, the appropriate military agency shall be notified and will handle the investigation.

B. Specific Procedures

1. During the on-site investigation, certain details should be noted and certain procedures should be carried out by the investigator. If possible, note the number on the tail section of the aircraft.
2. Prior to removal of the deceased, photograph the overall scene, the body(s) and their location(s). Pictures of the cockpit and instrument panel should be taken with emphasis on the throttle and its position.

3. The deceased must be tagged prior to removal from the aircraft. Seatbelt positions should be noted for each of the deceased. Clothing descriptions should be noted for each victim.
 - a. The aircraft logbook should be located and taken into evidence. The logbook may be an application on a digital tablet.
 - b. Any personal property found in the aircraft should be tagged and its location in the aircraft noted.
 - c. Note the aircraft number, the airport of flight origin, and the destination in the report. The pilot's license number, type, and number of hours of pilot experience will be made a part of the report.
 - d. The flight plan and logbook are coroner's property.
4. Fingerprints will be taken on all victims of air crashes.
5. The pilot's wrists or arms may be broken (seldom passengers').
6. Protect the death scene until daylight prior to removing remains (if bodies are fragmented).

C. Report Contents

1. Include all of the above items
2. A brief description of the terrain (mountains, flat land, tree-covered, et cetera).
3. Description of the weather conditions.
4. Lighting conditions (bright daylight, dawn, dusk, dark, et cetera).
5. Whether aircraft was landing, taking off, between destinations, et cetera.
6. Description of aircraft:
 - a. Single-engine, multi-engine, non-engine, et cetera.
 - b. Propellers, jet glider, et cetera.
 - c. Make, model, and serial number.
 - d. Aircraft owner

e. Are maintenance schedules available?

7. Was there evidence of defect or malfunction?

D. Major Aircraft Disasters

Nevada County Office of Emergency Services (OES) and the Sheriff-Coroner will work together with other agencies under the County Emergency Operations Plan to handle any major aircraft accidents/disasters.