

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Reference Manual #60: Aviation Management

Chapter 17 – Aviation Mishap Procedures

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Reviewed by the Chief, Division of Fire and Aviation Management

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17 Aviation Mishap Procedures

17.1 Aircraft Mishaps

Aircraft mishaps range from most severe (accidents) to least severe (incidents).

17.1.1 Accidents

Accidents involve death or serious injury to an individual or substantial damage to the aircraft. All aviation accidents will be reported immediately following the procedures outlined in Chapter 17.2, *Mishap Notification Procedures* in accordance with [112 DM 12](#) and [352 DM 3, Aircraft Mishap Notification, Investigation, and Reporting](#) and NPS policy. Accident classification and investigation is the responsibility of the NTSB.

17.1.2 Incidents with Potential (IWP)

IWPs are those in which the circumstances indicate significant potential for substantial damage or serious injury that should be reported following the procedures outlined in Chapter 17.2, *Mishap Notification Procedures* in accordance with [352 DM 3](#). Final IWP classification and investigation for the DOI will be determined by the OAS Chief, Aviation Safety, Training, Program Evaluations, and Quality Management.

17.1.3 Aircraft Incidents

Aircraft incidents are occurrences that may affect the safety of operations. It is the responsibility of the employee to submit a SAFECOM for all incidents.

17.1.4 Accident/Incident NPS Review Process

The NPS RD will determine within 14 days whether an internal NPS review of an aviation mishap is necessary per [Director's Order-50B, Occupational Health and Safety Program](#).

17.2 Mishap Notification Procedures

Nothing in the following notification procedures should be interpreted to delay emergency response of immediately needed and locally available resources in the event of a life-threatening emergency or when notification could delay the resolution of an ongoing problem.

17.2.1 Initial Notification

In the event of an aircraft accident or an incident with potential, the aircraft operator, flight manager, pilot, or person with flight-following responsibilities should immediately begin coordinating emergency response activities. When able, notify the DOI Operations Center at 1-888-4MISHAP (1-888-464-7427) and the RAM or PAM. The RAM or PAM will then notify the NAM. OAS is responsible for coordinating with the NTSB.

NPS Internal Aviation Notification and Routing Procedures:

1. For aviation mishaps or other aviation-related events with the potential to cause widespread interest both inside and outside the NPS, the NAM will notify the Chief, DFAM. The Chief will in turn notify the Associate Director, Visitor and Resource Protection (ADVPRP), who will notify the Director, NPS. In the event the RAM has not been notified, the NAM will contact the RAM who serves as the primary point of contact. The RAM will determine and ensure that the appropriate regional personnel are notified.

2. Concurrently the NAM will notify OAS. For accidents and incidents with potential, this will usually be the OAS Chief, Aviation Safety, Training, Program Evaluations, and Quality Management or an appointed designee.
3. Parks are required to utilize the Leadership Notification Tool, as directed by the ADVRP, to notify leadership of any accidents or incidents with potential.

17.3 Aviation Mishap Response Plan

Each unit that dispatches or controls aviation assets will develop an Aviation Mishap Response Plan that details the actions needed to be accomplished in the event of an aviation mishap. The plan will be updated and reviewed annually. A mishap response plan exercise is required annually. Requirements can be found in the sample [Interagency Aviation Mishap Response Guide and Checklist](#).

17.4 Aircraft Mishap Investigations

All DOI accidents are the responsibility of the NTSB whether they participate in the field investigation or not. NTSB may designate OAS as a party to the investigation. In this case, OAS works in conjunction with the NTSB and is bound by rules established in [49 C.F.R. §§ 830-831](#) and [352 DM 3](#). NPS will offer a qualified individual, assigned by the affected RD and NAM, to assist with the investigating agency.

17.5 Aircraft Mishap Review Board

A DOI Aircraft Mishap Review Board (AMRB) is responsible for developing mishap prevention recommendations for all DOI accidents and selected incidents with potential. Specific responsibilities, functions, and procedures to be followed are in accordance with DOI directives.

17.5.1 NPS Attendance, Report Routing and Follow-up Actions

Per [350 DM 1, Appendix 4](#), the NAM is responsible for recommending representation to the AMRB. This will usually be an aviation subject matter expert (SME) from outside the region where the event occurred.

1. When an AMRB involves an NPS employee, a senior line officer from the region involved in the event will participate in the AMRB as a non-voting member. The NAM will coordinate with OAS for the inclusion of this additional NPS participant on the AMRB.
2. Upon receipt of the AMRB report and final recommendations from OAS, the NAM will route the report to senior NPS management through the Chief, DFAM who will in turn route it to the ADVRP and NPS Director. The NAM will forward the report to the RAM in the affected region for distribution to the RD and the superintendent of the involved park.
3. Within 30 days of the issuance of an AMRB report, at the discretion of the RD of the region involved, a Board of Review (BOR) may be convened that will include the regional senior line officer present at the AMRB, RAM, park superintendent, and NPS flight, air or ground crew involved in the mishap. The BOR will task the responsible parties with responding to and/or implementing the AMRB recommendations in addition to any the BOR may develop.

17.6 Aircraft Mishap Documentation

17.6.1 Pilot/Operator Aircraft Accident Report

Upon request of an OAS safety investigator, the aircraft operator will complete NTSB Form-6120.1, Pilot/Operator Aircraft Accident Report. In the case of DOI-owned/bureau-

operated aircraft, a copy of the report must be sent to the OAS Chief, Aviation Safety, Training, Program Evaluations, and Quality Management manager within ten days following an aircraft accident or when requested by NTSB following any of the occurrences listed in 17.1.

17.6.2 Aviation Mishap Information System (SAFECOM)

NPS utilizes SAFECOM to document and communicate aviation safety-related incidents. The aircraft operator, flight manager, or any other person noting an aviation hazard, maintenance deficiency, airspace conflict, or incident is responsible for completing a [SAFECOM](#). See Chapter 3.5.1