

 EGG HARBOR TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENTAL DIRECTIVE	Date Issued: April 23, 2003	
	Date Effective: Immediately	
Directive: GENERAL ORDER	Directive # 03-10	Section # N-4
Subject: <i>Accident Investigation and Review Board</i>		

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the investigation of police vehicle accidents and damage, and establish procedures for accident review.

I. Accident Investigations:

- A. In all accidents involving departmental vehicles, the standard Accident Report will be used.
- B. The Shift Commander will require that all accidents involving departmental vehicles are thoroughly investigated by a Traffic Safety Officer. When a Traffic Safety Officer is not available, the Shift Commander will conduct the investigation.
- C. Photographs will be taken whenever a departmental vehicle is involved in a motor vehicle accident.
- D. If the accident involves a fatality or serious injury that may potentially become a fatality, the procedures outlined in departmental policy: "*Fatal Accident Investigations*," section N-6 of the Police Manual, will be followed.
- E. In the event the damage is a result of a traffic accident, a copy of the Accident Investigation Report, the officer's detailed written report and the employee's first report of injury (if applicable) will be forwarded to the Chief of Police through the Operations Bureau Commander.
- F. In the event the damage is the result of a non-traffic related occurrence, criminal mischief or intentional damage, a copy of the vehicle damage report and a complete crime report of investigation will be forwarded to the Chief of Police through the Operations Bureau Commander.
- G. All police officer Accident Reports will be forwarded to the Chief's Office where they will be assigned an Accident Review number.

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II. Accident Review Board:

The purpose of the Accident Review Board is to examine all accidents and make a determination as to their causes. The Board is designed as a management tool that assigns accountability and identifies areas where management accident prevention controls can be improved. The Accident Review Board can be used to introduce and/or strengthen standard operating procedures and identify training needs. Most importantly the Accident Review Board can effectively improve the safety "culture" within the Egg Harbor Township Police Department.

A. The following officers will be designated as members of the Vehicle Damage and Accident Review Board:

- 1. Operations Bureau Commander (Chairperson)**
- 2. Police Sergeant**
- 3. Police Officer**
- 4. Traffic Officer**

With the exception of the Operations Bureau Commander, those designated to the Vehicle Damage Accident Review Board will serve for a period of six months. Any Board member who is directly involved in an investigation or is the subject of an investigation, will be relieved from the Board and the Chief of Police will appoint an alternate. If for any reason a Board member is unable to meet, the Chief of Police will appoint an alternate.

B. The Board Chairperson will be responsible for notifying the members of the board and all persons concerned to set a meeting date within 15 days of the accident.

C. The Vehicle Damage and Accident Review Board will review all reports of damage to departmental vehicles and determine if there was negligence or abuse by the officer operating or assigned to the vehicle.

D. The Board Chairperson will present the facts about each accident under review and guide the discussion. The only question before the panel will be: "Could the employee have prevented this accident?" The Chairperson will present the facts from the following sources:

- 1. Drivers report of the accident.**
- 2. Police Investigation report(s).**
- 3. Facts based on an investigation by departmental representatives.**
- 4. Statements of witnesses.**
- 5. Diagrams, photographs and any other available evidence.**
- 6. In the event equipment failure may be an issue, a representative from Public Works may be brought in to affirm or refute the claim.**

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- E. The Board Chairperson will reply to the persons concerned, by letter, the results of the Board hearing.**
- F. The Chairperson may recommend disciplinary action in accordance with the Rules and Regulations of the Egg Harbor Township Police Department.**

**John J. Coyle
Chief of Police**

If

**Distribution: Police Manuals
Briefing**

DELETE: General Order 02-13

INSERT: General Order 03-10

Revised: April 23, 2003
