



Department of the Interior Lessons Learned

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Subject: Aircraft Mishap Reporting

Area of Concern: Immediate Mishap Notification

Distribution: All Aviation Activities

Discussion: One very important question I've received from supervisors of fleet pilots involved in a mishap is "so what do I do now?" Hopefully, this Lessons Learned document will answer that question.

First, let's start with the policy documents.

Federal Management Regulation (FMR) 102-33.180 requires federal agencies to possess a qualified Aviation Safety Manager, risk management programs, oversight assessment programs, aviation safety reporting capabilities, response plans, procedures for participating in an NTSB investigation, trained investigators, dissemination of information, awards programs and safety training.

Department Manual Part 112 Chapter 12 delegates to OAS the responsibility to establish and manage a Department-wide accident/incident and aviation hazard reporting system ([SAFECOM](#)), to investigate aircraft mishaps occurring in Departmental aviation operations in cooperation with the NTSB, and to represent the Department on all aircraft accident investigations where the Department has involvement.

Department Manual Part 352 Chapter 3.3 states: In an effort to prevent further aircraft mishaps, it is the responsibility of **all Interior employees** to report known aircraft mishaps, aviation hazards, and maintenance deficiencies. DOI contractors possess the same requirements within their contracts.

So, what that means for DOI pilots flying in a government owned aircraft or a contracted aircraft is that if they experience damage or injury, regardless of the extent, they are to inform the DOI Interior Operations Center (IOC) at **888-464-7427 (1-888-4MISHAP)**. Next, the bureau aviation chain of command should be notified and let them know that the IOC has been contacted.



Operators of Small Unmanned Aircraft System (sUAS) do not need to notify the IOC via the 888-4MISHAP number **UNLESS:**

1. Any injury
2. Property damage to anything other than the sUAS.
3. Unusual circumstances

As a supervisor, if an aircraft is overdue or suspected of being in a mishap, collect as much information as possible from dispatch then contact the DOI Interior Operations Center. Otherwise, a [SAFECOM](#) is an acceptable means of reporting.

The Chief, Aviation Safety, Training, Program Evaluations and Quality Management will contact the NTSB. The NTSB will determine whether the mishap is classified an accident based on criteria listed in NTSB 49 CFR 830.2. If not classified as an accident, the OAS Chief, Aviation Safety, Training, Program Evaluations and Quality Management will decide whether to classify it as an Incident-With-Potential (IWP). An IWP is an incident that narrowly misses being an accident and in which the circumstances indicate significant potential for substantial damage or serious injury. Other factors also considered include the amount of investigative value and significance of the event.

If the NTSB classifies the mishap as an accident, they will notify the FAA. Per Title 49 United States Code (U.S.C.) §1132(c), the FAA has the right to participate in the investigation in order to carry out the duties of the Secretary of Transportation. Typically, OAS participates in an investigation as a “Party to the Investigation” whereas an individual or an organization is designated by the NTSB IIC to participate in the investigation in order to provide technical assistance. Organizations, other than the FAA, are not given automatic party status in an investigation and must be invited by the NTSB IIC.

It’s important to note that the FAA can also initiate an investigation for enforcement action. So with the possibility of two concurrent investigations by the FAA (a safety investigation with the NTSB and a FAA enforcement investigation) it’s important that you understand the FAA’s role.

For contract pilots flying a contractor owned aircraft for DOI, the standard contract language is that the contractor must immediately, and by the most expeditious means available, notify the (OAS) Aviation Safety Manager when an aircraft accident or NTSB reportable incident occurs. Again, the toll free 24-hour Interior Operations Center (IOC) number is **1-888-4MISHAP (1-888-464-7427)**.

If you are a government employee flying your own aircraft, but not for DOI, you should contact the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB).

I hope this answered any questions you may have. If you need additional information, please contact the OAS Aviation Safety Branch at 208-433-5070.

/s/ Keith Raley

Keith Raley
Chief, Aviation Safety, Training,
Program Evaluations and Quality
Management