VEHICLE ACCIDENTS

This order establishes policies regarding the investigation of injury and non-injury vehicle accidents.

I. POLICY

- A. INVESTIGATION AND REPORT. It is the policy of the San Francisco Police Department to investigate and report the following types of vehicle accidents:
 - 1. Vehicle accidents resulting in death or injury.
 - 2. All hit and run vehicle accidents resulting in death, injury or property damage.
 - 3. All runaway vehicle accidents resulting in death, injury or property damage.
 - 4. All vehicle accidents involving a city-owned vehicle or damage to city-owned property.
 - 5. All school bus accidents.
 - 6. All vehicle accidents involving an arrest.
- B. PROPERTY DAMAGE ONLY. Members need not investigate or report noninjury (property damage) vehicle accidents that do not include any of the above-listed criteria.

C. ASSIGNMENT PRIORITY

- 1. COLLISION INFORMATION FORM. The assignment priority for accidents requiring the completion of a Collision Information Form is:
 - a. Primary Patrol Unit
 - b. Secondary -Traffic Unit

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- 2. TRAFFIC COLLISION INVESTIGATION AND REPORT. The assignment priority for accidents requiring an investigation and the completion of a Traffic Collision Report is:
 - a. Primary Traffic Unit
 - b. Secondary Patrol Unit

II. PROCEDURES

A. INJURY ACCIDENTS

- 1. REPORT. When investigating an accident involving injuries, always complete an entire Traffic Collision Report, including a diagram of the accident scene.
- 2. NOTIFICATION If a death or serious injury results, immediately notify the Hit and Run Section during business hours, or the Operations Center at all other times (see DGO 8.01, Critical Incident Evaluation and Notification). Record the name and the star number of the person notified along with the time on the Traffic Collision Report.
- 3. VICTIM IDENTIFICATION. Refer all requests for victim identification, by citizens or the media, to the Operations Center, the Hit and Run Section or the Medical Examiner's Office, if applicable (see DGO 8.09, Media Relations).
- 4. VEHICLE HOLDS. See DGO 9.06, Vehicle Tows.

B. HIT AND RUN VEHICLE ACCIDENTS

- 1. REPORT. When requested by a citizen, investigate and prepare a Traffic Collision Report and a Hit and Run Record (SFPD 133) for all hit and run vehicle accidents occurring in San Francisco, whether you are at the scene or not.
- 2. NOTIFICATION. If a death or serious injury has occurred, preserve the accident scene, notify the Hit and Run Section or the Operations Center, and follow the procedures outlined in Injury Accidents, II. A.

C. RUNAWAY VEHICLE ACCIDENTS

- 1. REPORT. When investigating a vehicle accident involving a parked vehicle in violation of Section 58a of the Traffic Code, prepare a Traffic Collision Report and include all of the following:
 - a. Whether the emergency brake was on or partially on.
 - b. The position of the gear selector (manual or automatic).
 - c. Whether the vehicle was locked.
 - d. Whether the vehicle may have been struck and set into motion by another vehicle.
- 2. CITATION/TOW/HOLD. Cite the vehicle 58a T.C. (no blocks) and tow it after placing a "hold" for the Traffic Division (see DGO 9.06, Vehicle Tows). Direct the owner to the Traffic Division, Room 150, Hall of Justice to get a release.
- D. CITY-OWNED VEHICLES OR PROPERTY. When investigating an accident involving a city-owned vehicle or property, attempt to notify the appropriate city department, e.g., Department of Electricity, Department of Public Works, etc. Minor non-injury accidents involving the Muni may be investigated by Muni personnel.
- E. SCHOOL BUS ACCIDENTS. If students are on the bus at the time of the accident and there are injuries, ensure that the Communications Division notifies the California Highway Patrol. The primary investigating unit should be a traffic solo officer.
- F. VEHICLE ACCIDENTS INVOLVING AN ARREST. After arresting a person involved in a vehicle accident, whether the arrest is related to the accident or is related to the previous commission of a crime, complete a Traffic Collision Report. When completing the incident report, refer to the Traffic Collision Report. Also refer to the incident report in the Traffic Collision Report.
- G. VEHICLE ACCIDENTS INVOLVING HAZARDOUS MATERIALS. See DGO 8.07, Hazardous Material Incidents.

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- H. NON-INJURY VEHICLE ACCIDENTS. When arriving at the scene of a non-injury vehicle accident, advise the citizens that it is the policy of this Department not to investigate vehicle accidents involving only property damage. If a citizen insists on a report, follow these procedures:
 - 1. EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION. Assure proper exchange of the Collision Information Form (SFPD 19) and, if necessary, assist each party in completing them. Ensure that any witness information is provided to the parties involved.
 - 2. TOWS. Arrange for tows and direct traffic if necessary.
- I. CITING AT THE SCENE OF A TRAFFIC COLLISION. See DGO 9.01, Traffic Enforcement.
- J. NOTIFICATION TO DMV
 - 1. WHEN. When investigating an accident (either injury or non-injury) advise the drivers involved that they must notify the Department of Motor Vehicles within 10 days when either:
 - a. There is more than \$500 in damage to the property of any one person, or
 - b. Anyone is injured (no matter how slightly) or killed.
 - 2. FORM. As required by California Vehicle Code Section 16000, it is the responsibility of each driver not the police or the CHP to report the accident. The accident should be reported on DMV Form SR 1, "Report of Traffic Accident," which is available at any DMV office or CHP field office.