

SERIOUS/FATAL INCIDENT GUIDE

How to use this Guide

This guide is provided to give managers, supervisors, and Safety & Health personnel information about the tasks to be completed in the event of a serious/fatal incident. The term “serious/fatal incident” refers to a fatality or hospitalizations of three or more people in which NC DOT employees are involved. The guide is divided into sections that outline Notification, Incident Investigation, Division/Unit Responsibilities, and the Investigation Report for a serious/fatal incident.

Serious/fatal incidents, which solely involve contractors or DOC inmates without NC DOT employee involvement, will not require the in-depth incident investigation and reporting presented in this guidebook. Notification should still be made to the Division/Unit and Safety and Loss Control, and any relevant information resulting from incident investigation from other sources should be documented for future reference. Incidents involving DOC inmates will require coordination with Workers Comp Section of Safety & Loss Control. The Safety Engineer for the Division/Unit will be the only responsible person for investigative purposes and will only provide an Incident Investigation Report if requested from the Division/Unit head or Safety and Loss Control.

Our ability to act quickly with diligence following an incident and securing the scene will prevent both additional injuries, loss of life and/or property. In addition, our capability to capture information from the scene and to identify witnesses to the event is critical for evaluating potential causes of the incident.

All Units are asked to review this guide periodically to ensure that all personnel are trained to know what to do in the event of a serious/fatal incident.

A. Notification

1. Initial Notification of Serious/Fatal Incident by NC DOT Personnel

For a serious/fatal incident involving NC DOT personnel where another NC DOT employee is at the scene, that individual should first call 911 for assistance providing information as requested. Care should be provided for the injured until fire and rescue arrive. Next, contact your immediate Supervisor and provide the following pertinent information:

- a) Who is involved?
- b) What happened? (brief explanation)
- c) Where did it occur?
- d) When did it occur?
- e) Your name and phone contact information.

SERIOUS/FATAL INCIDENT GUIDE

2. Initial Notification of Serious/Fatal Incident from Other Sources

In many cases the initial notification of serious/fatal incident may come from sources other than NC DOT personnel (i.e. fire, rescue, law enforcement). This initial notification may be received by any of a number of NC DOT locations. The NC DOT location receiving this initial notification should immediately relay the information to the appropriate Division/Unit for which the affected personnel in the incident is assigned. The following information should be obtained from the source reporting the incident:

- a) Who is involved?
- b) What happened? (brief explanation)
- c) Where did it occur?
- d) When did it occur?
- e) Name of individual reporting incident and their phone contact information.

3. Division/Unit Notification

The information obtained from the initial notification should be relayed immediately to the following personnel in the Division/Unit of the affected employee:

- a) Unit Supervisor
- b) Division or Unit Head
- c) Division or Unit Safety Engineer and/or Safety Officer

4. Safety & Loss Control Notification

The Division Engineer or Unit Head or a member of their management team should contact Safety & Loss Control and provide as much information as possible. Safety & Loss Control will use the "Fatality/Serious Injury Report Form" (Appendix A) to record incident information provided. The Division/Unit may be requested to provide additional necessary information. Safety & Loss Control will in turn provide this information to the following agencies by phone:

- a) Secretary of Transportation
- b) Highway Administrator or Deputy Secretary if incident involves Division of Highway employee(s).
- c) DOT Public Affairs
- d) OSHA (Labor Dept.) only in the event of a fatality or the hospitalization of three or more involving DOT personnel. OSHA must be notified within 8 hours of a fatality or hospitalization of three or more employees.
- e) DMV Assistant Commissioner if incident involves DMV employee(s).
- f) Workers Comp Administrator and Risk Manager assigned to Division/Unit in which incident occurred.

The Safety Engineer for the Division in which the incident occurred is responsible for the immediate investigation and should contact Safety & Loss Control directly after learning of the incident to review the incident and provide any updates. Safety & Loss Control will coordinate assigning an experienced Serious/Fatal Team member to assist the Safety Engineer responding to the incident. The selection of this Team member should be based on good working relationships and close enough proximity to respond within a two-hour window upon notification if possible.

SERIOUS/FATAL INCIDENT GUIDE

5. Chief Engineer Notification

The Division Engineer or member of their management team should report accidents resulting in fatalities or serious injuries in their respective Division to the Chief Engineer as follows:

- a) Fatalities/serious injuries involving DOT employees
 - Call the Chief Engineer or Director of Field Operations.
 - Follow-up with an e-mail or fax to the Chief Engineer and Director of Operations giving details of what happened (be sensitive and use discretion).
- b) Fatalities/serious injuries in active work zones or work site involving contract employees, DOT employees, or private citizens
 - Call the Chief Engineer or Director of Field Operations
 - Call Director of Safety & Loss Control
 - Follow-up with an e-mail or fax to the Chief Engineer and Director of Operations giving details of what happened (be sensitive and use discretion).
- c) Fatalities/serious injuries in inactive work zones
 - Send e-mail notification to the Chief Engineer, Director of Field Operations and Director of Safety & Loss Control giving general details of what happened (be sensitive and use discretion).
- d) The Chief Engineer's Office will notify Public Information, the Secretary's Office and the State Highway Administrator's Office as deemed necessary.
- e) When incident occurs which needs to be entered into TIMS due to anticipated traffic delays, road closures, detours, etc., **DO NOT** report the information on the fatality or serious injuries in TIMS.

6. Death Notification

In the event of a fatality, Division Engineer or Unit Head should select (2) individuals, who together will notify family members and co-workers of the deceased employee. OSP document entitled "Because We Care; Guidelines for Death and Life-Threatening Injury Notification" should be followed. Copy of this guide can be accessed from OSP web page:

<http://www.osp.state.nc.us/recognize/memorial/main.html>

B. Incident Investigation

1. Request for Investigation Assistance

- a) The Safety Engineer for the Division/Unit in which the serious/fatal incident occurred should request Investigation Assistance from Safety & Loss Control.
- b) The Serious/Fatality Team member assigned by Safety & Loss Control should contact the Safety Engineer to coordinate their efforts.
 - Safety Engineer should provide brief description of what is known about the incident, location of incident and directions if necessary, and where to meet based on estimated time of arrival of the Fatal/Serious Team member.

SERIOUS/FATAL INCIDENT GUIDE

- Serious/Fatal Team member should provide the Safety Engineer with their estimated time of arrival, and provide guidance related to the incident and/or investigation.
- Discuss the best methods of communication available for the area (good/poor cell reception or alternative methods).
- The Serious/ Fatal Team should use diligence during the course of the investigation when documenting information pertaining to the incident.

2. Investigation by Serious/ Fatal Team

- a) Try to avoid personal contact with the victim's family members until the investigation is complete unless warranted.
- b) Obtain accident summary from reliable sources at the incident scene (i.e. Division/Unit personnel, law enforcement, fire, rescue) and begin documenting the sequence of events.
- c) Quickly assess the following aspects of the incident:

| | |
|--|---|
| Condition of employee(s) and location of any medical facilities involved | Identity and location of witnesses and NC DOT employees at time of incident |
| Determine what information is time sensitive and necessary for investigation | Determine what part of scene has been changed as result of rescue, been moved, or altered |
| What vehicles, equipment, tools, material involved and location relevant to incident | Any items that may have contributed to the incident |
| Scope of work at time of incident | Overhead or other obstructions |
| Roadway signs in both directions of travel, especially sign sequence if work zone | Roadway conditions, tire, impressions, skid marks, and pavement markings by law enforcement |

- d) Based on the above assessment, the Team should split up tasks including documenting information, taking photographs, and making sketches to capture time sensitive information.
- e) Document names of all NC DOT employees involved with the operation (onsite or otherwise) at time of the incident including job title, unit, assigned work task, and telephone contact information.
- f) Document scope of work at time of the incident.
- g) If a Commercial Motor Vehicle, (one that requires a CDL to operate) is involved in a fatal incident, call the NC Highway Patrol and request assistance from the Motor Vehicle Enforcement Section for a possible inspection and impoundment of the vehicles involved. This may also be necessary if the incident involved a commercial vehicle and multiple injuries.

SERIOUS/FATAL INCIDENT GUIDE

- h) Gather Evidence - Time Sensitive/Critical Information
Following an incident there is a limited opportunity to capture on film, sketches, and to note the physical location of vehicles, equipment, witnesses, work zone layout, materials, etc. The Serious/Fatal Team should determine which tasks each team member will be performing. The integrity of the scene should be maintained as long as possible to gather evidence. For this reason, the following should occur as soon as possible:
- i. Photographs – Use 35 mm and/or digital camera
 - All signs
 - Vehicles/Equipment/Tools (front, back, and each side)
 - Material or property from multiple angles
 - Any items that might have contributed to the incident
 - In cases where your arrival at the scene does not allow you the opportunity to photograph the above items, it may be necessary to obtain photographs from other sources (i.e. other NC DOT personnel, law enforcement).
 - ii. Sketches – General area, noting the location of signs, equipment, material, personnel, witnesses, and other relevant items. Include distances for the following if applicable for the type of incident.
 - Skid Marks
 - Tire Impressions
 - Sign Placement
 - Sight Distances
 - iii. Examine items involved in or contributing to the incident (i.e. vehicles, equipment, tools, etc.) to determine if anything out of the ordinary (i.e. part of scene changed as result of rescue, been moved, or altered).
- i) Obtain Witness Information, Statements, & Interviews
Interviews with witnesses to the scene of the incident in most cases will be the primary source of information. Witnesses can be contractors, co-workers, or members of the public, fire, rescue, and police. Without interfering with fire, rescue, or investigation by police, obtain the following information from potential witnesses if possible:
- i. Witness Information
 - Name
 - Address
 - Phone numbers (home, work, and cell)
 - Location at time of incident
 - Brief statement of what witness saw or heard
 - ii. In most cases, interviews may need to be conducted at a later date or may involve individuals who were not at the scene of the incident that may have relative information. Record names, contact information, and a brief statement for those witnesses and make arrangements for interview to occur as soon as possible. Delay may result in loss of vital information related to the incident.
 - iii. Upon later review of Employee Statements (Form I-2) or if the need arises, follow-up interviews may be necessary.

SERIOUS/FATAL INCIDENT GUIDE

- iv. Interview Process
The fundamental purpose of interviewing is to obtain an accurate and comprehensive account from the person being interviewed of all pertinent facts. Interviews should be conducted privately and separately. Allow the person being interviewed to describe what they saw or heard related to the incident. Follow-up questions (i.e. who, what, when, how, why) may be necessary to obtain all pertinent facts.
- j) Document Vehicles/Machines/Equipment Involved
Include information from both NC DOT owned and privately owned vehicles, equipment, and machinery:
 - i. Owner name
 - ii. Owner address
 - iii. Owner phone number
 - iv. Description, year, make, model, license tag, and VIN or NC DOT equipment number if applicable
 - v. Description of damage
- k) Document Damaged Material and/or Property
Material or property involved should be noted. This may be items like freight on a truck, power lines, mailboxes, driveways, etc....
 - i. Owner name
 - ii. Owner address
 - iii. Owner phone number
 - iv. Description of property and damage
- l) Collect Reports
Following a serious/fatal incident, copies of the following reports should be obtained if applicable.
 - i. Police or Highway Patrol report
 - ii. Commercial Motor Vehicle Report
 - iii. Form 19, Industrial Commission First Report of Injury
 - iv. NCDOT Form I-1, Employee's Statement
 - v. NCDOT Form I-2, Incident Investigation
 - vi. NCDOT Form 140, Equipment Accident and Property Damage Report
- m. Compile Additional Information
When a fatality or an incident involving multiple injuries occurs, various response agencies as well as the media may show up on the incident scene. All requests from the media should be directed to NC DOT's Public Information Office. Additional information, which may be vital to the incident investigation, might include training records, safety meetings, and relevant disciplinary action for all NC DOT employees involved in the incident. The following information should be gathered if applicable:
 - i. Fire/Rescue Squad
 - Name of Squad
 - Phone number

SERIOUS/FATAL INCIDENT GUIDE

- ii. Police/NC Highway Patrol
 - Name of agency,
 - Officer's name
 - Phone number
- iii. OSHA Compliance Officer
 - Name
 - Phone number
- iv. Utility Companies
 - Name of Utility
 - Phone number
- v. Media (newspaper, television, etc)
 - Name of paper, or television station
 - Name of photographer, reporter
- vi. Training Records of all NC DOT employees involved with the incident.
- vii. CDL Operator Daily Inspection sheets
- viii. Policy and Procedure Review applicable to the scope of work being performed by Division/Unit personnel at the time of incident.
- ix. Safety Meetings
- x. Relevant Disciplinary Action
- xi. Injured/Deceased Family Information
- xii. Death Certificate and/or Autopsy Report if questionable cause of death

C. Division/Unit Responsibilities

1. Division Engineer/Unit Head

When a serious or fatal incident has occurred within a Division or Unit, the Division Engineer, Unit Head, or a member of their management team should:

- a. Make certain that adequate resources are available to assist with:
 - i. Injured employees and crew members
 - ii. The incident scene
 - iii. The incident investigation
- b. Contact the Safety Engineer and/or Safety Officer assigned to the Division or Unit regarding the incident.
- c. Contact Safety and Loss Control and provide as much information as possible from the "Fatality/Serious Injury Report Form" (Appendix A).
- d. In the event of a fatality, select 2 individuals, who together should notify immediate family members, and co-workers of the deceased employee. Notification guidelines outlined in the handbook titled "Because We Care, Recommended Procedures for Death Notification" (available from the Security Section of Management Assessment Unit) should be followed. Make a special attempt to identify any requests and/or immediate needs for the employee's family and respond as permitted.
- e. Have Division/Unit Human Resources coordinator contact NC DOT Human Resources for coordination of Death Benefits if applicable.
- f. If coworkers are significantly traumatized by the event, contact NC DOT Human Resources and request the services of a grief counselor.

SERIOUS/FATAL INCIDENT GUIDE

- g. Communicate with the Safety Engineer as needed to stay informed about the progress of the incident investigation.
- h. Review identified causes and/or recommendations provided by the Serious/Fatality Team and follow-up with Division/Unit personnel regarding implementation of recommendations until complete.

2. Immediate Supervisor of Injured Employee(s)

The immediate supervisor of the injured or deceased employee has multiple responsibilities and should not hesitate to seek assistance from their Division/Unit. The following is a detailed list of the duties that may be required of a supervisor. (The Division/Unit Safety Engineer or Fatality Team Member may assist with many of the items listed below once they arrive on the incident scene.)

- a. Emergency Response
 - i. Call or have someone call 911 requesting emergency response.
 - ii. Assess the scene and have 1st aid provided as needed if safe to do so.
 - iii. Secure the scene to prevent additional injury to employees or the traveling public.
 - iv. A supervisor should go to the hospital where the injured employee is transported.
 - v. Notify your Division/Unit management of the incident, providing as much detail as possible. Do not broadcast injured employees names and/or conditions over the radio.
- b. Incident Scene

If possible use personnel from other crews, (not those involved with the incident) to assist rescue personnel as requested with the following:

 - i. Traffic control
 - ii. Detours
 - iii. Heavy equipment needs
- c. Do not move any equipment, traffic control, materials or other items related to the incident unless it poses an immediate hazard to employees and/or the public or you are directed to do so by Fire, Rescue, Police or Safety personnel. If requested to move any of the above items, make a mental note of where the items were before they were moved.
- e. Co-workers or crewmembers of the injured employee(s) onsite at the time of the incident may need to provide information to police, fire or rescue personnel. Otherwise the following guidelines should be followed:
 - i. Employee involved in the incident or onsite at the time of the incident should be relieved of duties at the scene as soon as additional resources become available.
 - ii. Do not let employee(s) operate equipment or drive vehicles at or from the scene.
 - iii. Do not let employee(s) leave the incident scene until police, fire or rescue OKs their departure.
 - iv. Drug and Alcohol testing as required by NCDOT policy must not be forgotten. Arrangements should be made to have affected employees tested. Do not let employees drive themselves to this test.

SERIOUS/FATAL INCIDENT GUIDE

- v. All employees should eventually be transported to one location. Coordinate this with the Division/Unit Safety Engineer or Fatality Team Member.
3. Division/Unit Safety Engineer
The Division/Unit Safety Engineer along with a Serious/Fatality Team Member (Safety Engineer) assigned by Safety and Loss Control are responsible for conducting a thorough investigation of the incident. Upon completion of the investigation a member of the team will write the Serious/Fatal Incident Investigation report which states all facts gathered during the course of the investigation. The Serious/Fatal Team will also write a separate Serious/Fatal Incident Analysis, which presents the root causes for the incident and recommended corrective action.

D. Serious/Fatal Investigation Report by Serious/Fatal Team

After the Serious/Fatal Team has completed the incident investigate, they should review all items for completeness and decide which member will type up the report. Appendix B outlines the format to be used by Safety personnel when preparing the Serious/Fatal Investigation Report. Appendix C contains the Serious/Fatal Investigation Shell format, which can be used when typing the report.

SERIOUS/FATAL INCIDENT GUIDE

APPENDIX A: "FATALITY/SERIOUS INJURY REPORT FORM"

FATALITY/SERIOUS INJURY REPORT FORM

NOTE: TO BE COMPLETED WHEN CALLED, FOR FATALITIES OR SERIOUS INJURIES

PART I- SOURCE OF NOTIFICATION

Name & Title of Person calling: _____

DOT Division/Unit: _____

Address: _____

Telephone Number: _____ Date and Time of Call: _____

PART II: ACCIDENT DATA (USE SPACE ON BACK IF REQUIRED FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION)

Name of Employee: _____ Class _____ Age: _____

Address: _____

Description of Injuries to Employee: _____

If employee was injured or this is an employee fatality, has next of kin been notified?

Yes: _____ No: _____

Date of Accident: _____ Time of Accident: _____

Exact Location of Accident: _____

Description of Accident: _____

If employee is hospitalized, name and address of hospital: _____

SERIOUS/FATAL INCIDENT GUIDE

APPENDIX A: "FATALITY/SERIOUS INJURY REPORT FORM" (cont.)

PART III - PRIVATE CITIZEN INFORMATION

Is private party involved? Yes _____ No _____
Is this an insured accident? Yes _____ No _____
Travelers notified? Yes _____ No _____

List private citizen information below:

Name: _____ Age: _____
Address: _____
Description of injuries: _____

Has next of kin been notified? _____ Yes _____ No _____ Not determined
Others Involved: _____
Fatal: Yes ___ No _____

PART IV - OTHER AGENCY NOTIFICATION

Secretary of Transportation
919-733-2520
(fax) 919-733-9150
Fax sent to: **Hannah Jernigan/Diane Berger**
Time sent: am pm

****OSHA (Labor Dept.)**
919-779-8560
(fax) 919-779-8559
Fax sent to: Complaint Desk
Time sent: am pm

Highway Administrator
919-733-7384
(fax) 919-733-9428
Fax sent to: Beth Smith
Time sent: am pm

DOT Public Information Office
919-733-2522
(fax) 919-733-9980
Fax sent to: Ernie Seneca/Nicole Burris
Time sent: am pm

DMV Commissioner
919-861-3015
(fax) 919-733-0126
Fax sent to: **Delories Perry/Frank Smith**
Time sent: am pm

**** Notify only in the event of a fatality or the hospitalization of three or more employees**

NOTE: Telephone DMV Assistant Commissioner for DMV employees, the Highway Administrator for Division of Highways Employees, not both.

Remarks: _____

SERIOUS/FATAL INCIDENT GUIDE

APPENDIX B: SERIOUS/FATAL REPORT OUTLINE GUIDE

- A. The cover page (insert in binder) for the report should include:
- NC DOT Logo
 - North Carolina Department of Transportation
 - Serious/Fatal Investigation
 - Employee(s) Name
 - Date of the Incident
 - Location of the Incident
 - Division/Unit
 - Prepared By (Include all Serious/Fatal Team members)
- B. The report should include a table of contents listing each of the following (5) sections. Avery "Ready Index" Dividers or similar can be used for this purpose. Each section should include the following information. Keep in mind to use the Serious/Fatal Investigation Shell format as a guide for the report.
1. **General Information** (Follow Serious/Fatal Investigation Shell format)
 - a. Time, Location, Conditions
 - i. For location, include county, city, intersection, and roadway if applicable.
 - ii. For conditions, include weather, type roadway, speed limit if applicable.
 - b. Injured/Deceased Employee(s) Information
 - c. NC DOT Division/Unit Information
 - d. NC DOT Personnel On-site at Time of Incident (name, title, duty at time of incident)
 - e. Private Party Information (If Applicable)
 - f. Location Maps
 - i. Figure 1 map should show the county in which this incident occurred. Revise the County Location Map provided in the Serious/Fatal Investigation Shell to indicate County Location for current incident.
 - ii. Figure 2 map should show relevant portion of State Travel Map. This can be obtained by accessing state travel maps from NCDOT – GIS website using Internet Explorer. Copy map from website and insert into report. To insert circle on map to indicate location of the incident access "Toolbars-Drawing" from drop down menu for "View". Insert circle using "Oval" drawing tool and format inserted circle using drawing tool bar by selecting "no fill", suitable color, and line weight of "3" in order for circle to be readily identifiable on the map.
 2. **Description of Serious/Fatal Incident** (Use Serious/Fatal Investigation Shell as reference)
 - a) Describe Scope of Work be performed at time of the Incident.
 - b) Describe Events Prior to and Including Serious/Fatal Incident.
 - c. Describe Events after the Incident including Incident Response and any other relevant information pertaining to the Incident.

SERIOUS/FATAL INCIDENT GUIDE

APPENDIX B: SERIOUS/FATAL REPORT OUTLINE GUIDE (cont.)

3. Site Information

- a) Site Diagram(s)
- b) Photographs including captions.
- c) Vehicle/Equipment Information (DOT & Private Party)
 - Type
 - Year, Make, & Model
 - DOT Equipment #
 - VIN # (if applicable)
 - Tag # (if applicable)

4. NC DOT Reports

- a) Industrial Commission Form 19 (Employer's Report of Injury)
- b) Incident Investigation (Form I-2)
- c) Employee Statements (Form I-1)
- d) Equipment Accident & Property Damage Report (Form 140)

5. Additional Information

- a) NC Highway Patrol Report (DMV-349)
- b) NC Division of Motor Vehicle Reports (If applicable)
 - i. Driver/Equipment Inspection Report (ENF-500)
 - ii. Commercial Vehicle Accident Report (ENF-502)
 - iii. Motor Carrier Supplemental Accident Report (ENF-503)
- c) Motor Fleet Management Post Crash Vehicle Inspection (If applicable)
- d) Motor Fleet Management Vehicle Maintenance Records (If applicable)
- e) CDL Operator Daily Inspection Sheets (if applicable)
- f) Training Records
- g) Safety Meetings for Past Year (Form M-2)
- h) Information provided to NCDOL
- i) Newspaper Articles
- j) Any other relevant information

SERIOUS/FATAL INCIDENT GUIDE

APPENDIX C: SERIOUS /FATAL INVESTIGATION SHELL

Appendix C is a separate shell document, which should be used by Safety Personnel when typing the Serious/Fatal Investigation Report. User will have to remove the header and change footer information to include the name of the victim. Enter all applicable information in each section if appropriate for the type incident.