



# CITY OF COLUMBIA

Columbia Police Department



Special Order 2015-01

To: All Personnel

Date: 01-01-2015

From: Chief William H. Holbrook

Subject: Accident Review Board

Initials

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**This Special Order is to be appended to Section 02 Chapter 06 of the Directives and Procedures Manual – Internal Affairs and Adds An Addition: 8.0 Motor Vehicle Accident Review Board.**

## 8.0 PURPOSE

The City of Columbia Police Department utilizes a Motor Vehicle Accident Review Board to review all motor vehicle accidents involving the Department's vehicles. This review will aid in preventing motor vehicle accidents in order to safeguard our personnel and others. At the same time it will promote the reduction in costs incurred as a result of motor vehicle accidents. This will be accomplished through the identification of unsafe or negligent driving by individual officers and taking action to correct such behavior. In addition, the board will identify patterns of driving, circumstances, equipment or training deficiencies that contribute to accidents and recommend strategies to resolve these issues.

### 8.1 Accident Review Board Structure:

The Accident Review Board will consist of the following personnel, assigned by the Chief of Police or his designee:

- Staff Officer (Lieutenant or above) as assigned by the Chief of Police. This position will serve as Chairperson of the board
- Professional Standards Division Supervisor who will provide administrative support to the Chairperson of the board
- Traffic Unit Supervisor
- Training Unit Supervisor
- Representative from Risk Management
- Officer designated by the Chief of Police

## 8.2 Specific Procedures:

The Accident Review Board will be convened on a monthly basis and will review all accident reports involving on-duty police personnel. The reports will be provided by the Professional Standards Division.

Accident Review Board will review all aspects of each accident to determine the cause, identify contributing circumstances or other factors that caused the accident, and to render a decision regarding the officer's responsibility for the accident. The board will consider information including, but not limited to:

- Weather and roadway conditions at the time of the accident
- Driver's activities at the time of the accident
- Vehicle or equipment conditions that may have contributed to the accident
- Any charges arising out of the accident
- Drug and alcohol screening reports
- Driver's past history of accidents

## 8.3 Accident Review Board Decisions

At the conclusion of the review of each accident, the board will render a decision regarding the officer's responsibility for the accident. These decisions will be one of the following two dispositions:

- **Preventable Accident:** An accident in which the officer's operation of the vehicle or action was a contributing factor to the collision.
- **Not Preventable:** An accident in which the employee's operation of the vehicle or action was not a contributing factor to the collision.

The board should strive for consensus in making these decisions, but the final decision in each case rests with the board chairperson.

Based upon the determination of the investigating agency that the driver was at fault or contributed to the accident, the board will recommend a course of action, which may include, but is not limited to:

- Additional driver training;
- Loss of driving privileges (take home vehicle);
- Review any disciplinary actions previously taken.

- Recommendations for disciplinary action based upon violations of department policy or procedures.

#### 8.4 Accident Review Board Reports.

The Professional Standards Division shall be responsible for preparing a written report on behalf of the Accident Review Board Chairperson and forward to the Office of the Chief.

The report will include:

- The Department's vehicle accident packets
- Indicate if the officers involved in each accident followed City of Columbia and Police Department policies and procedures;
- Identify training deficiencies and/or officer safety issues;
- Identify patterns or trends that may indicate training needs and/or directive modifications;
- Disciplinary recommendations as decided by the board;
- Recommendations for action to reduce accidents based upon information gained in these reviews.

These reports will be used to develop policies, strategies and training to reduce preventable motor vehicle accidents by officers.

Upon request by the Board Chair, the Board may receive legal advice from the City Attorney's Office. The City Attorney, if requested, will have no discretionary position on the Board and will be advisory only. All communication with the City Attorney and the Accident Review Board will be privileged.

Meetings of the Accident Review Board will not be recorded and no minutes will be maintained. The members of the Board may take notes, at their discretion, but the notes are not required and will not be maintained by the CPD. A report will be produced that outlines the results of this meeting and maintained in the Officer's Personnel File.

This special order is effective upon receipt and is binding on all personnel.



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William H. Holbrook  
Chief of Police  
Columbia Police Department