

**Forest Service Manual
National Headquarters - Washington Office
Washington, DC**

**Forest Service Manual 6700 – Safety and Health Program
Chapter 6730 - Accident Reporting and Investigation**

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Digest: Following is an explanation of the changes throughout the directive by section.

6732.12: Establishes code, caption and sets forth direction on accident notification procedures to the National Technology and Development Program Director.

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6730.1 - Authority

1. U.S. Department of Labor, Federal Personnel Manual Chapter 810, "Injury Compensation."
2. Federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), Section 1960.29 of Title 29 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR 1960.29).

6730.2 - Objective

The objective of accident reporting and investigation is to prevent similar accidents/incidents from occurring in the future, by determining the contributing and causal factors, organizational weaknesses, and recognizing opportunities for continuous learning.

6730.3 - Policy

It is Forest Service policy to review all accidents/incidents that involve the Agency and result in death, injury, illness, and/or property damage. This includes the review and reporting of serious injury or death to visitors, contractors, cooperators, and permittees or their employees. Reporting and review must be in accordance with FSM 5720 and 29 CFR 1960.29, the Facilitated Learning Analysis (FLA) Guidebook, the Coordinated Response Protocol (CRP) Guidebook, the Learning Review (LR) Guidebook, and this chapter.

6730.4 - eSafety

eSafety is an electronic system for recording and managing safety accidents/incidents and must be used to record each accident/incident where an injury is incurred (regardless of severity). Such safety accidents/incidents include all motor vehicle accidents, specialized equipment accidents, other Agency equipment accidents, and all near misses. eSafety maintains records of these events and provides valuable statistical information on incident records. The following requirements must be met in the event of a work-related accident:

1. Employee(s) shall seek medical attention as necessary;
2. Employee(s) shall inform their Supervisor immediately or as soon as practical;
3. Employee(s) shall enter accident information into eSafety within 72 hours;
4. Unit safety manager(s) shall proceed as follows:
 - a. Review all accidents to determine contributing factors and learning opportunities;
 - b. Determine incident chargeability status per the relevant FSM 6730.5 definition and Federal OSHA injury or illness record-ability as defined in 29 CFR 1904.7; and
 - c. Complete accident/incident data entry into eSafety.

- d. Utilize eSafety accident data to produce reports, such as year-end program summaries, wildland fire injury statistics, property damage caused by accidents, and other mishap trend information.

6730.5 - Responsibility

Every unit at all Agency levels must have a process for reporting, reviewing, analyzing, and recording accidents/incidents, as outlined in this chapter. All incidents must be recorded in the eSafety database.

6730.51 - Unit Line Officers and Supervisors

Unit Line Officers and Supervisors have the authority and responsibility to proceed as follows:

1. Ensure employees are trained and familiar with local procedures to report injuries and illnesses and ensure those events are reported in eSafety in a timely manner.
2. Report serious injury or death incurred to visitors, contractors, cooperators, and permittees or their employees, to their Regional, Station, Area, or Institute executive leadership.
3. Ensure investigations or learning reviews are conducted to identify and understand potential organizational weaknesses and opportunities for learning so as to develop measures to prevent recurrence of similar outcomes.
4. Maintain copies of all unit reports, investigations, reviews, and analysis per recordkeeping requirements in FSH 6209.11, Records Management Handbook.

6730.52 - Deputy Chiefs, Regional Foresters and Research Station, Northeastern Area, and International Institute of Tropical Forestry Directors

Deputy Chiefs, Regional Foresters and Research Station, Northeastern Area, and International Institute of International Forestry Directors have the authority and responsibility to appoint a safety review for any accident with serious potential or serious consequences that is not investigated by the Chief's Office or Washington Office-appointed team. Said team(s) shall cooperate with the Washington Office, Office of Safety and Occupational Health (OSOH) in determining the classification of serious accidents and the level of investigation required.

6730.6 - Definitions

Entrapment. A situation where personnel are unexpectedly caught in a fire behavior-related, life threatening position where planned escape routes or safety zones are absent, inadequate, or compromised. Entrapment may or may not include deployment of a fire shelter for its intended purpose. Entrapment may result in a serious wildland fire accident, a wildland fire accident, or a near-miss.

Forest Service Aircraft Accident and Incident. For aircraft accident and incident definitions, see FSM 5720.

Motor Vehicle Accident. Any occurrence involving the use of a Government-owned, -leased, or -rented automobile, truck, or bus that results in death, injury, illness, and/or combined damage of \$1,500 or more, regardless of whose property was damaged or who was injured. This definition also applies to privately owned vehicles (POVs) when used on official duty. All motorized vehicle incidents are reportable and must be entered into eSafety. Vehicle accidents with over \$1,500 in damage costs as indicated above are chargeable incidents for statistical, trending, and analysis purposes.

Occupational Fatality. Death resulting from a job-related injury or illness.

Occupational Illness or Disease. An illness or disease produced by: (1) systemic infections; (2) continued or repeated stress or strain; (3) exposure to toxins, poisons, fumes, and so forth; or (4) continued and repeated exposure to other conditions of the work environment. These conditions must occur over a period of time longer than 1 day or 1 work shift.

OSHA Recordable Injuries and Illnesses. The Federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), Section 1904.7 of Title 29 of the Code of Federal Regulations (29 CFR 1904.7) prescribes which work-related injuries and illnesses are recordable.

Property Damage Accident. An accident that occurs in the course of a Forest Service activity and results in a combined total of \$1,000 or more damage to Government and/or private property.

Specialized Equipment. An accident that involves Forest Service All-Terrain Vehicles (ATVs), Utility Terrain Vehicles (UTVs), Motorcycles, Snowmobiles, Snowcats, Trailers, and similar equipment.

Traumatic Injury. A job-related wound or other condition of the body caused by external force, including stress and strain. The injury must be identifiable as to time and place of occurrence and member or function of the body affected and be caused by a specific event or incident or series of events or incidents within a single day or work shift.

6731 - Accident Investigations

6731.1 - Chief's Safety Reviews

On behalf of the Chief, the Designated Agency Safety and Health Official (DASHO) will consider the circumstances and may appoint a Chief's-level investigation team for work-related accidents involving employee fatalities and for other serious accidents. Reviews of fatalities, other serious accidents, or near misses may be delegated to Regional Foresters and Station, Area, and Institute Directors at the DASHO's discretion.

The Coordinated Response Protocol (CRP) team is a Chief's-level review and has the full authority of the Chief to conduct a thorough review and develop a Safety Action Plan to prevent accident recurrence.

6731.2 - Regions, Stations, Northeastern Area, and International Institute of Tropical Forestry Investigations

A review team appointed by Regional Foresters or Research Station, Northeastern Area, or International Institute of Tropical Forestry Directors shall normally review accidents with serious potential or serious consequences that are not reviewed by a Chief's-level CRP team. The delegating Line Officer may determine the most appropriate review. In some cases, a Law Enforcement Claims Investigation may be more appropriate than a safety review.

6731.3 - Safety Reviews

Unit Line Officers and Supervisors shall ensure that unit Safety and Occupational Health (SOH) programs include procedures to review safety-related accidents that do not meet the threshold of a Chief's-level CRP response. Unit procedures for review of safety-related accidents/incidents should include the following elements:

1. Contributing facts and conditions that led to the accident;
2. Review of potential organizational or systemic weaknesses (for example, policy, equipment, training, so forth) that may have contributed to the outcome;
3. Potential learning opportunities that may be shared with other units; and
4. Potential preventive measures or lessons learned that might prevent future events from occurring.

In most cases, accidents resulting in minor injury or nominal property damage require fewer resources and investigative formality to develop lessons learned and to recommend systematic improvements than accidents involving serious injury or damage.

6731.4 - Multi-agency Investigations

When serious accidents involve the Forest Service and other Federal or State agencies or cooperating partners, they shall be jointly reviewed, to the extent as is practical. When available, the Forest Service shall use memorandums of understanding and/or interagency agreements to determine the degree of Forest Service or outside agencies' participation in joint investigations. The Washington Office, Office of Safety and Occupational Health shall coordinate multi-agency fatality investigations.

6731.5 - Collateral Agency Investigations

Forest Service-conducted collateral investigations include but are not limited to Tort claims, administrative and/or disciplinary reviews, and criminal investigations.

1. Collateral investigations are governed by various policies and conducted independent of safety investigations and reviews.
2. When civil, criminal, claims, or administrative issues surface beyond the scope of the safety review, the team leader shall immediately contact the appropriate delegating Line Officer to determine whether the safety review should continue or be halted based on newly identified issues or information.
3. Collateral investigations must be conducted independent of safety reviews.
4. Safety and Occupational Health Managers and others responsible for conducting safety reviews shall not conduct, review, evaluate, support, or maintain any files on collateral investigations.

6731.6 - Aviation Accident Investigations and Reporting

All aviation-related accidents must be reported and investigated as outlined in FSM 5720.

6732 - Accident Notification, Reporting, and Review

6732.1 - Notification

6732.11 - Mandatory Washington Office Notification

Each Region, Station, the Northeastern Area, and the International Institute of Tropical Forestry, and Washington Office Directors shall ensure the following events or occurrences are reported to the Washington Office, Office of Safety and Occupational Health, as soon as possible following an event or occurrence, as well as to other offices or agencies listed below:

1. All aircraft accidents must be reported to the Washington Office, Fire and Aviation staff and National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB).
2. All work-related fatalities, work-related overnight (inpatient) hospitalizations of one or more employees, work-related amputations, and work-related losses of an eye must be reported to the Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration within 8 hours of occurrence for a fatality and within 24 hours for all other incidents.
3. All burn-over or entrapment fatalities must be reported to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Inspector General (OIG) within 8 hours of occurrence. The Washington Office, Office of Safety and Occupational Health Director, or their designee, shall make this report.
4. Incidents that either involve fatalities to one or more members of the public or severe injuries or fatalities to one or more employees of other government agencies where the Forest Service might have been involved or could be associated.

5. Accidental property damage of \$100,000 or more, excluding forest fire damage to natural resources.
6. Incidents that involve the release of hazardous substances or pesticides into the environment must be reported to the local Engineering Office for further reporting.
7. Incidents in which a Job Corps student is hospitalized overnight, suffers amputation or eye loss, or is fatality injured must be reported immediately to the Forest Service Job Corps National Headquarters either in person or by telephone and in accordance with the procedures outlined in the Department of Labor Policy and Requirements Handbook (PRH). The Job Corps Center is responsible to report Job Corps student injuries and illnesses via the Department of Labor (DOL) electronic reporting system, ECOMP. Do not enter Job Corps student injuries or illnesses into eSafety unless the student has status as a Forest Service employee, such as when a student is hired on a fire assignment as an Administratively Determined (AD) employee.
8. Additional non-safety related reporting and procedural guidance for employee fatalities may be found in FSH 1309.19, chapters 10 through 60.

6732.12 - National Technology and Development Program (NTDP) Director Notification

The NTDP Director shall be notified for incidents within NTDP's sphere of expertise or for programs that NTDP manages, such as fire shelters, personal protective equipment (PPE), and mobile fire equipment (such as, accidents involving vehicle burnovers and rollovers and incidences involving fire shelter deployment).

6732.2 - Accident Reporting

6732.21 - Release of Reports

Accident reports are subject to both the Privacy Act and Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Forest Service employees, contractors, or volunteers in receipt of an accident report request should contact the local FOIA coordinator immediately.

6732.22 - Forest Service Employees and Volunteers

All occupational injuries, illnesses, and fatalities involving Forest Service employees and volunteers with a signed volunteer agreement must be entered into eSafety within 72 hours.

6732.23 - Visitors, Contract Employees, Cooperators, and Permittees

Law enforcement personnel shall use the Law Enforcement and Investigations Management Attainment Reporting System (LEIMARS) to report serious injuries and fatalities to these persons that occur on National Forest System land. Do not report deaths from natural causes, suicides, homicides, non-Forest Service aircraft accidents, and those fatalities occurring on easements administered by other jurisdictions.

6732.24 - Property Damage Accidents and Motor Vehicle Accidents

Property damage accidents, motor vehicle accidents, and accidents involving specialized equipment must be entered into eSafety within 72 hours.

6732.25 - Other Agency Personnel

Injuries or illnesses sustained by employees from other Federal Agencies (for example, a Bureau of Land Management firefighter injured on a Forest Service-managed fire) are reported by their respective owning organization using their agency procedures. Do not enter these events into eSafety.

6732.3 - Accident Data Review and Analysis

All units shall have procedures in place to act as follows:

1. Review each accident/incident to determine contributing factors, learning opportunities, trends, equipment or mechanical deficiencies, training limitations, and organizational weaknesses;
2. Address underlying causes of accidents and report – within eSafety - organizational weaknesses so they may be addressed by the appropriate office or organizational unit; and
3. Discuss significant unit accidents/incidents with employees to obtain their perspectives and insights to potentially prevent recurrence.

6732.4 - Accident Data Recordkeeping

1. The office of record for the organization that delegated the review shall maintain all accident reports. The offices of record for accident investigation reports are the Safety and Occupational Health Offices of the Washington Office, Regions, Stations, Northeastern Area, and International Institute of Tropical Forestry. The Office of Regulatory and Management Services Records Manager, located at the Albuquerque Service Center in New Mexico, shall maintain case files and records of fatality investigations.
2. All Forest Service units shall manage and control all accident investigation reports and related documents/information in the eSafety database, in accordance with requirements of Section 1960.73 of Title 29 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR 1960.73); the Privacy Act of 1974, Title 5, United States Code, section 552a (5 U.S.C. 552a); and the Freedom of Information Act, Title 5, United States Code, section 522 (5 U.S.C. 552).