

Bethel Fire Department

Accident Review Board

A-010

Purpose and Policy:

Any and all accidents which occur to equipment, vehicles, or the employees of this department, the Bethel Fire Department, must be examined in detail to avoid repeats where possible. To safeguard the safety of our members remains the highest goal as a department, and understanding what went wrong will allow the department to make necessary changes in its policies and procedures as well as training to better prepare the department's employees for the work that may come up in their career with the Fire Department.

Equipment cost a considerable amount since most is involved in fire department activities, it can take a considerable amount of time to repair or replace leaving the citizens of the Town of Bethel, and all people passing through, in jeopardy. Proper use of the department's equipment is critical, not just for the equipment's sake but also to safeguard the user or any other people within the zone of impact affected by the equipment such as victims being extricated from a vehicle or other situation. Vehicles can have the biggest impact on people and the environment while running a hot call or normal day-to-day business. Any vehicle must be operated by trained and approved operators that are responsible for all aspects of the vehicle and the impacts they could have on the public.

To this end, this department shall utilize and Accident Review Board, comprised of the full Fire Department Advisory Board (4) to determine what went wrong, why, and how the department deals with the results going forward. They will function under their own specific rules. This is an internal review for the purposes of data collection and not intended to be solely about fixing blame. A report will be generated and released to the Select Board, Town Manager, and Fire Department within 60 days of the incident.

Requirements:

This review action shall be conducted for any activity with a vehicle that causes more than \$500 dollars of damage to any vehicle, or any dollar amount where there is injury or death involved to any employee or member of the public, or property damage of any amount.

Additionally, this review action shall be conducted for any equipment which will cost more than \$300 to replace or repair, has a significant impact on the operational capability of this department, results in any amount of non-targeted damage to private property, or that results in the injury or death of any employee or member of the public.

The Fire Chief, the ultimate responsible party, and all departmental officers must ensure that proper training is done, and that no one without the proper training is allowed to utilize any departmental equipment, including vehicles. All members must work within their skill set at all times.

After any event requiring a review, all reports, witness statements, photographs, and any other items of an evidentiary value must be accumulated and delivered to the Board within 3-7 days of the trigger event. Any incident involving an injury or death shall require statements from all personnel present at the time of the accident. Additional information will be presented to the Board within 24 hours of being acquired. Additional interviews may and should be conducted as needed and should be done within a 30-day window. The Board will then discuss and cause to be drafted a report of their findings to be disseminated on final vote of the full board and within 60 days.

The Fire Chief shall provide all support and documentation requested by the Board. The Fire Department will also make available to the Board written procedures for the correct operation of any equipment in question so that the Board can have a full understanding of the equipment and the correct handling of the equipment in order to better suggest changes to the system.

The Advisory Board will draft changes to any SOG's if needed and the Fire Department shall implement and follow any recommendations given.

Final Intent:

This policy establishes the Accident Review Board comprised of the members of the Advisory Board including the Fire Chief. Due to the sensitive nature of this board in that it will always involve individuals/ personnel, this will be an executive session discussion and event without public participation. The public will, however, be entitled to a copy of the final report should the request be made, with all identifying information removed. If it is not possible to protect the confidentiality of involved individuals then the decision to release to the public remains with the Select Board. All effort must be made to keep the final report available to the public.

It is the responsibility of all members to read, understand and follow this Standard Operating Guideline

Approved: _____ Date _____

Printed Name: _____