MILWAUKEE POLICE DEPARTMENT

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

650 – VEHICLE CRASHES

GENERAL ORDER: 2025-22 **ISSUED:** April 25, 2025	**EFFECTIVE:** April 25, 2025	**REVIEWED/APPROVED BY:** Assistant Chief Steven Johnson **DATE:** March 10, 2025
ACTION: Amends General Order 2023-39 (June 2, 2023)		**WILEAG STANDARD(S): 6.2.7, 6.2.8**

650.00 PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to provide department members with instructions to properly investigate, report, and track motor vehicle crashes coming to their attention.

650.05 JURISDICTION OF REPORTING AGENCY

The geographical jurisdiction of the agency reporting such motor vehicle crashes shall be governed by the territorial integrity of such cities, villages, or towns. Expressway ramps are the jurisdiction of the county sheriff when the crash occurs within the physical limits of the fencing line of approach ramps or exit ramps.

650.10 CRASH SCENE PROCEDURES (WILEAG 6.2.8)

Police members responding as primary units or assisting units in vehicle crashes shall abide by the following procedures and file the appropriate reports as outlined in 650.15 and 615.20.

A. The primary investigator is the incident commander until relieved by a member of a higher rank.

B. Secure the scene and broadcast a safe entry route.

C. If there are visible injuries or any driver is complaining of injury implement first responder techniques and request medical attention.

D. Separate witnesses and obtain statements. Broadcast any description of fleeing vehicles or persons.

E. Treat scene as a crime scene. Officers shall attempt to identify any drivers and passengers who are present at the crash scene and shall separate drivers and passengers to the extent possible to avoid outside influence on their recollection of the event.

F. Members should not touch, operate or manipulate vehicles unless necessary for scene safety.

G. If members encounter any safety hazards as a result of the crash such as a gas leak or vehicle fire, the Milwaukee Fire Department (MFD) should be contacted through the Department of Emergency Communications (DEC).

H. Members shall alert the Department of Public Works (DPW) if there is any roadway debris as a result of a crash by submitting an on-line request through the city of Milwaukee's online portal to ensure the debris is collected in a timely manner. Upon entering the request, the member shall provide the dispatcher with the case ID number provided by the online portal so it can be added to the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) record or they can document this in the add info section of CAD.
(WILEAG 6.2.8.1, 6.2.8.2, 6.2.8.3, 6.2.8.4, 6.2.8.5)

650.15 NON-REPORTABLE CRASHES (WILEAG 6.2.7)

A. Crashes where there is no death or personal injury and the amount of damage to state or other government owned property (except vehicles) to an apparent extent of less than $200 or a total damage to property owned by any one person or to a state or other government-owned vehicle to an apparent extent of less than $1,000 are not reportable under state law. Therefore, members shall not file a *Wisconsin Uniform Crash Report* (form DT4000), but shall provide each driver with a *Driver Exchange of Crash Information* (TraCS BDS331). Upon completion of the TraCS BDS331, the form must be "End Shifted" into the database.
(WILEAG 6.2.7.3, 6.2.7.4)

B. NON-CRASHES

The following illustrations are those in which an DT4000 is not necessary or required, as per the National Safety Council or state law. This list is not all-inclusive.

1. Train striking a pedestrian, bicycle, or any non-motorized vehicle, on or off the roadway.
2. Bicyclist strikes a fixed object or a legally parked auto.
3. Bicyclist strikes a pedestrian or another bicyclist.
4. Push carts, hand trucks, or other non-motorized vehicles running into legally parked autos.
5. Acts of nature: lightning, flood, torrential rain, cloudburst, or tornado.
6. Loading on/off a conveyance of a vehicle not under its own power.
7. Suicide, homicide or self-inflicted injury.
8. Harm done only to an animal (under $1,000 damage).
9. Loaded gun fires accidentally causing injury.
10. Breakage of car parts without collision.
11. Injury/damage from working on car not in transport.

12. Intentionally pushing a person from a vehicle.

650.20 REPORTABLE CRASHES (WILEAG 6.2.7)

A. Police members shall file an DT4000 when the crash is reportable as defined in Wis. Stat. § 346.70(1). The following are examples when an DT4000 is required. This list is no way all-inclusive.

1. Accidental carbon monoxide poisoning generated by the vehicle, while vehicle is in transport.
(WILEAG 6.2.7.5)

2. Breakage of any part of vehicle, resulting in injury or damage.

3. Explosion of any part of the motor vehicle in transport.

4. Person falling or jumping from a vehicle.

5. A fire starting in a motor vehicle in transport.

6. Person hit by object in or thrown into or against a vehicle.

7. Injury or damage by animals flying into or against a vehicle.

8. Bridge giving way under the weight of a vehicle.

9. Intentional acts shall be filed for "financial responsibility" purposes as per Wis. Stat. § 344. An incident report is needed for the crime.

10. All reportable crashes occurring on private property open for use by the public.
(WILEAG 6.2.7.6)

11. All hit and run cases.
(WILEAG 6.2.7.2)

12. Any damage to state or other government-owned property, except a state or other government-owned vehicle, to an apparent extent of $200 or more, or total damage to property owned by any one person or to a state or other government-owned vehicle to an apparent extent of $1,000 or more.
(WILEAG 6.2.7.3)

B. HIT AND RUN CRASHES

Members shall not enter the registration plate of a hit and run vehicle on the DT4000 unless a member has personally seen such vehicle and can confirm said vehicle was the vehicle involved in the crash.

Note: Inaccurate reporting of a hit and run vehicle may cause a civil judgment to be filed against an uninvolved party.

(WILEAG 6.2.7.2)

C. SUPPLEMENTAL CRASH REPORTS

1. Supplemental information must be included in the narrative field of the DT4000 in all crashes involving department vehicles and all crashes resulting in death or personal injury where the victim is conveyed to a medical facility by ambulance. Supplemental information on other crashes shall be left to the discretion of the officer, a supervisor, or his/her shift commander.

2. In situations where supplemental information must be added to a completed and validated DT4000 (in TraCS), members shall provide the additional information:

   a. In the narrative field of the TraCS report, as long as the report has not been approved and transmitted to the Department of Transportation, and as long as the officer is the person who initiated the DT4000.

   b. On a *TraCS Crash Supplemental Report* (form PO-15a) if the DT4000 has been approved and transmitted to the Department of Transportation.

   c. On a *TraCS Crash Supplemental Report* if the additional information is being provided by an officer, other than the one who initiated the DT4000 report.

3. The investigating member shall file a *TraCS Crash Supplemental Report* or supplemental incident report in the Records Management System (RMS) (if applicable) when it involves a hit and run crash. The investigating member shall file an incident report in RMS when it involves an operating while intoxicated (OWI) crash. The filing of these reports will allow this information to be used if required in court by the district attorney's office. The following information shall be incorporated into the incident report in RMS or *TraCS Crash Supplemental Report* as DT4000 reports are not allowed in the court room and cannot be used to recall a member's memory if required:

   a. Document the type of incident the member was sent to;

   b. Identify and document who was driving each unit;

   c. Identify all occupants in the vehicles including:

      - Who was in each unit including children (include names, dates of birth, addresses, phone numbers for all occupants). If the child(ren)'s parent(s) or legal guardian is not in the vehicle, members shall obtain contact information, including address and telephone number, for the parent(s) or legal guardian.

      - Identify and document where each occupant was sitting.

      - Document whether or not the children were wearing their seatbelt.

   d. Document the damage sustained by each vehicle involved.

e. Document the injuries to each person.

f. Document whether or not MFD responded. If so, interview emergency response personnel and document their responses.

g. Document if anyone was transported for medical treatment and where they were treated.

h. Document if anyone involved in the crash sought treatment on their own. If anyone sought treatment on their own, follow up with them and obtain what their injuries were as a result of the crash.

i. If the person received any medical treatment, have the person sign a medical release form (located in the N: drive Forms folder).

j. Document if anyone was arrested and if so indicate the charges and / or citations issued.

- If the crash involved an OWI, document what the member observed.

- Document whether or not Field Sobriety Tests were conducted. If so, detail the results of the tests. If not, explain why the tests were not conducted.

k. If the crash was OWI related, document if a search warrant for blood evidence was needed. If so, document why a search warrant was obtained.

l. If the defendant left the scene of an accident, the member shall document their efforts to locate the defendant(s).

m. Document how the driver identified the suspect. Members shall not use a driver's license or identification card photograph to identify the suspect and shall use a photo array if necessary.

n. Interview the 911 caller if applicable (if the caller is one of the drivers document this information in the report).

o. Interview and document all witness statements.

4. The *TraCS Crash Supplemental Report* will be filed via the TraCS attachment form, referencing the crash document number in the "Form Number" field.

5. Only mark the "Supplemental Report" box "YES" in the crash report if a PO-15a or an incident report is filed. If supplemental information is contained in the narrative field of the crash report, this box does not need to be checked.

D. NON-CONTACT VEHICLES

1. A unit may be involved in an accident without making contact with another unit or other object. Involvement constitutes any unit's action or failure to act as required

by law and the act contributed to the accident. Non-contact units meeting this criterion must be included on the DT4000 crash report as a non-contact unit. Members shall not enter the registration plate of non-contact units on the DT4000 unless a member has personally seen such vehicle and can confirm said vehicle's involvement.

2. If the non-contact vehicle was operating within the law, police members shall record information only in the diagram and narrative of the report. Do not include this non-contact unit as a unit in field 6. Label the vehicle as "non-contact" in the diagram and record the driver's name and date of birth in the narrative. A non-contact vehicle operator which was operating within the law will not have a reportable accident placed on their driving record.

E. WARNING CARD INFORMATION NOT TO BE INCLUDED ON DT4000

The judgmental disposition of a traffic warning card is not to be included on the face of an DT4000.

F. COMPLETION OF DT4000

1. Police members shall complete the DT4000 on the day the crash is investigated and prior to the end of their shift. Police members unable to complete the report prior to the end of their shift shall notify their shift commander. Shift commanders shall determine if the report shall be completed on extension of duty overtime or the member's next tour of duty. Shift commanders shall consider the member's work schedule (e.g., regular off days, vacation) when deciding when the report shall be completed.

2. Work location supervisors shall review and approve all DT4000 reports that are received in "validated" status for their work location. Work location supervisors shall ensure all DT4000 reports are completed and approved within ten days of the crash date to conform to state mandates.

Note: Serious injury crashes (hit and run or not) involving great bodily harm or death shall be reviewed and approved by the Crash Reconstruction Unit.

650.25 CRASHES REPORTABLE AT DISTRICT STATIONS

A. SQUADS NOT TO BE DISPATCHED

1. Crashes which meet the below listed criteria shall not have squads dispatched to investigate at the scene. In these instances, the caller shall be informed that if the parties involved wish to have a crash report filed, they must appear in person at a district station to file a report or be directed to the Wisconsin Department of Transportation's website to self-file a Wisconsin Driver Report of Crash (form DT4002).

a. None of the parties involved are injured.

b. Neither driver is intoxicated.

c. The vehicles are drivable.

d. No government property is damaged.

e. The crash is not a hit and run.

f. There are no escalations between parties involved in the crash which may compromise public safety.

g. No major traffic congestion as a result of the crash.

2. Department members receiving this information shall advise those persons that prior to leaving the crash scene they must:

a. Exchange their names, addresses, and registration numbers with the other person.

b. Upon request of the other driver, exhibit their driver's license to the other person.

c. If any driver involved in the crash refuses to provide their information and the above criteria is met, all persons involved in the crash shall be advised to report to the nearest district station to have a crash report filed.

B. Persons appearing at a district station requesting to have a crash report filed shall have their requests investigated and filed by a police member assigned to inside duty. No police members assigned to street duty shall investigate these crashes unless directed to do so by their shift commander because of extraordinary circumstances.

C. Officers who come upon an accident while in service are still required to obtain all pertinent information and file the appropriate reports.

650.30 FATAL OR SERIOUS INJURY CRASH INVESTIGATIONS (WILEAG 6.2.7)

A. Members of the Crash Reconstruction Unit (CRU) shall respond in all cases deemed appropriate by direction of a Specialized Patrol Division supervisor or in the absence of such supervisor the shift commander at the respective district or Criminal Investigation Bureau.

B. Members of the Criminal Investigation Bureau may also respond in cases deemed appropriate by direction of a Criminal Investigation Bureau supervisor. A supervisor from the Criminal Investigation Bureau shall respond to all fatal motor vehicle crashes.

C. The request for the CRU may be made by a district or division shift commander through a Specialized Patrol Division supervisor at extension [redacted] or [redacted] between 7:00am – 11:00pm. If the CRU is needed on scene between 11:00pm – 7:00am, the district or division shift commander shall contact a DEC supervisor at extension [redacted] who will contact a Specialized Patrol Division supervisor via call-up protocol.

D. The supervisor from the CRU shall be in charge of the scene, in the event no CRU supervisor is available, the on-scene supervisor will remain in charge.

E. Upon arrival, CRU personnel shall coordinate with the scene supervisor in the recovery of evidence.
(WILEAG 6.2.7.1)

F. TELETYPE / WISCONSIN CRIME ALERT NETWORK ALERTS REQUIRED

1. It shall be the responsibility of the CRU to transmit a teletype message "MVFR" (Motor Vehicle Fatality Report) to DOT by the end of the working shift during which the fatality occurred. Such messages are to be submitted only on fatalities. Information required is as follows:

   - Date and time of the crash.
   - Name, sex, date of birth, time, and date of death of person(s) killed.
   - Can names be released to the press? Yes or No (check with Criminal Investigation Bureau shift commander).
   - Location of crash: county, municipality, street, and highway.
   - Total number and type of units involved.
   - Seating position and safety equipment used by the person(s) killed.
   - Name of the investigating enforcement agency.
   - Attach a copy of such message to the DT4000.

2. It shall be the responsibility of the CRU to disseminate the report of a violation of Wis. Stat. § 346.67 (Duty Upon Striking Person or Attended or Occupied Vehicle) or Wis. Stat. § 346.70(1) (Duty to Report Accident) through the Wisconsin Crime Alert Network as a “Standard Alert” or “Standard with Suspect Alert” if the following conditions are met:

   a. A person has been killed due to an accident that is related to a violation of Wis. Stat. § 346.67 or Wis. Stat. § 346.70(1).

   b. The law enforcement agency has additional information that could help identify the person who has allegedly committed the violation or the vehicle involved in the violation.

   c. An alert could help avert further harm or aid in apprehending the person who allegedly committed the violation.

650.35 CRASHES INVOLVING CITY OWNED VEHICLES OR PROPERTY (WILEAG 6.2.7)

Whenever any city-owned vehicle or property is involved in a crash, a DT4000 shall be filed. Appropriate supplemental reports shall also be filed if necessary. The investigating member shall determine whether or not insurance is carried by the operator of any other vehicle involved, and if insurance is carried, the member shall indicate the name and address of the insurance company, and policy number, if available, on the DT4000. The Records Management Division shall be responsible for forwarding reports of such crashes to the city attorney’s office.

(WILEAG 6.2.7.4)

650.40 CRASHES INVOLVING DEPARTMENT VEHICLES (WILEAG 6.2.7)

A. INVESTIGATING SUPERVISOR

1. Department members shall immediately report to their supervisor any crash with a department motor vehicle operated by them or in their charge. The supervisor shall respond to the scene of all crashes involving a department vehicle.

   A supervisor of higher rank from the member's work location shall conduct the investigation, with the exception of Internal Affairs Division (IAD) personnel who are authorized by the Chief of Police to conduct the investigation regardless of the rank of the member involved. If no supervisor of higher rank from the member's work location is available, then a supervisor of higher rank from the district in which the crash occurred shall investigate. If one is not available from the district in which the crash occurred, then a supervisor of a higher rank from another district shall investigate.

2. A DT4000, including supplemental information shall be filed on all crashes involving department vehicles. Members must print and submit a copy of the DT4000, including supplemental information, to their shift commander for review. If correction is needed, the member must make such correction on the TraCS report and then re-validate the report.

3. The supervisor investigating a crash involving a department vehicle shall make the determination if the crash is "reportable" or "non-reportable." The supervisor shall ensure that field #1 on the DT4000 is properly checked.

4. The supervisor shall file a squad accident report via the Administrative Investigations Management (AIM) system detailing the facts of the investigation. The AIM report shall be prepared using the following guidelines:

   a. The supervisor responsible for filing the report shall obtain a number in the AIM system prior to securing from duty on the date in which the incident occurred.

   b. Reports are to be completed and tracked to the designated supervisor or shift commander within 8 days of the incident.

   c. The squad accident report shall be reviewed by the supervisor / shift commander within 10 days following the receipt from the supervisor who completed the report (within 18 days of the incident). The squad accident report shall then be tracked by the supervisor / shift commander to their commanding officer.

   d. The squad accident report shall be reviewed by the commanding officer within 17 days following the receipt from the supervisor / shift commander (within 35 days of the incident).

   e. Reports shall be thoroughly completed and reviewed within 35 days following the date on which the incident occurred and then tracked to the Internal Affairs

Division.

f. The Internal Affairs Division shall review the reports within 21 days following the receipt from the commanding officer of the work location.

5. The supervisor shall file the *Vehicle Service Request* (form PV-18) and consult with his/her shift commander to ensure that the Facilities Services Division has been notified of the damage to the department vehicle. The supervisor shall notify the Crash Reconstruction Unit (CRU) at [redacted] if there is an airbag deployment in the department vehicle.

6. The supervisor shall ensure any *TraCS Crash Supplemental Reports* filed via the TraCS attachment form are printed and included with the above reports.

7. The shift commander shall ensure that the *Restitution Recovery-Review Package* (form PR-92) is filed (Refer to SOP 640 - Department Owned Vehicles). (WILEAG 6.2.7.4)

B. CRASH RECONSTRUCTION UNIT (CRU)

1. Members of the CRU shall respond in all cases of a crash involving a department motor vehicle where a resident or department member suffers great bodily harm, as defined by Wis. Stat. 939.22(14), as a result of the crash.

2. The CRU, when receiving a notification at [redacted], shall image the airbag control module and document such results on a *Department Memorandum* (form PM-9E), which shall be forwarded to the member's commanding officer for review.

C. COMMANDING OFFICER

1. The commanding officer of the member involved in the crash shall be responsible for the review and approval of the investigating supervisor's on-duty squad accident report on the AIM system.

2. Commanding officers shall provide recommendations for further action or investigation (if needed), and they shall forward the AIM system report to the Internal Affairs Division.

3. If there are serious injuries requiring admission to a hospital or if death occurs as a result of a department vehicle crash, the commanding officer shall forward the reports via the AIM system to their respective bureau commanding officer. Commanding officers may, at any other time they believe notification to their bureau commander is warranted, forward department vehicle crash reports to their bureau commander.

D. MOTOR VEHICLE PURSUITS

If a crash occurs during a motor vehicle pursuit, in addition to the DT4000, supervisors shall file a motor vehicle pursuit report via the AIM system (Refer to SOP 660 - Vehicle

Pursuits and Emergency Vehicle Operations).

650.45 HAZARDOUS MATERIAL (WILEAG 6.2.7)

As a result of vehicle crashes members may encounter materials they deem to be hazardous to themselves or to the environment. This may include vehicles transporting hazardous materials or a vehicle leaking gas following a crash. If a member determines a hazardous material leak or concern they shall contact the DEC who, in turn, will contact MFD (Hazardous Material Unit).
(WILEAG 6.2.7.5)

650.50 FILING OF INCIDENT REPORT REQUIREMENTS

Police members shall file an incident report involving the following incidents.

A. All crashes resulting in death.

B. All hit-and-run incidents resulting in injury or death

C. All fleeing incidents resulting in injury or death.

D. All incidents involving unlicensed drivers (OAR/OAS) resulting in great bodily harm or death.

Note: Members shall be aware that according to Wis. Stat. § 346.73: Accident reports required to be filed with or transmitted to the department (Department of Transportation) or a county or municipal authority shall not be used as evidence in any judicial trial, civil or criminal, arising out of an accident, except that such reports may be used as evidence in any administrative proceeding conducted by the department. The department shall furnish upon demand of any person who has or claims to have made such a report, or upon demand of any court, a certificate showing that a specified accident report has or has not been made to the department solely to prove a compliance or a failure to comply with the requirement that such a report be made to the department.

650.55 ANALYSIS OF CRASH / PURSUIT DATA

A. It shall be the responsibility of IAD to establish a database of information on department motor vehicle crashes and motor vehicle pursuits.

B. In certain circumstances, IAD may conduct a statistical analysis of all departmental motor vehicle crashes and motor vehicle pursuits. This analysis may be conducted for the following purposes:

1. Identification of those department members who are involved in on-duty motor vehicle crashes or motor vehicle pursuits.

2. Examination of the data to identify any trends, patterns, or causative factors.

3. Determination of the need for further investigation or departmental discipline.

4. Consultation with the Training Division commanding officer to evaluate the need for remedial, revised, or additional training.

5. Provide assistance to the Office of the City Attorney in civil litigation involving department motor vehicle crashes or motor vehicle pursuits.

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CHIEF OF POLICE

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