

**Galveston Fire Department  
Standard Operating Procedure  
#1400.04 Aircraft Emergencies**

**Fire Chief** \_\_\_\_\_

Implementation Date: March 2010

Review Date: October 2011

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**Aircraft Emergencies**

The purpose of this Standard Operating Procedure is to ensure safe, consistent operations when handling an aircraft emergency. These emergencies may occur at the Airport or at any location across the Island. This SOP is intended to provide all responding personnel some guidelines to handle these incidents consistently. Scholes International Airport is not an FAA indexed airport and the GFD is not designated as an ARFF equipped fire department.

**Alert I** – This shall be used for an in-flight emergency as declared by the pilot, when it involves mechanical issues or other unforeseen issues that could affect a safe landing.

**Alert II** – This shall be used for an in-flight emergency as declared by the pilot, when it involves smoke and/or fire in the aircraft, the aircraft is forced to land without landing gear or there is a medical emergency involving the pilot.

**Alert III** - This shall be used when an aircraft has crashed at the airport.

**At the Airport**

**All Radio communications for Aircraft emergencies will be on Public Safety Channel.**

In the event of an aircraft emergency at the Airport during the scheduled hours of operation for the Air Control Tower, GFD will be notified by the Tower controller. The Tower will first attempt to contact Station #4 via the direct ring down line at Station #4. When possible, the on-duty Captain shall answer the phone and obtain the report from the Tower. It will be the responsibility of the Captain to notify Dispatch of an aircraft emergency, specify the level of Alert required, type aircraft, nature of emergency and number of passengers on board. Have responding units switch to “Public Safety Channel”

In the event that Engine 4 is out of the Station or the Tower phone is not answered in 3 rings, the Tower controller will call 911 to report the aircraft emergency.

An Alert I will be handled by a single Engine Co. and additional units/agencies as requested by the Captain of that Engine Company.

An Alert II or III will require a One Alarm response for an airport alert. This response will require 2 Engine Companies, the Rescue unit, Safety and Battalion. In addition, GEMS shall be dispatched. This response may be cancelled or altered by the Captain of the first arriving fire company.

In the event of an aircraft emergency at the Airport outside of the scheduled hours of operation for the Air Control Tower, Dispatch should be contacted and they will dispatch the closest Engine Company. It will be the responsibility of that Captain to determine the Alert level based on the information provided and request additional units based on the alert level.

### **Staging Areas**

All responding units will stage at Station #4 and use the gate at Station #4 to access the airfield when directed. One member of the 2<sup>nd</sup> arriving GFD unit will function as the staging officer until relieved or the incident is terminated. The staging officer will control the gate and only allow units onto the airfield as directed by Command.

All media personnel shall be directed to the Terminal building where they will be contacted by the PIO.

### **Triage Areas**

For patients involved in the aircraft incident, a triage area will be established, by the first arriving unit. This triage area shall be established outside of the immediate hazard area, to provide a safe environment for the later arriving responders. One member of the first arriving unit will be the Triage officer until relieved by EMS or the incident is terminated.

### **Unified Command**

Incidents that require additional units will require a unified command be established. This command post should be at the control Tower. In the event the control Tower is not open, the parking lot of the Tower will be the location of the Unified command post. The Captain of the first arriving Company shall be the incident commander until relieved or the incident is terminated. A face to face transfer of command will not be possible when a Unified Command post is established.

### **Away from the Airport**

Incidents that occur away from the airport will be handled in accordance with normal operation SOP's.

***All aircraft emergencies shall be reported to the Texas Department of Public Safety as soon as possible. The incident commander shall remain on scene until the DPS arrives and relieves the IC.***