



Chapter 05: Flight School Operations

05. Safety Incident Reporting

Manage safety incident reporting and investigation to maintain safe training environment and regulatory compliance while promoting a positive safety culture.

Purpose

Establish procedures for reporting, investigating, and responding to safety incidents during flight training operations to ensure regulatory compliance, prevent future occurrences, and maintain the highest safety standards in all training activities.

Roles and Responsibilities

Flight Instructor:

- Conduct student assessments and training
- Review training objectives with students
- Coordinate aircraft scheduling for training
- Maintain communication with students on progress
- Ensure safety and regulatory compliance

Safety Officer:

- Monitor safety compliance across all operations
- Conduct safety investigations and reporting
- Coordinate safety training and certification
- Ensure regulatory safety compliance
- Authorize safety equipment and improvements

Chief Flight Instructor:

- Review student qualifications and training goals
- Assign appropriate flight instructors based on needs
- Conduct flight school orientation and safety briefings
- Approve training program selection and scheduling
- Ensure Part 61 compliance for all training operations

Process Steps

Immediate Response Phase

- **Ensure safety and security** - Verify all persons are safe and secure the incident scene
- **Provide emergency assistance** - Coordinate emergency medical or rescue services if required
- **Notify leadership** - Contact Chief Flight Instructor, Safety Officer, and Operations Leader immediately
- **Document initial information** - Record basic incident facts, time, location, and persons involved

Incident Reporting Phase

- **Complete incident report** - Document detailed incident information using standardized reporting forms
- **Notify regulatory authorities** - Report to FAA, NTSB, or other agencies as required by regulations
- **Contact insurance providers** - Notify insurance companies and coordinate claims processing
- **Preserve evidence** - Secure aircraft, documentation, and other physical evidence

Investigation Phase

- **Conduct incident investigation** - Analyze incident causes and contributing factors systematically
- **Interview involved parties** - Gather statements from witnesses, instructors, and students
- **Review documentation** - Examine training records, maintenance logs, and operational procedures
- **Analyze contributing factors** - Identify systemic issues, training gaps, or procedural deficiencies

Corrective Action Phase

- **Develop corrective actions** - Create specific action plans to prevent similar incidents
- **Implement safety improvements** - Modify procedures, training, or equipment as needed
- **Monitor effectiveness** - Track implementation progress and measure safety improvement outcomes
- **Communicate lessons learned** - Share safety insights with all flight school team members

Process Mapping

Flowchart showing incident response workflow from initial occurrence through corrective action implementation

Tools and Resources

Reporting Forms:

- Safety incident reporting forms
- Witness statement templates
- Regulatory notification checklists
- Insurance claim documentation

Investigation Tools:

- Incident investigation procedures
- Root cause analysis methodologies
- Evidence collection and preservation guidelines
- Interview techniques and documentation

Communication Systems:

- Emergency notification procedures
- Regulatory agency contact information
- Insurance provider contact details
- Internal communication protocols

Success Metrics

- **Completion Time:** Initial incident reports submitted within 2 hours of occurrence.
- **Quality Standard:** 100% of incidents receive thorough investigation and documented corrective actions.
- **Safety Standard:** Corrective actions implemented within 30 days of incident investigation completion.
- **Client Satisfaction:** Transparent communication maintained with affected students and families throughout process.

Common Issues and Solutions

- **Issue:** Delayed incident reporting due to uncertainty about reporting requirements
- **Solution:** Provide clear incident reporting training to all team members and establish "when in doubt, report" policy

Issue: Inadequate incident investigation due to limited investigation experience

Solution: Partner with experienced safety professionals and provide investigation training for key personnel

Issue: Resistance to reporting incidents due to fear of blame or punishment

Solution: Establish non-punitive safety reporting culture focused on learning and improvement rather than blame

Safety Considerations

- **⚠ WARNING:** All safety incidents must be reported immediately regardless of severity to ensure proper investigation and regulatory compliance
- **⚡ CAUTION:** Preserve all incident-related evidence and documentation until investigation is complete and regulatory requirements are met
- **i NOTE:** Maintain confidentiality of incident investigations while ensuring appropriate information sharing for safety improvement
- **✅ BEST PRACTICE:** Foster open safety culture where team members feel comfortable reporting safety concerns without fear of retribution

Regulatory References

- 14 CFR Part 830 - Notification and reporting of aircraft accidents or incidents
- NTSB Part 830 - Rules pertaining to the notification and reporting of aircraft accidents
- FAA Order 8020.11 - Aircraft accident and incident notification, investigation, and reporting
- 14 CFR Part 61.51 - Pilot logbooks and incident reporting requirements
- FAA Advisory Circular AC 00-46 - Aviation safety reporting program