

Fatal Crash Early Notification System Guidance

Purpose

The Fatal Crash Early Notification section is used to promptly notify the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD) that a fatal crash has occurred. It is also used to notify DOTD when a roadway, traffic-control device, or other DOTD-controlled condition contributed—or may have contributed—to the crash, or when a roadway traffic-control device, or other DOTD property was damaged in the crash. Early notification allows DOTD to review the available information, inspect a potentially hazardous condition, and take appropriate action when necessary.

When to Complete the Notification

Complete the Fatal Crash Early Notification as soon as reasonably possible during the initial investigation. Before submitting the notification, complete all required fields in the eCrash pages listed below:

- Identification Page - Local case number and/or local case reference number
- Date and Time Page - Date of crash and all relevant times associated with this crash
- Location Page – Copy and paste the location of the crash from MapClick and complete all required fields
- Road Page – Complete all required fields
- Circumstances Page – When you select 100 (K) Fatal Injury for Crash Severity, a page titled “Notification” will display on the tree to your left under Circumstances. Continue completing all required fields on the Circumstances page.
- Notification Page – Complete all fields using the guidance for each that are listed below. Once you complete this page, it is important to click the “Submit Early Notification” tab.
 - Once this tab is submitted, it is removed from the tree on the left and it will not be listed in the crash report. This form is sent to, and used by, LA DOTD to notify them as quickly as possible that a fatality crash occurred, allowing a quicker response time to inspect the site of the crash for any damage or hazards.

It is important to note that users should not delay this notification while waiting for final toxicology results, reconstruction findings, a final determination of crash causation, or to complete the entire report. LA DOTD needs this basic information as soon as practical.

The notification is based on the officer's preliminary observations and the information reasonably available at the time. Reporting that a condition may have contributed to the crash does not require the officer to make a final determination that the condition caused

the crash. Update the crash report if later information changes or clarifies the preliminary information.

If a roadway or traffic-control condition presents an immediate hazard, follow agency procedures to notify dispatch and the appropriate roadway authority without delay. Submission of this form does not replace an immediate request for emergency inspection, traffic control, repair, or other assistance.

Field Instructions

Number of Injuries: Enter the number of people known to be injured at the time of the notification. Use the best information reasonably available during the initial investigation.

Number of Fatalities: Enter the number of persons known to have died because of the crash at the time of the notification.

Roadway Condition: Describe the officer's preliminary assessment of the roadway at the crash location as Excellent, Good, Fair, or Poor. Consider the general condition of the travel surface and any visible damage, defect, deterioration, contamination, standing water, debris, or other conditions that may be relevant to the crash. Explain any Fair or Poor assessment, and any condition that contributed or may have contributed, in Roadway Comments.

Traffic Signs Roadway Markings: Describe the applicable traffic signs and roadway markings at the crash location as Visible, Faded, Missing, or Destroyed. Consider whether a sign or marking was present, visible, legible, properly positioned, damaged, obscured, or otherwise deficient. Describe any condition that contributed or may have contributed, in Roadway Comments.

Roadway Comments: Describe any roadway, traffic-control, work-zone, roadside, or other DOTD-controlled conditions that directly contributed to, or may have contributed to, the crash. Include the condition's exact location and enough detail for DOTD to identify and evaluate it. Examples include damaged pavement, rutting, potholes, shoulder drop-offs, standing water, debris, missing or damaged signs, faded or missing pavement markings, malfunctioning traffic signals, sight obstructions, work-zone conditions, guardrail concerns, or similar conditions. Also document any DOTD property damaged in the crash. If no relevant condition was observed, state that no roadway or DOTD-controlled condition was identified during the preliminary investigation.

Synopsis of Crash Incident: Provide a brief, factual summary of the preliminary crash information. Identify the roadway, direction of travel, actions of the vehicles or other road users, known fatality and injury outcomes, restraint use when known, and whether an injured person was transported. Include any roadway or DOTD-controlled condition that contributed or may have contributed. Clearly identify information that remains preliminary or has not yet been confirmed.

Example Synopsis

Vehicle 1 was traveling northbound on State Street when it crossed the centerline and struck southbound Vehicle 2. Driver 1 was not wearing a seat belt and was pronounced dead at the scene. Driver 2 was wearing a seat belt and was transported to Parish Hospital with a suspected serious injury. Preliminary observations identified standing water across the northbound lane near the point where Vehicle 1 crossed the centerline. The source and role of the standing water have not yet been determined. Dispatch was notified of the condition.