

These are NTSB rules — 49 CFR Part 830, not 14 CFR. When this part requires notification, it goes to the National Transportation Safety Board, not the FAA.

1 • The decision, in order

TECHNIQUE

- 1 • **Was it an accident?** Death or serious injury to any person, or substantial damage to the aircraft, in the window from boarding with the intention of flight until everyone has disembarked. Every load-bearing term is defined — read the definitions band before deciding. 49 CFR § 830.2
- 2 • **Not an accident — is it on the list?** Twelve listed serious incidents carry the same immediate-notification duty, and so does an aircraft that is overdue and believed to have been involved in an accident. 49 CFR § 830.5
- 3 • **If yes to either: notify the NTSB immediately.** The nearest NTSB office, by the most expeditious means available. The NTSB — not the FAA, not your FSDO. The section's own footnote gives the Response Operations Center phone numbers. 49 CFR § 830.5
- 4 • **Have the notification items ready.** Nine items, and the rule says "if available" — a missing item does not hold the call. 49 CFR § 830.6
- 5 • **Preserve the wreckage and the records.** Nothing is disturbed or moved until the Board takes custody, except for the three listed reasons — and if wreckage must move, sketch, note, and photograph it first, if possible. 49 CFR § 830.10
- 6 • **Then file the report.** Form 6120.1/2 within 10 days after an accident — 7 days only if an overdue aircraft is still missing. A report on a listed incident is filed only if the Board asks for one. 49 CFR § 830.15

2 • The definitions, in full

49 CFR § 830.2

REGULATION

Aircraft accident

"Aircraft accident means an occurrence associated with the operation of an aircraft which takes place between the time any person boards the aircraft with the intention of flight and all such persons have disembarked, and in which any person suffers death or serious injury, or in which the aircraft receives substantial damage. For purposes of this part, the definition of "aircraft accident" includes "unmanned aircraft accident," as defined herein."

49 CFR § 830.2

Three doors into the definition — death, serious injury, substantial damage — and each of the last two is itself defined below. The clock runs from boarding with the intention of flight to everyone off.

Fatal injury

"Fatal injury means any injury which results in death within 30 days of the accident."

49 CFR § 830.2

Incident

"Incident means an occurrence other than an accident, associated with the operation of an aircraft, which affects or could affect the safety of operations."

49 CFR § 830.2

Broad on purpose — but only the twelve listed serious incidents in the next band carry the immediate-notification duty.

Operator

"Operator means any person who causes or authorizes the operation of an aircraft, such as the owner, lessee, or bailee of an aircraft."

49 CFR § 830.2

Who holds the § 830.5 notify duty and the § 830.15 report duty — and it is wider than whoever is flying: any person who causes or authorizes the operation, the rule's own examples being the owner, the lessee, and the bailee.

Serious injury

"Serious injury means any injury which: (1) Requires hospitalization for more than 48 hours, commencing within 7 days from the date of the injury was received; (2) results in a fracture of any bone (except simple fractures of fingers, toes, or nose); (3) causes severe hemorrhages, nerve, muscle, or tendon damage; (4) involves any internal organ; or (5) involves second- or third-degree burns, or any burns affecting more than 5 percent of the body surface."

49 CFR § 830.2

The exception is as testable as the rule: a simple fracture of a finger, toe, or nose is not a serious injury. Any other broken bone is.

Substantial damage

"Substantial damage means damage or failure which adversely affects the structural strength, performance, or flight characteristics of the aircraft, and which would normally require major repair or replacement of the affected component. Engine failure or damage limited to an engine if only one engine fails or is damaged, bent fairings or cowling, dented skin, small punctured holes in the skin or fabric, ground damage to rotor or propeller blades, and damage to landing gear, wheels, tires, flaps, engine accessories, brakes, or wingtips are not considered "substantial damage" for the purpose of this part."

49 CFR § 830.2

The second sentence is the one to know cold: the exclusions list. A gear collapse that bends only the gear, a ground prop strike whose damage stays in the blades, a dented cowl — the rule itself says these are not substantial damage. What it excludes decides most oral-exam scenarios.

3 • Immediate notification

49 CFR § 830.5

REGULATION

"The operator of any civil aircraft, or any public aircraft not operated by the Armed Forces or an intelligence agency of the United States, or any foreign aircraft shall immediately, and by the most expeditious means available, notify the nearest National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) office, 1 when:"

49 CFR § 830.5

The "1" is the section's own footnote marker — the footnote is where the phone numbers live, quoted next.

"To report an accident or incident, you may call the NTSB Response Operations Center, at 844-373-9922 or 202-314-6290."

49 CFR § 830.5, footnote 1

The regulation's own footnote, quoted — still, phone numbers can change faster than regulations. Confirm before you need it.

"An aircraft accident or any of the following listed serious incidents occur:"

49 CFR § 830.5(a)

- (1) "Flight control system malfunction or failure;"
- (2) "Inability of any required flight crewmember to perform normal flight duties as a result of injury or illness;"
- (3) "Failure of any internal turbine engine component that results in the escape of debris other than out the exhaust path;"
- (4) "In-flight fire;"
- (5) "Aircraft collision in flight;"
- (6) "Damage to property, other than the aircraft, estimated to exceed \$25,000 for repair (including materials and labor) or fair market value in the event of total loss, whichever is less;"
- (7) "For large multiengine aircraft (more than 12,500 pounds maximum certificated takeoff weight):"
 - (i) "In-flight failure of electrical systems which requires the sustained use of an emergency bus powered by a back-up source such as a battery, auxiliary power unit, or air-driven generator to retain flight control or essential instruments;"
 - (ii) "In-flight failure of hydraulic systems that results in sustained reliance on the sole remaining hydraulic or mechanical system for movement of flight control surfaces;"
 - (iii) "Sustained loss of the power or thrust produced by two or more engines; and"
 - (iv) "An evacuation of an aircraft in which an emergency egress system is utilized;"
- (8) "Release of all or a portion of a propeller blade from an aircraft, excluding release caused solely by ground contact;"
- (9) "A complete loss of information, excluding flickering, from more than 50 percent of an aircraft's cockpit displays known as:"
 - (i) "Electronic Flight Instrument System (EFIS) displays;"
 - (ii) "Engine Indication and Crew Alerting System (EICAS) displays;"
 - (iii) "Electronic Centralized Aircraft Monitor (ECAM) displays; or"
 - (iv) "Other displays of this type, which generally include a primary flight display (PFD), primary navigation display (PND), and other integrated displays;"
- (10) "Airborne Collision and Avoidance System (ACAS) resolution advisories issued when an aircraft is being operated on an instrument flight rules flight plan and compliance with the advisory is necessary to avert a substantial risk of collision between two or more aircraft."
- (11) "Damage to helicopter tail or main rotor blades, including ground damage, that requires major repair or replacement of the blade(s);"
- (12) "Any event in which an operator, when operating an airplane as an air carrier at a public-use airport on land:"
 - (i) "Lands or departs on a taxiway, incorrect runway, or other area not designed as a runway; or"
 - (ii) "Experiences a runway incursion that requires the operator or the crew of another aircraft or vehicle to take immediate corrective action to avoid a collision."

"An aircraft is overdue and is believed to have been involved in an accident."

49 CFR § 830.5(b)

4 · What to tell them

49 CFR § 830.6 **REGULATION**

“The notification required in § 830.5 shall contain the following information, if available:”

49 CFR § 830.6

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| (a) “Type, nationality, and registration marks of the aircraft;” | (b) “Name of owner, and operator of the aircraft;” |
| (c) “Name of the pilot-in-command;” | (d) “Date and time of the accident;” |
| (e) “Last point of departure and point of intended landing of the aircraft;” | (f) “Position of the aircraft with reference to some easily defined geographical point;” |
| (g) “Number of persons aboard, number killed, and number seriously injured;” | (h) “Nature of the accident, the weather and the extent of damage to the aircraft, so far as is known; and” |
| (i) “A description of any explosives, radioactive materials, or other dangerous articles carried.” | |

5 · Preserve the wreckage and the records

49 CFR § 830.10 **REGULATION**

“The operator of an aircraft involved in an accident or incident for which notification must be given is responsible for preserving to the extent possible any aircraft wreckage, cargo, and mail aboard the aircraft, and all records, including all recording mediums of flight, maintenance, and voice recorders, pertaining to the operation and maintenance of the aircraft and to the airmen until the Board takes custody thereof or a release is granted pursuant to § 831.12(b) of this chapter.”

49 CFR § 830.10(a)

“Prior to the time the Board or its authorized representative takes custody of aircraft wreckage, mail, or cargo, such wreckage, mail, or cargo may not be disturbed or moved except to the extent necessary.”

49 CFR § 830.10(b)

- (1) “To remove persons injured or trapped;”
- (2) “To protect the wreckage from further damage; or”
- (3) “To protect the public from injury.”

“Where it is necessary to move aircraft wreckage, mail or cargo, sketches, descriptive notes, and photographs shall be made, if possible, of the original positions and condition of the wreckage and any significant impact marks.”

49 CFR § 830.10(c)

“The operator of an aircraft involved in an accident or incident shall retain all records, reports, internal documents, and memoranda dealing with the accident or incident, until authorized by the Board to the contrary.”

49 CFR § 830.10(d)

6 · The report that follows

49 CFR § 830.15 **REGULATION**

“The operator of a civil, public (as specified in § 830.5), or foreign aircraft shall file a report on Board Form 6120. 1/2 (OMB No. 3147-0001) [...] within 10 days after an accident, or after 7 days if an overdue aircraft is still missing.”

49 CFR § 830.15(a)

Ten days after an accident. Seven days is not a shorter general deadline — it applies only when an overdue aircraft is still missing. (The spacing in “6120. 1/2” is the frozen artifact’s own markup; the printed designation is Board Form 6120.1/2.)

“A report on an incident for which immediate notification is required by § 830.5(a) shall be filed only as requested by an authorized representative of the Board.”

49 CFR § 830.15(a)

The oral-exam point: a listed serious incident always gets the immediate phone call, but the written report follows only if the Board asks for it. An accident gets both.

“Each crewmember, if physically able at the time the report is submitted, shall attach a statement setting forth the facts, conditions, and circumstances relating to the accident or incident as they appear to him. If the crewmember is incapacitated, he shall submit the statement as soon as he is physically able.”

49 CFR § 830.15(b)

“The operator of an aircraft shall file any report with the field office of the Board nearest the accident or incident.”

49 CFR § 830.15(c)

Source. Every quote is 49 CFR Part 830 at eCFR issue date 2026-08-19, retrieved 2026-08-31 — NTSB regulations (Title 49), not FAA regulations. Every quoted section is frozen and hashed in the repository; a test recomputes each hash and re-checks every quote against the frozen bytes. Footnote markers and the form-designation spacing are the artifact’s own — see the transcription notes where they appear. This is a study aid — it does not replace the regulations or your CFI, and after a real event it does not replace calling the NTSB. Verify against the primary source before you act on it.