

2004-1963

Date of Crash 04/30/04
Time of Crash 0909
City/Town BrooklineMotor Vehicle Crash
Police ReportNumber Vehicles 1
Number Injured 1
Speed Limit
Latitude
Longitude
State Police
Local Police
MBTA Police
Other

AT INTERSECTION:

LOCATION

NOT AT INTERSECTION:

Route# Direction Name of Roadway/Street
At
Route# Direction Name of Intersecting Roadway/Street
Also at Intersection with
Route# Direction Name of Intersecting Roadway/StreetW 672 Washington Street
Route# Direction Address # Name of Roadway/Street
Feet N S E W of Mile Marker Exit Number
Feet N S E W of
Route# Intersecting Roadway/Street
Feet N S E W of
LandmarkPlease Select One
of the Following:☐ Vehicle 1 4 # Occupants
☐ Hit/Run
☐ Moped

License # S19 443 022 St MA DOB/Age 04/30/61 Reg # FM 4377 Reg Type MNC Reg State MA

Sex M Lic. Class D Lic. Restrictions 19 CDL Endorsement

Operator Last First Middle

Address

City Brookline State MA Zip 02445

Insurance Company Self insured

Vehicle Travel Direction: N S E W Responding to Emergency? Yes

Citation # (If Issued)

Violation 1: Ch Sec Violation 2: Ch Sec

Violation 3: Ch Sec Violation 4: Ch Sec

Veh Year 1976 Veh Make Pirsch Veh Config. 6

Owner Town of Brookline

Address 350 Washington Street

City Brookline State MA Zip 02445

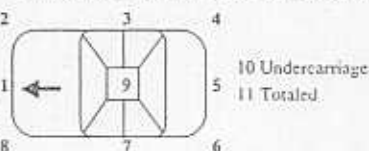
Vehicle Action Prior to Crash 21 Damaged Area Code: (Circle Up to Three)

Event Sequence 22 22 22 22

Most Harmful Event 23 51

Driver Contributing Code 24 24

Underride/Override 25 Towed NO



Please fill out for operator and all occupants involved

Name (Last First Middle) Address DOB/Age Sex 26 Seat Pos. 27 Safety System 28 Airbag Status 29 Airbag Switch 30 Eject Code 31 Trap Code 32 Injury Status 33 Transp. Code Medical Facility

Operator

See Above

0 5 3 0 0 5 1
3 0 5 3 0 0 5 1
6 0 5 3 0 0 5 1
4 0 5 3 1 0 1 2 B.I.Please Select One
of the Following:☐ Vehicle 2 # Occupants
☐ Non-Motorist A Type 14 Action 15 Location 16 Condition 17
☐ Hit/Run
☐ Moped

License # St DOB/Age Reg # Reg Type Reg State

Sex Lic. Class 18 18 Lic. Restrictions 19 CDL Endorsement

Operator Last First Middle

Address

City State Zip

Insurance Company

Vehicle Travel Direction: N S E W Responding to Emergency?

Citation # (If Issued)

Violation 1: Ch Sec Violation 2: Ch Sec

Violation 3: Ch Sec Violation 4: Ch Sec

Reg # Reg Type Reg State

Veh Year Veh Make Veh Config. 20

Owner Last First Middle

Address

City State Zip

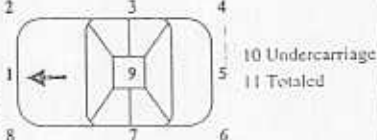
Vehicle Action Prior to Crash 21 Damaged Area Code: (Circle Up to Three)

Event Sequence 22 22 22 22

Most Harmful Event 23

Driver Contributing Code 24 24

Underride/Override 25 Towed



Please fill out for operator/non-motorist and all occupants involved

Name (Last First Middle) Address DOB/Age Sex 26 Seat Pos. 27 Safety System 28 Airbag Status 29 Airbag Switch 30 Eject Code 31 Trap Code 32 Injury Status 33 Transp. Code Medical Facility

Operator/Non-Motorist

See Above

Crash Diagram:

ie: → 1 → 2 # 672 →

WASHINGTON STREET

665

4372

NOT TO SCALE

Detailed diagram is with Report # 2004 - 1963

If Crash Did Not Occur on a Public Way:

☐ Off-Street Parking Lot

☐ Garage

☐ Mall/Shopping Center

☐ Other Private Way

Crash Narrative: The listed Fire Truck was responding to an emergency call. The truck left 665 Washington Street (firestation), turned right onto Washington Street towards Beacon Street. During the turn, firefighter [REDACTED] was ejected from the truck. A severe head injury resulted because of the fall to the ground. Firefighter [REDACTED] did not endure the injuries, he died on a later date. This is a non-collision, passenger fatal report.

Detailed narrative is with Report # 2004 - 1963

Witnesses:

Name (Last, First, Middle)	Address	Phone #	Statement
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Yes

Property Damage:

Owner (Last, First, Middle)	Address	Phone #	Type	Description of Damaged Property

Truck and Bus Information:

Registration # _____ (From Vehicle Section)

Carrier Name _____ Carrier Issuing Authority Code [REDACTED]

Address _____ City _____ St _____ Zip _____

US DOT #: _____ State Number _____ Issuing State _____ ICC #: _____ Interstate [REDACTED]

Cargo Body Type Code [REDACTED] Gross Vehicle Weight [REDACTED]

Trailer Reg #: _____ Reg Type _____ Reg State _____ Reg Year _____ Trailer Length [REDACTED]

Hazmat Information:

Placard [REDACTED] Material 1 digit # [REDACTED] Material Name _____ Material 4 digit # _____ Release code [REDACTED]

Michael E. Hunter
Police Officer Name (Please Print)

Signature

Patrolman # 176
ID/Badge #

Department

Brookline
Precinct/Barracks

05-05-04
Date

BROOKLINE POLICE DEPARTMENT

TRAFFIC DIVISION

NON-COLLISION PASSENGER FATAL
INVESTIGATION

C# 2004-1963

Firefighter [REDACTED]

5/17/2004

Brookline Police Department – Traffic Division
Reconstruction Report
2004 – 1963

DATE OF INCIDENT: 04-30-2004

TIME: 0909 Hours

LOCATION: 672 Washington Street

REPORT TYPE: Non-collision, passenger fatal

VEHICLE: 1976 Pirsch Fire truck – MA Plate – FIRE 4377

OPERATOR: [REDACTED]

PASSENGERS: [REDACTED]

INVESTIGATING OFFICER: Ptl. Michael Hunter # 176

ASSISTING OFFICERS: Ptl. Keith Lacy # 244

Ptl. John King # 226

Ptl. Paul Cullinane # 173

Detective Lawrence Crapo # 135

Sgt. Martin Parlon

Lt. Michael Gropman – Traffic Division Commander

ASSISTING AGENCY: Massachusetts State Police – Collision Analysis and
Reconstruction Section

Fallon Ambulance Service

WEATHER: Clear / sunny

DATE OF REPORT: 05-20-2004

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:


Patrolman Michael E. Hunter # 176

SYNOPSIS:

At approximately 0905 hours on 04-30-2004 the Fire Department's Engine Company # 3 for the Town of Brookline left Station # 7, 665 Washington Street to service a call. They were dispatched to 11 Regent Circle for a call relating to an odor of gas and the fire truck that they used for this response was Spare Engine # 2. Engine Company # 3 responded by exiting the bay of the firehouse marked OH # 1 and made a right turn onto Washington Street towards Beacon Street. In this turn area, a firefighter fell onto the roadway from the rear driver's side passenger compartment. There were no other firefighters injured during this run. The firefighter's fall and the landing onto the roadway caused severe head trauma. An investigation by the Brookline Police Department commenced moments after notification of the medical assist call at 665 Washington Street. The State Police, who provided three Troopers from their Specialty Sections, enhanced the investigation. There was a Medical response by the Fallon Ambulance Company that required transporting the injured firefighter to Beth Israel / Deaconess Hospital.

ASSIGNMENT:

The Traffic Department has five officers assigned to the Division as investigators. They routinely respond to accidents that involve Town Property and personal injury. The first traffic officer that was dispatched to this call was Officer Keith Lacy # 244; he was driving the 563 cruiser and working his scheduled shift. Officer Lacy arrived on scene and observed several firefighters rendering aid to the injured firefighter. He then began assisting with traffic control and while doing this task he learned through Officer Douglas Dunwoody # 131 that the firefighter's injury appeared to be serious. Officer Lacy then reassessed the incident and asked Control for additional units to close sections of Washington Street. Officer Lacy also asked Control to locate this Officer (Michael Hunter # 176) to respond to the scene. Officer Lacy knew that I was working on a project inside the first floor Public Safety interview room and that I would be able to respond without delay. Officer Sean O'Brien # 195 notified me that there was an accident in Washington Square that involved a firefighter that was badly injured. I gathered equipment from the station and responded using the 560 cruiser. Lieutenant Gropman also responded to the scene at the direction of Police Chief Daniel C. O'Leary. At the scene Lieutenant Gropman communicated to me that I would be the lead investigator for this incident. Additionally, Lieutenant Michael Gropman had additional Traffic personnel respond to the scene. These assisting officers were Sergeant Martin Parlon, Patrolman Paul Cullinane # 173 and Patrolman John King # 226.

ON SCENE ARRIVAL:

I arrived at the scene and was met by Sergeant Richard Barron. He explained to me that he had taken photographs of the scene and wanted to know if there were

particular shots that I may need. He also briefed me with what he had learned and indicated that he had placed officers at both ends of the scene to detour the Washington Street traffic. Sergeant Barron, acting under the direction of Lieutenant Gropman placed yellow "DO NOT CROSS POLICE" tape around the scene that contained the fire truck and the fall location of Firefighter [REDACTED].

NOTE:

Detective Crapo # 135 arrived later and extensively photographed the scene.

OFFICER'S OBSERVATIONS AND LEARNED INFORMATION:

I parked in the area of 655 Washington Street and walked towards the scene. I could see upon my approach two stationary Fire Trucks. The first truck was Ladder Company # 2, and it was parked opposite Station # 7, in the middle of the road dividing the double yellow line. Ladder Company # 2 was dispatched to the same Odor of Gas call that Engine Company # 3 was responding to. Ladder Company # 2 was traveling to 11 Regent Circle using Washington Street for conveyance, thus bringing them directly into the radio call that reported that a firefighter was down at 665 Washington Street. Ladder Company # 2 became detoured and remained on scene, making them the back up for the medical assist to the injured firefighter. Engine Company # 1 serviced the Odor of Gas call at 11 Regent Circle. The firefighters that were assigned to Ladder Company # 2 are Firefighter [REDACTED]

The second Fire Truck I saw was in its' final rest position. This was west on Washington Street facing towards Beacon Street, it was Engine # 2 and it was in front of Ladder # 2. As I walked through the scene with Sergeant Barron I learned from Firefighter [REDACTED] that he had placed some of Firefighter [REDACTED] equipment back into the truck. The floor area of the rear driver's side compartment was the location that Firefighter [REDACTED] indicated that he placed these items. It was Firefighter [REDACTED] helmet that he told me he had moved and it was later learned that he had placed Firefighter [REDACTED] glasses and radio inside the compartment. In this compartment area near where Firefighter [REDACTED] gear had been placed I viewed a plain white Styrofoam coffee cup. The cup had a lid and some black coffee inside; a portion of the coffee cup had been crushed. The coffee from this cup was running from the floor of the compartment, down the side of the truck, onto the running board, and onto the roadway.

NOTE:

Firefighter [REDACTED] helmet was later inspected and photographed. The chinstrap had been secured to the rear of the helmet which signified that it was not in use during his fall from the fire truck.

INJURY and MEDICAL TRANSPORTATION:

The injured firefighter is [REDACTED], Public Safety Headquarter Address -350 Washington Street, Brookline, MA 02445. - [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

As stated in the synopsis, Firefighter [REDACTED] sustained a serious head injury that is considered life threatening. For the medical needs of Firefighter [REDACTED] Brookline Control dispatched P-10 Ambulance to 665 Washington Street. P-10 Ambulance is a paramedic truck owned by the Fallon Ambulance Company. At the time of this medical call Paramedic Nguyen Chung and Paramedic William Crozier were assigned. The P-10 Ambulance was traveling to another call prior to this incident, they diverted to this medical call due to the seriousness of the reported injuries. During the wait for the arrival of the P-10 Ambulance, medical aid was rendered to Firefighter [REDACTED] by his brother firefighters from Engine Company # 3 and Ladder Company # 2. They used equipment from Ladder # 2 to backboard and collar Firefighter [REDACTED]. To allow for the continued care of Firefighter [REDACTED] by Paramedics Chung and Crozier, Firefighter [REDACTED] drove the P-10 Ambulance to the Emergency Room of the Beth Israel /Deaconess Hospital.

NOTE:

Brookline Control is a combined Dispatch Center housed inside the Public Safety Building. The workers for this Center are cross-trained for Fire and Police functions and are known as Civilian Call Takers / Dispatchers. Procedurally the P-10 Ambulance is simultaneously dispatched with a Fire Company to medical calls. The following names that are listed are the workers that were assigned to the Center during this incident. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

FAMILY NOTIFICATION:

Brookline Control was notified that the injuries sustained by Firefighter [REDACTED] were extremely severe and that family members should be notified. Through the State Police, arrangements were made to have a Framingham Police Officer drive Mrs. [REDACTED] from the Framingham Court House, where she is employed, to the Emergency Room of the Beth Israel /Deaconess Hospital.

NOTE:

Firefighter [REDACTED] succumbed to his sustained injuries and died on Monday 05-03-04. Medical Examiner Frank Evangelista, M.D. issued Death Certificate # [REDACTED] on Tuesday 05-04-04 citing severe head trauma as cause of death. An autopsy was not done.

ROADWAY SIGNS AND SIGNAL:

For motorist traveling west, there is one diamond shaped "FIRE SIGNAL AHEAD" sign is in front of 657 Washington Street. There are no signs posted on the east side of Washington Street. The Fire Station at 665 Washington Street does have signal lights in the East and Westbound lanes. These signal lights remain on flash unless they are activated to go to a solid red signal. To change the light cycle you must use a control located at the front desk of the Fire Station.

ROADWAY DESCRIPTION:

The road surface is made of asphalt and is well traveled, it would be considered smooth and polished. The road appears to have the normal wear of a highly traveled road and no defects to the surface were noted. There is an approximately 5' by 8' asphalt patch near the rear of the final rest of Engine # 2; this patch does not hinder the performance of the roadway nor did it interfere with the operation of Engine # 2.

VEHICLE INSPECTION:

Officer Cullinane was present with Trooper Middleton Shield # 1544, Massachusetts State Police Truck Team. See report by Patrolman Cullinane.

The Vehicle Identification Number on the Engine # 2 (# [REDACTED]) is stamped and in plain view. On the certificate of title from the Registry of Motor Vehicles, the Vehicle Identification Number is recorded as the Engine Serial number: [REDACTED]

STATEMENT FROM OPERATOR:

Officer Cullinane and I interviewed Firefighter [REDACTED] at his home on Wednesday 05-05-04, 1515 hrs. He was the operator of Engine # 2. There was a delay in speaking with Firefighter [REDACTED]

Firefighter [REDACTED] stated the following in response to the question "I don't want to put words in your mouth, could you tell me what you remember about the incident Friday morning?"

"[REDACTED] was the last one getting on, I think he was still putting on gear. [REDACTED] and I both turned around. I know he had his helmet on. I made the turn over the line and then back, I was going slow, 5 MPH...heard a banging sound, like metal. I saw that the door was open. I looked in the mirror and first saw a scanner and

then [REDACTED] on the ground. [REDACTED] was yelling that [REDACTED] fell out, [REDACTED] fell out. It's hard to hear through the glass."

We had discussion with Firefighter [REDACTED] after his statements. He said that when he left the firehouse as the operator of Engine # 2, he was the using lights and sirens. The Washington Street red signal lights were not activated by anyone.

STATEMENT FROM PASSENGERS OF ENGINE # 2:

Interviewed and recorded by Officer Lacy- 4/30/04

Lieutenant [REDACTED] – [REDACTED] Front passenger: Stated he observed [REDACTED] pick up a gas meter and begin activating it prior to boarding Engine 2. [REDACTED] stated he checked on both firefighters assigned to the jump seat area of the piece before it departed Station # 7, and that both men were seated. As the engine was turning North on Washington St. he heard a bang, and then a yell from Firefighter [REDACTED] claiming that [REDACTED] had fallen off the engine. He looked back through the window and confirmed that [REDACTED] was no longer in the vehicle. The driver then stated to [REDACTED] that [REDACTED] was lying in the street. [REDACTED] then exited the cab area of Engine 2 and began to render care to [REDACTED] who was lying in the southbound lane of Washington St.

NOTE:

Officer [REDACTED] uses Washington Street as a north/south reference. However, Washington Street runs closer to an east/west reference.

Firefighter [REDACTED]; Rear passenger's seat: Observed [REDACTED] board the engine with gas meter in hands. [REDACTED] appeared to be setting the instrument for the call they were responding to. [REDACTED] stated that he was sitting in the jump seat processing the information about the call they were responding to when the vehicle was exiting the station. Out of his peripheral vision he saw motion coming from the area where [REDACTED] was. When he looked in the direction of the motion, he saw [REDACTED] falling out the doorway that contains firefighters when the vehicle is moving. [REDACTED] stated that the door was open when [REDACTED] was falling from the engine. He yelled to the others on the engine that [REDACTED] had fallen off. When the vehicle stopped, he got off and began rendering care to [REDACTED]

STATEMENTS FROM LADDER # 2:

Interviewed and recorded (unsequestered) by Patrolman Lacy

Firefighter [REDACTED] – Driver

States upon arrival that he sees members of Engine 2 tending to the injured Firefighter, who is laying-head toward Beacon St-receiving O2, and having his neck supported.

██████████ – Passenger front seat
Position of ██████████ and scene consistent with ██████████ account. Removes ██████████ equipment (helmet, radio, and glasses) from street and puts them in compartment area where ██████████ was located.

Firefighter ██████████ – Passenger rear seat
Position of ██████████ and scene consistent with the accounts of ██████████ and ██████████
States that he saw helmet, glasses, and radio on ground.

INTERVIEW WITH WITNESS:

Interviewed by Patrolman Hunter / Recorded by Patrolman Lacy 4/30/4

██████████
Phone # ██████████ was interviewed at approximately 1300 hours, she had returned to the scene for this purpose. At the scene, she explained what she had viewed by physically demonstrating. Also shown to me by ██████████ was where she had been, in line as the third motorist, watching Engine # 2 make its intended right turn.

██████████ stated she was in her car stopped at the light controlling eastbound traffic on Washington St. Prior to stopping at the red light, she could hear sirens sounding during her crossing of Beacon St. Two motor vehicles were in front of her. She saw the engine turning from the firehouse toward her (west). Stated she saw firefighter facing her in an "erect" position and he then turned to his left (a quarter turn). Then, as if he had jumped, he was in the air and he landed on one foot. He then fell backwards, and came to a rest with his head back towards the truck and his feet diagonally to the left. She recalled watching the other firemen holding his head.

PHOTOGRAPHS AND VIDEO:

Detective Crapo responded to the scene under the direction of Detective Sergeant Phillip Harrington. He took a total of 117 photographs and video recorded the scene in VHS format. At the Highway Yard, 870 Hammond Street, the location where Engine # 2 was secured, Detective Crapo took 8 photographs. The first officer to photograph the scene was Sergeant Barron, he took 17 photographs. Patrolman King took 6 photographs of Firefighter ██████████ fire helmet and 4 photographs of his fire coat.

EVIDENCE RECOVERY:

See reports by Patrolman King, he secured and submitted the recovered evidence.

PROPERTY RECOVERY:

See reports by Patrolman King, he secured and submitted the recovered property.

DIAGRAM:

Trooper Edward O'Hara Shield # 2428 Trooper and Leo Paulding Shield # 2911 arrived on scene at approximately 1200 hours. They assessed the incident and offered assistance by diagramming the scene using their Total Station Laser Diagram system.

ENGINE # 2 STORAGE:

On Friday 04-30-04 at approximately 1400 hours, Officer King # 226 drove Engine # 2 to the Town's Highway Garage, 870 Hammond Street. It was parked inside the upper garage underneath a 24-hour surveillance camera with yellow "DO NOT CROSS POLICE" tape draped around it. Detective Crapo attached forensic security tape to both rear compartment doors. Officer King performed an inventory search of Engine #2 prior to leaving the Highway Garage. Officer King located a gas meter inside of the cab where Firefighter [REDACTED] was positioned. Ptl King returned it to Fire Captain [REDACTED] at Station #7. Captain [REDACTED] indicated to Officer King that the meter was damaged.

SUMMARY OF FACTS:

The following is a collection of facts and evidence that has been compiled from the investigation of the death of Firefighter Irwin [REDACTED]

The rear left door on Engine # 2 was in a closed position when it exited OH door #1; it would not fit outside the firehouse if it were open. This does not mean that the door was latched or locked. If the door was unlatched and unlocked it is possible that the door would remain in a closed position due to the momentum of the fire truck going forward.

It is highly unlikely that the red SCOTT PACK cover that is mounted on the running board interfered with the closing of the rear left door. On scene attempts to jam the door with the red cover were unsuccessful. Trooper Middleton

indicated that, based on his investigation, it would not interfere with the door closing.

Firefighter [REDACTED] and Lieutenant [REDACTED] report that they saw Firefighter [REDACTED] sitting prior to the fire truck leaving the bay. Firefighter [REDACTED] can only remember him boarding; he does not place Firefighter [REDACTED] as sitting. The witness, [REDACTED] describes Firefighter Gross as erect and facing her. For an unlearned reason, Firefighter [REDACTED] left his seated position, stood, and turned around during the exit from the firehouse bay to the turn area on Washington Street.

It appears that at no time was Firefighter [REDACTED] secured by a safety belt. Patrolman Dunwoody discovered the seatbelts tucked underneath the seat where Firefighter [REDACTED] was described as seated. Prior to the search for seatbelts, Detective Crapo used videotape and photographs to document the seat area. Detective Crapo captured Patrolman Dunwoody on video as he removed the seatbelts from under the seat. It was apparent that the seatbelts had not been used recently.

The investigation was steered towards the rear left door based on concerns expressed by firefighters that were on scene; they reported that the door was problematic. On scene attempts to open when it was shut and locked were unsuccessful. Brookline Police Department and Massachusetts State Police officers made these attempts. Upon further review, it appears that Fire Department mechanics had serviced this door on April 22, 2004.

There were reading glasses and a fire helmet found on the floor of the rear cab where Firefighter [REDACTED] was positioned. Firefighter [REDACTED] indicated that he had placed the helmet and glasses in the cab after removing them from the area where Firefighter [REDACTED] had laid on Washington Street. There was also a coffee cup found on the floor of the rear compartment where Firefighter [REDACTED] was positioned. A spill from this cup was located on Washington Street by Trooper O'Hara. We did not determine if Firefighter [REDACTED] was holding this cup.

It is known that Firefighter [REDACTED] left his seated position for unknown reasons. He was standing facing the front of the fire truck, and turned left while the fire truck was making the right turn onto Washington Street. He was not secured by a safety belt. He fell from the truck through the unlocked rear passenger door. Firefighter [REDACTED] fell into the eastbound lane of Washington Street landing on his right foot and then backwards-striking his head on the pavement. Firefighter [REDACTED] was transported to the Beth Israel/Deaconess where he succumbed to his injuries on May 3, 2004. The investigation is still open.