



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## Multi-jurisdictional case under investigation by NNDPS, ADPS

TUBA CITY, Ariz. — The Navajo Nation Division of Public Safety and Arizona Department of Public Safety are investigating a head-on collision that occurred on U.S. Highway 160 on March 28, 2014.

The two-vehicle crash resulted in five fatalities.

A Japanese family of four collided head-on with a pickup truck that was reported driving recklessly in Tuba City.

From the family, a 50-year-old man, 42-year-old woman and 16-year-old boy died on the scene. A 9-year-old girl survived and is listed in critical condition at Phoenix Children's Hospital. The suspected reckless driver and his passenger also died at the scene.

Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly said the accident was a tragedy and offered condolences to the families of the deceased.

"This was a senseless and tragic accident. We offer our deepest condolences to the family of the victims," President Shelly said. "Navajo Division of Public Safety continues their investigation of this incident."

According to the Navajo

DPS police report, officers responded to complaints of a maroon colored pickup truck driving recklessly near Edgewater Drive and Warrior Drive in Tuba City. The intersection is located near Tuba City Trading Post and McDonalds.

Navajo Police responded to the call at 9:41 p.m. and began pursuit of the vehicle.

The suspect vehicle traveled on Warrior Drive toward Tuba City High School and began traveling eastbound on U.S. Highway 160 at a high rate of speed before colliding head-on with another vehicle at milepost 346. The incident occurred at 10:03 p.m.

Navajo Police Capt. Ivan Tsoisie said the suspect's vehicle was overturned on its cab when a fire ignited under the hood. Four Navajo Police officers were on the scene.

"Officers began rescue efforts and attempted to extinguish the flames to pull people out," Tsoisie said. "Officers broke a window to gain access, but the flames became intense and they had to stop life saving efforts as the fire went out of control."

The suspect vehicle was engulfed in flames. Efforts

to extricate the suspect and passenger from his vehicle were unsuccessful due to the flames that consumed the pickup truck.

Arizona DPS, Navajo Nation Department of Criminal Investigations, Navajo Nation Emergency Medical Services, Navajo Nation Fire and Rescue, Sacred Mountain and Lifeguard all responded to the accident.

Captain Harry Sombrero of Navajo DPS said the accident is still under investigation. Arizona DPS is currently reconstructing the accident scene and Navajo DPS is taking care of the bodies before autopsies are conducted by medical examiners.

"The chain of events and point of impact is still being determined," Sombrero said.

He noted that the Navajo Police were in pursuit of the suspect vehicle for about 20 miles before the accident

occurred.

"This will at least be a two-week investigation or longer and we are awaiting the Arizona DPS investigation report," he said.

John Billison, director of Navajo DPS, said additional information could not be provided due to the sensitivity of the circumstances and the ongoing investigations.

"We offer our sincere condolences to the family. This is a horrible and tragic event. We are doing everything we can to determine the facts of the case and at such time we will act," Billison said.

Navajo Nation Department of Criminal Investigations and Arizona DPS are actively investigating the case. No further information is available at this time.

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