

South Dakota Highway Patrol and Lincoln County Sheriff's Office Shooting Summary of the incident that occurred on October 17, 2012

On October 17, 2012, the South Dakota Division of Criminal Investigation (SD DCI) conducted an investigation regarding an Officer-Involved Shooting that resulted in the shooting of Rachel Coleman (DOB: 5-12-87) after she led South Dakota Highway Patrol Troopers and Lincoln County Deputies in a pursuit through Sioux Falls (Minnehaha, Lincoln Counties) as a result of an attempted traffic stop. This shooting incident and Trooper Steen's injuries occurred in The Bridges shopping complex parking lot, southwest of the intersection of 57th Street and Western Avenue in Sioux Falls (Lincoln County), SD. The following information is a synopsis of the events that occurred on October 17, 2012, and the subsequent investigation conducted by the SD Division of Criminal Investigation.

Synopsis

On October 17, 2012, at approx. 2:37am, SD Highway Patrol Trooper Andrew Steen attempted to stop a silver 2005 Chevrolet Malibu driven by Rachel Coleman for erratic driving in western Sioux Falls (Minnehaha County). The vehicle did not stop and a pursuit ensued.

The pursuit reached speeds of 80-90mph in Sioux Falls. Other SDHP Troopers and Lincoln County Deputies joined to assist in the pursuit. South Dakota Highway Patrol did consider deploying road spikes during the pursuit in order to stop Coleman's vehicle, but was unable to find a suitable location.

After traveling through western Sioux Falls, the pursuit continued to The Bridges shopping complex parking lot near 57th St. and Western Ave. in Sioux Falls (Lincoln County). Entering the eastern side of the lot, the pursuit continued west around the center row of businesses to the northern area of the main lot.

While in the lot, Trooper Steen continued efforts to stop Coleman. At that point Coleman's vehicle made contact with Trooper Steen's patrol car. Trooper Steen and Trooper Orth then attempted to stop Coleman's vehicle by immobilizing it. Unable to immobilize the vehicle, Trooper Steen's patrol car was contacted again. At this point, Trooper Steen got out of his patrol car and was on foot several feet in front of Coleman's vehicle. Coleman accelerated forward. Trooper Steen gave a command to, "Stop!" as Coleman accelerated. Trooper Steen fired several rounds as the vehicle was coming at him and after it went past him. Coleman drove westbound into the storefront of the David Jones business located on the west edge of the parking lot, narrowly missing Trooper Steen on foot, and narrowly missing Trooper Shannon Orth in his patrol car. Coleman's vehicle embedded itself in the storefront of the David Jones business and then began to back out. Trooper Orth attempted to box-in Coleman's vehicle by impacting it with his own patrol car, which resulted in the Coleman's vehicle being faced towards the parking lot. Trooper Steen, on foot, ran towards the vehicle. Coleman accelerated forward directly towards Trooper Steen, leaving acceleration marks. From approximately less than ten feet in front of the Coleman's vehicle front bumper, Trooper Steen gave a command of, "Stop!". Coleman did not stop, but instead continued accelerating, and Trooper Steen fired at Coleman's vehicle. Trooper Steen fired his Sig Sauer .40 caliber duty weapon in two areas of the parking lot a total of 7 times.

Lincoln County Deputy Aaron Bartscher had also entered the parking lot and at that point was on foot. Having heard the radio traffic regarding the pursuit, and hearing shots fired by Trooper Steen, Deputy Bartscher approached Coleman's vehicle as it was embedded in the storefront. Hearing the shots fired, Deputy Bartscher fired his Glock .40 caliber duty weapon a total of 2 times at the driver. Deputy Bartscher believed that Coleman was going to run over someone and that their lives were in danger. Bartscher fired towards the driver of the vehicle as he had observed a Highway Patrolman in front of the vehicle, shots being fired and the vehicle was attempting to move.

Coleman's vehicle struck Trooper Steen directly and forced him onto the hood as it continued forward. Coleman then continued south through the parking lot and drove over a small tree.

Lincoln County Deputy Tom Krull was near the south entrance of The Bridges lot along Western Avenue attempting to set up road spikes. Hearing the gunshots, the radio traffic of "Officer Down", and seeing Coleman's vehicle coming his direction through the parking lot, he positioned himself in an area of cover. As Coleman drove towards his position, Deputy Krull fired at the vehicle with his Beretta 9mm handgun. The road spikes were not deployed. Deputy Krull knew that the driver of Coleman's vehicle had inflicted serious injury to an officer. Deputy Krull fired his duty weapon a total of 14 times. Deputy Krull stated that he knew there had been a deadly force situation and the vehicle was travelling towards him around 30 miles per hour in his direction.

Coleman left the lot with Troopers in pursuit. Coleman came to a stop in the area of 47th and Western Avenue (Minnehaha County) where Coleman exited her vehicle and was apprehended by officers.

A total of 23 rounds were fired by Trooper Steen, Deputy Bartscher, and Deputy Krull. Coleman was struck at least 3 times, with one round recovered from her back, another recovered from her upper right arm, and a third fell out of her clothing upon her apprehension by law enforcement.

Trooper Steen sustained life threatening injuries.

Crime Scene and Interviews

A crime scene investigation was conducted by the SD Division of Criminal Investigation and assisted by the Sioux Falls Police Department. Based on the SD DCI's investigation, including interviews with Deputy Bartscher, Deputy Krull, Trooper Orth, Trooper Knutson and Trooper Gacke, approximate positioning of the officers and Coleman was established at the shooting scene. SFPD traffic investigators measured the distance from the rear bumper of Trooper Orth's patrol car to the location where Trooper Steen's vest was located and found it to be approx. 84ft. Using that calculation they estimated that the speed of Coleman's vehicle could have reached 29mph before Trooper Steen was no longer on the vehicle.

A criminal history check on Rachel Coleman determined that Coleman has a history of prior alcohol violations. It was also determined that Coleman was a Wanted Person in Lincoln County, SD for Driving under the Influence 2nd offense, at the time of her arrest.

Drug screens and blood alcohol tests were conducted on Trooper Steen, Trooper Orth, Trooper Knutson, Trooper Gacke, Deputy Bartscher, and Deputy Krull. All tests were negative. Coleman's blood alcohol content level four hours after arrest was .079.

Investigation Results

It is the conclusion of this report and the Attorney General that the trooper and deputies were justified in firing their weapons and using lethal force.

The crime scene investigation conducted by the DCI is consistent with statements made by Trooper Orth, Trooper Knutson, Trooper Gacke, Deputy Bartscher, and Deputy Krull, as well as other officers that responded. In-car video from several police cars witnessed the majority of the incident and provided evidence consistent with statements from law enforcement.

Coleman is charged with Attempted First Degree Murder, Aggravated Assault against a Law Enforcement Officer, Hit and Run Accident Resulting in Death or Injury, and Aggravated Eluding in Lincoln County.

End of Report.

City of Sioux Falls
The Bridges at 57th

