

South Dakota Highway Patrol & Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe Law Enforcement Services Shooting Summary Detailing Events That Took Place on August 5, 2025

On August 5, 2025, the South Dakota Division of Criminal Investigation (DCI) was requested by the South Dakota Highway Patrol (SDHP) and local law enforcement to investigate an officer-involved shooting which occurred at a rural Haakon County residence approximately 13 miles east of Philip, South Dakota. The suspect, Shace Looking Horse, was fatally shot by a SDHP Trooper while Looking Horse held a female hostage at gunpoint. The following is a summary of the events that occurred, and the results of the DCI's investigation.

SYNOPSIS

On August 5, 2025, at approximately 7:15 PM MST, Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe Law Enforcement Services (CRST-LES) officers responded to a report of an intoxicated male discharging a firearm in the Green Grass Community on the Cheyenne River Indian Reservation; the male was identified as Shace Looking Horse. Upon locating the suspect, officers attempted a traffic stop, but Looking Horse fled in a vehicle, initiating a high-speed pursuit.

During the pursuit, Looking Horse drove recklessly—reaching speeds in excess of 100 miles per hour, swerving at other vehicles to include law enforcement officers, and entering opposing lanes of traffic. The pursuit extended beyond the reservation into Stanley and Haakon Counties, with CRST-LES receiving authorization from the Stanley County Sheriff's Office to continue onto state land. Multiple agencies responded to assist, including the South Dakota Highway Patrol (SDHP), Stanley County Sheriff's Office, Haakon County Sheriff's Office, Jones County Sheriff's Office, Jackson County Sheriff's Office, and the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish & Parks.

At approximately mile marker 177 on U.S. Highway 14, a spike strip deployed by the Haakon County Sheriff's Office successfully deflated two of Looking Horse's tires. Looking Horse then pulled into a rural property approximately five miles north of Midland, SD (*Scene 1*), where he exited the vehicle and exchanged gunfire with CRST-LES officers. CRST-LES Officers #1 and #2 discharged their firearms. No individuals were struck, but three CRST-LES vehicles sustained damage consistent with being struck by gunfire.

Looking Horse then entered a nearby residence, took a female occupant hostage at gunpoint, and commandeered a second vehicle, forcing the hostage to drive. The pursuit resumed westbound on U.S. Highway 14 toward Philip, SD.

At approximately mile marker 160, another spike strip deployment successfully disabled the second vehicle's driver-side tires. Following the spike strip deployment, Looking Horse fired at least one round at pursuing officers, with a projectile penetrating the windshield and passing through the passenger compartment of a South Dakota Highway Patrol vehicle. At approximately 8:45 PM MST, the vehicle stopped at a rural homestead approximately 13 miles east of Philip, SD (*Scene 2*). Looking Horse exited the vehicle while holding the hostage at gunpoint. As law enforcement established a perimeter, SDHP Trooper #1 exited his patrol vehicle, scaled a fence line, and used his department-issued patrol carbine rifle to fatally shoot Looking Horse. The hostage was unharmed and received on-scene medical evaluation.

INTERVIEW: SOUTH DAKOTA HIGHWAY PATROL TROOPER #1

DCI Agents interviewed South Dakota Highway Patrol Trooper #1.

Trooper #1 stated that he was on duty in Kadoka, SD, around 8:00 PM MST on August 5th, in full uniform and operating a marked patrol vehicle. Trooper #1 was advised via State Radio Communications of a pursuit initiated by CRST-LES involving a suspect, later identified as Shace Looking Horse, who was reportedly armed and traveling southbound on Highway 63.

While responding to assist, Trooper #1 learned that the Haakon County Sheriff's Office had deployed a spike strip, which partially disabled the suspect's vehicle. The vehicle eventually came to a stop near a rural residence

(*Scene 1*). Upon arrival at Scene 1, Trooper #1 observed the vehicle parked near a tree belt, approximately 100 meters from other law enforcement units. He was informed that Looking Horse had fired at officers, and his location was unknown.

Due to the distance, Trooper #1 retrieved his SDHP-issued service rifle. He then observed a maroon SUV leaving the area near the suspect's vehicle. Trooper #1 radioed for other on-scene law enforcement officers to conduct a traffic stop on the maroon SUV. The SUV failed to yield and fled westbound on U.S. Highway 14, prompting a pursuit involving SDHP, South Dakota Game, Fish & Parks, and the Jackson County Sheriff's Office.

During the pursuit, Trooper #1 was advised that Looking Horse had fired from the SUV, striking a law enforcement vehicle. Dispatch also relayed a 911 call from the female driver of the SUV, who reported she was being held hostage at gunpoint and Looking Horse threatened to kill her if she stopped. The SUV eventually turned onto a gravel road and stopped at a rural residence (*Scene 2*).

Law enforcement subsequently established a perimeter. Trooper #1 again retrieved his rifle and moved to the south side of the property, scaling a fence to maintain visual contact. Trooper #1 reported that the other law enforcement on scene were issuing loud verbal commands for Looking Horse to "Drop the gun!"

From his position, Trooper #1 observed Looking Horse outside the SUV, using the female hostage as a "human shield." Trooper #1 reported seeing what appeared to be an object held to the hostage's head or upper body. Based on the totality of the circumstances—including prior reports of Looking Horse being armed and having fired at officers—he believed the object was a firearm.

Trooper #1 stated that he believed there was an imminent threat to the hostage and officers. Trooper #1 advised that he believed that if law enforcement did not take immediate action, Looking Horse would kill the hostage or begin shooting at officers again. Trooper #1 explained that it appeared to him that Looking Horse had the means and opportunity to kill others, and that their lives were in jeopardy. He aimed at the center of Looking Horse's head and fired two rounds from his service rifle. Looking Horse fell to the ground and was deceased. After law enforcement evacuated the hostage, Trooper #1 observed a handgun on the ground near Looking Horse, which he believed was the object previously held to the hostage.

Trooper #1 confirmed that he did not discharge his service pistol and that his rifle was loaded with a full 30-round magazine of SDHP-issued duty ammunition at the time of deployment.

CRST-LES REPORTS

CRST-LES reports associated with this incident were provided to DCI Agents. The reports document that CRST-LES officers were dispatched to the Green Grass Community on the Cheyenne River Indian Reservation for a report that Shace Looking Horse was discharging a firearm. Upon arrival, CRST-LES officers located the vehicle consistent with the reporting party's description. CRST-LES officers initiated a traffic stop. Although Looking Horse initially yielded to law enforcement, Looking Horse fled from officers at a high rate of speed. CRST-LES reports depict Looking Horse's erratic driving, which placed the motoring public and officers at risk. Additionally, CRST-LES officers documented that during the pursuit a laser was aimed at officers multiple times. CRST-LES Officers #1 and #2 document firing their weapons at Scene 1 only after gunshots emanated from Looking Horse's vehicle targeting on-scene officers.

DCI Agents found the CRST-LES reports to be consistent with video recordings and statements made by law enforcement present during the incident.

WITNESS & VICTIM STATEMENTS

The female victim reported that while in the basement of a family member's residence (*Scene 1*), she heard gunfire outside. After receiving a call from a family member warning of a high-speed chase and shots fired nearby, she went upstairs and confirmed hearing additional gunshots.

While on the phone, the front door burst open and a male, later identified as Shace Looking Horse, entered armed with a pistol and AR-style rifle. Looking Horse ordered her to come with him and demanded vehicle keys. Despite her offering the vehicle, he insisted she accompany him. Looking Horse forced her at gunpoint into the driver's seat of a Nissan Murano and directed her to drive west on U.S. Highway 14.

During the drive, Looking Horse moved to the back seat, held a gun to her head, and pulled her hair. He made threatening statements, including that she was "probably going to die." The vehicle hit tire spikes deployed by law enforcement. Looking Horse again pointed the gun at her head, then fired a shot out the window. Looking Horse then ordered her to find a house, and they arrived at Scene 2. There, Looking Horse forced her out of the vehicle and held her at gunpoint while she screamed for help.

She heard law enforcement command Looking Horse to drop the weapon. She fell to the ground, covered in blood, and was assisted by officers. She confirmed she had never met Looking Horse before.

Witnessing law enforcement officers documented their observations and involvement and are consistent with the victim's statement as well as findings from interviews, video reviews, and scene analysis.

SCENE INVESTIGATIONS

Shooting scene investigations were conducted by DCI Agents and produced items of evidence consistent with statements made by involved law enforcement and video recordings.

Scene 1 – Residence 5 miles north of Midland, South Dakota

The scene was located on a service road that paralleled U.S. Highway 14. A Chevrolet Impala driven by Looking Horse was disabled in the nearby residential driveway. Agents collected thirty (30) fired .223 cartridges and thirteen (13) fired 9mm cartridges from the gravel service road near the Chevrolet Impala's rear. An AR-style rifle was located on the ground outside the Chevrolet Impala's driver's side.

During the search of the Impala, DCI Agents found suspected methamphetamine, drug distribution materials, ammunition/magazines, and a body armor plate.

CRST-LES vehicles were located approximately 333 feet south of the Chevrolet Impala on the service road. Agents observed a bullet defect in one CRST-LES vehicle windshield directly in front of the driver's seat. Additional bullet defects were observed in the side window, tire, and bumper of additional CRST-LES vehicles on scene. Three (3) fired 9mm cartridges were collected from the ground beside a CRST-LES vehicle.

Scene 2 – Residence 13 miles east of Philip, South Dakota

The scene was located in a ranch yard approximately 0.40mi off of U.S. Highway 14. The second vehicle occupied by Looking Horse and the female hostage, a Nissan Murano, was located on the southeast corner of a shed in the residence's yard. A marked Jackson County Sheriff's Office patrol vehicle was located to the north of the Murano, along with two marked SDHP patrol vehicles located west of the Murano, blocking the Murano behind the shed. Agents observed the Murano to have its driver's side tires damaged/deflated.

Pursuing officers secured and provided to DCI Agents a pistol with its serial number removed and an AR style rifle, which were both possessed by Looking Horse. Cartridge counts were conducted on these firearms; the pistol and its magazine contained a total of twelve (12) 9mm cartridges, and the AR rifle and its magazine contained a total of thirty-one (31) cartridges.

DCI Agents observed a bullet defect in the windshield directly in front of the driver's seat of a SDHP marked patrol vehicle. A projectile consistent with a bullet was later recovered from the interior of this SDHP patrol vehicle.

DCI Agents conducted a cartridge count on Trooper #1's patrol rifle and loaded magazine which determined the magazine was two (2) cartridges short of its thirty (30) cartridge capacity. Two (2) fired rifle cartridges were recovered on scene. The investigation determined Trooper #1 fired their patrol rifle two (2) times.

Both scenes were forensically mapped and documented by DCI Agents.

Officer Processing

Agents documented that Trooper #1 and CRST Officers #1 and #2 were wearing their issued duty uniforms.

A cartridge count was conducted on Trooper #1's duty pistol and spare magazines and were determined to be at full capacity, containing one (1) unfired cartridge in the chamber and seventeen (17) unfired cartridges in the magazine. Trooper #1 did not fire his duty pistol during the incident.

A cartridge count was conducted on CRST Officer #1's duty pistol and spare magazines. CRST Officer #1 informed DCI Agents that their pistol contained one (1) cartridge in the chamber and their magazines were full with fifteen (15) cartridges in each magazine prior to this event. Upon inspection, CRST Officer #1's pistol contained one (1) cartridge in the chamber and fifteen (15) cartridges in the magazine. CRST Officer #1 advised he performed a "tactical reload" after they fired their pistol, exchanging the originally inserted magazine for a full spare magazine. CRST Officer #1's two spare magazines were inventoried and were determined to contain twelve (12) cartridges and fifteen (15) cartridges respectively. This concluded three (3) cartridges were missing.

A cartridge count was conducted on CRST Officer #2's duty pistol and spare magazines. CRST Officer #2 informed DCI Agents that their pistol contained one (1) cartridge in the chamber and their magazines were full with fifteen (15) cartridges in each magazine prior to this event. Upon inspection, CRST Officer #2's pistol contained one (1) cartridge in the chamber and twelve (12) cartridges in the magazine. CRST Officer #2's two spare magazines were inventoried and were determined to be full, containing fifteen (15) cartridges each. This concluded three (3) cartridges were missing.

VIDEO EVIDENCE

Body-worn camera (BWC) and vehicle-mounted camera footage from sixteen (16) involved law enforcement officers plus aerial video footage was obtained and reviewed by DCI Agents. Involved officer and witness statements are consistent with captured video.

SOUTH DAKOTA FORENSIC LABORATORY TESTING

The South Dakota Forensic Laboratory (SDFL) analyzed probative evidence items obtained during the investigation and made the following pertinent findings:

The Colt AR15 rifle utilized by Trooper #1 was test fired and found to be functional as intended by the manufacturer. Two rifle cartridges recovered from near where Trooper #1 discharged their rifle were fired from this rifle.

The Andro Corp Industries AR15 Rifle recovered at Scene #1 was test fired and found to be functional as intended by the manufacturer.

The SCCY 9mm handgun recovered from near Looking Horse's body (Scene #2) was test fired and found to be functional as intended by the manufacturer. The projectile recovered from a CRST-LES patrol vehicle was found to be fired from this handgun.

The Ruger AR15 recovered from near Looking Horse's body (Scene #2) was test fired and found to be functional as intended by the manufacturer. The thirty (30) fired .223 cartridges recovered from Scene #1 were fired from this rifle.

MEDICAL REPORTS

An autopsy was performed on Looking Horse which identified the cause of death as a single gunshot wound to the head. Analysis of urine and blood samples obtained from Looking Horse identified the presence of cannabinoids, ethanol (alcohol), methamphetamine, amphetamine, norfentanyl, ephedrine, and phenylpropanolamine.

Blood and urine samples were obtained from SDHP Trooper #1, CRST Officer #1, and CRST Officer #2. The test results showed no presence of alcohol or illegal drugs in any of the officers' samples.

CRIMINAL HISTORY AND PREVIOUS INCIDENTS

Looking Horse's criminal history documents previous arrests for possession of a controlled substance, theft, obstructing emergency services, accessory to a felony, false impersonation, forgery, first degree robbery, possession a weapon by a former drug offender, receiving a stolen vehicle, simple assault, and burglary. At the time of this incident, Looking Horse had an active federal arrest warrant for a probation violation regarding a weapons offense and was on federal supervised release status.

CONCLUSION

Based on the totality of the circumstances and from the perspective of a reasonable officer who was on-scene, Trooper #1 utilized deadly force in a situation that was tense, uncertain, and rapidly evolving. Looking Horse placed the female hostage at risk of serious bodily injury or death when he held her at gunpoint and used her as a "human shield." Additionally, Looking Horse posed a clear and present danger to on-scene law enforcement and bystanders by brandishing the firearm. Looking Horse demonstrated his propensity for violence through his erratic driving, active flight from law enforcement, and by discharging a firearm multiple times at law enforcement, nearly striking officers. Additionally, Trooper #1 had probable cause to believe Looking Horse was a violent, fleeing felon who posed a significant threat of violence to officers and the community, and that deadly force was immediately necessary to stop that threat.

It is the conclusion of this report and the South Dakota Attorney General that South Dakota Highway Patrol Trooper #1 was justified in firing their weapon and using lethal force.

It is the conclusion of this report and the South Dakota Attorney General that CRST-LES officers #1 and #2 were justified in firing their weapons and attempting to use lethal force.

This information is based on the investigation conducted by the DCI, crime scene processing, law enforcement officer statements, and laboratory results. All the information is consistent with the described events that occurred on August 5, 2025 in Haakon County, South Dakota.



Figure 1 The front windshield of a pursuing South Dakota Highway Patrol vehicle is struck with a projectile fired by Shace Looking Horse (Projectile impact has been circled in red)



Figure 2 Firearm recovered from Shace Looking Horse at Scene 2



Figure 3 *Diagram of Scene 2 derived from forensic laser scanner*