

NEWS RELEASE



MARYLAND STATE POLICE



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TROOPER SHOT WHILE CONDUCTING A TRAFFIC STOP IN WICOMICO CO. INVESTIGATION UNDERWAY

(VIENNA, MD) – An investigation is underway after a trooper was shot while conducting a traffic stop in Wicomico County.

The trooper is not being identified at this time. He was transported to Tidal Health Peninsula Regional in Salisbury for medical treatment of injuries sustained in the shooting. He is an 18-and-a-half-year veteran of the Maryland State Police.

The suspect is identified as Keiford Lee Copper, III, 23, of Trappe, Maryland. He was the driver of a Toyota Prius at the time of the incident. Copper was confirmed deceased on the scene by emergency medical service personnel from Hebron.

There were two other occupants in the Toyota Prius. They are not being identified at this time. Both are currently in police custody.

Shortly before 10:00 p.m. last night, a Maryland State Trooper from the Easton Barrack attempted to conduct a traffic stop on a Toyota Prius on eastbound Route 50 near the Vienna Scale House. The trooper approached the passenger side of the vehicle to make contact with the driver.

During the traffic stop, the driver brandished a firearm and fired at the trooper, striking him several times. The trooper returned fire. None of the occupants in the vehicle were struck. The driver fled the scene traveling eastbound on Route 50.

A trooper on his way home heard the broadcast and immediately responded to the scene. Upon his arrival, he found the injured trooper suffering from multiple gunshot wounds. He provided the trooper medical treatment on scene until EMS arrived. The injured trooper was subsequently transported by ground to the hospital.

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Shortly after 10:00 p.m., officers from the Delmar Police Department located the suspect vehicle in the area of eastbound Route 54 and Providence Church Road in Delmar. Officers followed the vehicle to the 600 block of Elizabeth Street, a dead-end residential street in Delmar.

The driver, later identified as Copper, attempted to turn the vehicle around. He hit the curb, crashed into two vehicles, and came to rest after hitting a tree. Police surrounded the vehicle and observed Copper alone in the vehicle and slumped over the wheel with an apparent self-inflicted gunshot wound. No shots were fired by law enforcement at the scene of the crash.

Shortly before 12:30 p.m. this morning, a 9-1-1 call reported two unidentified men with hooded sweatshirts walking around a neighborhood in Hebron. Troopers from the Salisbury Barrack responded to the area and located the two men walking on Porter Mill Road towards Route 50. They were taken into police custody without incident.

State Police Homicide Unit investigators responded and are conducting the investigation. Crime scene technicians from the Maryland State Police Forensic Sciences Division responded to process both crime scenes. A gun was recovered in the Toyota Prius.

Maryland State Police from the Eastern Troop responded to both scenes. K-9 and Maryland State Police Aviation Command also responded to assist. Personnel from the Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Personnel Assistance responded to set up detours. Assistance was provided by local, state and federal law enforcement partners.

The Wicomico County State's Attorney was briefed by investigators. Upon completion of the investigation, it will be provided to the state's attorney for review.

The State Police Internal Affairs Unit is conducting a concurrent investigation. The trooper involved in the shooting has been released from the hospital and placed on administrative leave, as is procedure.

The investigation is continuing.

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