



Nevada Highway Patrol

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Media Release

One Person Dead After Single Vehicle Crash on I80 Near Fernley

On Saturday, January 17, 2015 at approximately 5:10 a.m., Troopers from the Nevada Highway Patrol were dispatched to a single vehicle rollover accident that occurred on Interstate 80 at mile post 50 in Lyon County approximately 2 miles east of Fernley.

The crash investigation details indicate a 2001 green Volkswagen Beetle driven by 18 year old male Simonas Vanagas of Riverside, IL along with three occupants 18 year old male Yeats E. Brannik of Riverside, IL, 18 year old male Matthew Pioch of Kingston, IL and a 17 year old juvenile female also of Riverside, IL where traveling westbound on I80 in the left travel lane. Mr. Vanagas allowed the vehicle to drive off the south paved roadway edge and into the center median. Mr. Vanagas over corrected to the right which caused the vehicle to overturn across the westbound travel lanes. The juvenile female who was seated in the right front passenger seat and the right rear passenger (Yeats E. Brannik) were ejected from the vehicle. Both occupants who were ejected were not wearing their seatbelts. The other two occupants who were seat belted in their seats were not ejected.

The vehicle came to rest on its wheels facing east on the gravel shoulder just north of I80. Mr. Brannik was transported via Care Flight to Renown where he later died from his injuries. The juvenile female and Mr. Pioch were both transported to Renown via ambulance with non-life threatening injuries. The juvenile female is currently at Renown recovering from an injured back but is alert and conscious. Mr. Pioch was treated for a sore back and released. The driver Mr. Vanagas who had minor lacerations to in upper extremities consented to a legal blood draw. He was taken by law enforcement officers to Renown for assessment of his injuries and to gather a legal blood sample. He was also released from the hospital.

Interstate 80 westbound was shut down for several hours while the accident scene was investigated and diagramed. Fatigue may be a factor in the cause of the accident. This area of I80 is two lanes in each direction and the speed limit is 70 mph.

Trooper Doug Hildebrand of the Nevada Highway Patrol's Multi-Disciplinary Investigation and Reconstruction Team (MIRT) is investigating this incident. Anyone who may have witnessed this incident or who may have information related to this incident is encouraged to reach out to him at (775) 689-4623 or dhildebrand@dps.state.nv.us regarding case number NHP-150101437.

