

NEWS RELEASE | **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** | October 6, 2021

NDHP Aircraft Enforcement

NARRATIVE: On the evening of October 5th, 2021 the North Dakota Highway Patrol conducted an aircraft detail to safely and more effectively apprehend suspects that flee from traffic stops in the Bismarck-Mandan area. The North Dakota Highway Patrol fixed-wing aircraft was used to monitor traffic stops conducted by local law enforcement in the event a vehicle fled.

At 8:16 pm CDT, a Bismarck Police Officer attempted to stop a motorcycle for a traffic violation. The driver of the motorcycle fled from the officer at a high rate of speed. Due to the dangerous nature of the driver's actions that posed a risk to other motorists, the officer did not pursue the suspect. The NDHP's fixed-wing aircraft was monitoring the traffic stop. The aircraft tracked the motorcycle to a residence in rural Bismarck. Officers responded to the residence and identified the driver as a 16-year-old male. The driver was referred to juvenile court by the Bismarck PD for fleeing a police officer and reckless endangerment-extreme indifference.

Incidents of drivers fleeing law enforcement has been increasing. Through October 5, 2021, the North Dakota Highway Patrol has been involved in 72 pursuits statewide. Drivers who flee law enforcement place themselves, other motorists, and pedestrians in danger by their actions.

Due to these incidents, the North Dakota Highway Patrol more frequently engages the fixed-wing aircraft to monitor traffic stops conducted by local law enforcement. These traffic details allow law enforcement to more effectively apprehend suspects that flee and result in enhanced safety to the public.

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