

# Troopers Investigating Fatal Crash North of Laurel

*Presented by Public Information Officer, Master Corporal Gary Fournier*

**Laurel-** The Delaware State Police Collision Reconstruction Unit is investigating a fatal crash that occurred north of Laurel early this morning.

The incident occurred around 1:41 a.m., Saturday July 30, 2016, as Michael J. Gonzalez, 32 of Paramount, California, was operating a 2014 Ford F250 southbound on Sussex Highway (US13) in the right lane, just north of Boyce Road at an apparent high rate of speed. A 42-year-old Salisbury, Maryland man, whose name is being withheld pending notification of next of kin, was operating a 1998 Mercedes SUV southbound in the right lane of US13 just ahead of the pick-up truck when the front of the truck struck the rear of the Mercedes in the right lane. Upon impact, the Mercedes rotated violently in a clockwise direction while spinning down a grass embankment and overturning into thick roadside foliage. The Ford rotated slightly in a clockwise direction and exited the roadway onto the grass embankment before coming to stop. The Mercedes subsequently became engulfed in flames, trapping the driver, who was pronounced dead at the scene.

A 41-year-old passenger (wife of driver) in the Mercedes was able to exit the vehicle. She suffered substantial burns and multiple blunt force injuries and was flown to Crozer-Chester Hospital in Chester, PA where she is currently admitted.

Michael Gonzalez and a 44-year-old male passenger were both transported by EMS to Nanticoke Memorial Hospital where they were treated and released with non-life-threatening injuries. Gonzalez was transported back to Troop 5 where he was charged

with Vehicular Homicide 1st, Vehicular Assault 1st, Vehicular Assault 2nd, Driving Under the Influence of Alcohol, No Insurance, Driving Without a Valid License, and Inattentive Driving. He was arraigned at JP3 and committed to Sussex Correctional Institution on \$40,000.00 cash bond. (No photo is currently available on Gonzalez)

The Collision Reconstruction Unit is continuing their investigation into this incident. US13 southbound at Boyce Road was closed for approximately four hours while the crash was investigated and cleared.

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