



## South Carolina Law Enforcement Division

P.O. Box 21398  
Columbia, South Carolina  
29221-1398

*Henry D. McMaster, Governor*

*Mark A. Keel, Chief*

*Tel: (803) 737-9000*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
March 22, 2023

Renée Wunderlich  
Director of Public Information  
(803) 260 – 3020  
[rwunderlich@sled.sc.gov](mailto:rwunderlich@sled.sc.gov)

### **SLED PROVIDES DETAILS IN STEPHEN SMITH HOMICIDE INVESTIGATION**

In the interest of accuracy, understanding, and the continued mission of seeking justice for victims of crimes, the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division (SLED) is providing the following information:

On July 8, 2015, the Hampton County Sheriff's Office requested SLED's Crime Scene Unit to process a death scene involving a body that was found on Sandy Run Road in Hampton County.

SLED Crime Scene Agents were dispatched from SLED's Headquarters and responded to the scene. Upon arrival, SLED Crime Scene Agents processed the crime scene. The primary mission of SLED is to provide quality manpower and technical assistance to law enforcement agencies and to conduct investigations. SLED's Crime Scene Unit routinely responds to requests for assistance from local law enforcement and fellow state agencies to process crime scenes across South Carolina. The involvement of SLED's Crime Scene Unit at a scene does not automatically indicate a SLED investigation.

On July 8, 2015, SLED Crime Scene Agents attended the autopsy of Stephen N. Smith where medical examiner Dr. Erin Presnell concluded Mr. Smith died from being struck by a motor vehicle.

Due to the medical examiner's determination, the Hampton County Sheriff's Office requested the South Carolina Highway Patrol (SCHP) to investigate Mr. Smith's death.

SLED was not requested by the Hampton County Sheriff's Office or the South Carolina Highway Patrol to investigate Mr. Smith's death in 2015.

On June 23, 2021, SLED opened an investigation into the death of Stephen Smith after SLED Agents received information about his death and subsequently reviewed the SCHP investigative file. From SCHP case notes it was apparent that the SCHP did not believe Mr. Smith's death was a hit and run by a motor vehicle.

SLED's investigation into the death of Mr. Smith was never closed - it remains a homicide investigation. Progress has been made, and SLED's investigation is active and ongoing.

Since the beginning of SLED's investigation, the goal has been to find out how Mr. Smith died and find the person(s) responsible for his death. To that end, SLED Chief Mark Keel has assigned additional SLED Low Country Regional Agents to work this case in the hopes that those who may know what happened to Mr. Smith are more willing to speak freely now than they may have been in 2015 or 2021.

If you have any information regarding the death of Stephen Smith, please call SLED at (803) 737-9000 and ask for Investigative Services. Tips can also be submitted by email to [tips@sled.sc.gov](mailto:tips@sled.sc.gov).



*An Accredited Law Enforcement Agency*

