



# HAWTHORNE POLICE DEPARTMENT

12501 S HAWTHORNE BL | HAWTHORNE | CALIFORNIA | 90250

March 29, 2017

FILE #: 17-3751

## PRESS RELEASE

**CRIME: STOLEN VEHICLE / HIT AND RUN ARREST**

On Wednesday, March 29, 2017, at 3:30 AM, two Hawthorne police officers working a patrol shift were in the area of Prairie Avenue and 130<sup>th</sup> Street. The officers noticed a Lincoln Continental sedan, travelling on Prairie Avenue in the opposite direction, with the headlights switching on and off. The officers turned their patrol car around, and attempted to catch up to the Lincoln in order to conduct a traffic stop on it.

During this time, the officers temporarily lost sight of the Lincoln, because its driver had made two turns in rapid succession, in what we believe was a deliberate attempt to evade the police. The two officers quickly located the Lincoln on Roselle Avenue, a nearby residential street. The Lincoln had collided with the front of an apartment complex in the 13000 block of Roselle Avenue. The Lincoln was blocking the entrance to an apartment unit, preventing the occupants of that unit from exiting.

The officers noticed a male subject on foot, fleeing the area of the Lincoln, and pursued him. They were able to detain him nearby, and found him to be in possession of the Lincoln's key fob. The man was later identified as Ernest Scott, 31 years old. He was placed under arrest for suspicion of auto theft and hit and run. Scott is currently on parole for burglary.

As assisting officers arrived in the area, they noticed that Lincoln had caught on fire. These officers were able to pry the security bars from the apartment's window, to allow the occupants who were trapped inside (an adult male, an adult female, and two children) to evacuate. Although officers attempted to extinguish the vehicle fire with fire extinguishers, the car eventually became fully engulfed. LA County Fire responded and was able to extinguish the fire. The complex itself was temporarily evacuated until the vehicle fire could be extinguished.

Further investigation determined that the Lincoln had possibly been taken from a nearby car dealership during the night. Hawthorne police detectives will continue with this investigation during the day to verify where the car was taken from.

**F O R P U B L I C R E L E A S E**

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