

LAS CRUCES – Three people in a vehicle bypassed a Border Patrol checkpoint on the morning of Feb. 27, alerting the Border Patrol, New Mexico State Police, and Dona Ana County Sheriff's Office. The three were identified as James Kirkland, 39, of Kingman, Ariz., his wife, and the couple's 7-year-old son.

The vehicle was traveling on Interstate 25 around milepost 37. Once stopped, Kirkland's wife ran and Kirkland armed and barricaded himself and his son inside the vehicle. Kirkland made several statements indicating he was going to kill his son and himself. He placed the boy between himself and the officers attempting to negotiate with him.

During the standoff, a State Police officer fired his gun, striking Kirkland. Other officers and deputies rushed in to remove the child and render aid to Kirkland. The boy was rescued and Kirkland was airlifted to an area hospital. The boy, his mother, and officers were uninjured in the incident. Kirkland's injuries are not believed to be life-threatening.

Later, State Police Investigations Bureau agents learned Kirkland and his wife were under investigation by the Livingston Parish Sheriff's Office for an incident in Louisiana. They also learned that the wife had told her employer she had been kidnapped by Kirkland.

Kirkland is facing a number of state and federal charges. The boy is in CYFD custody, and the woman is being treated for non-related injuries. State Police will remain with Kirkland until he can be booked into jail.

State Police Investigations Bureau agents continue to investigate the case.

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