

Attorney General rules August police shooting - Associated Press State Wire: Maine (ME) - October 4, 2018

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ROCHESTER, N.H. (AP) — The Attorney General's office ruled Thursday that law enforcement officers were justified in shooting dead a New Hampshire man who led them on a brief chase before crashing his car.

In dramatic dash cam video and footage from a private cellphone of the August shooting, **Douglas Heath**, 38, of Rochester, can be seen falling out of his crashed vehicle with a semi-automatic pistol in his hand. It was released at a press conference about a report on whether the use of force was justified.

Officers in the video repeatedly ask to see Heath's hands before screaming for him to drop his gun. Heath appears to ignore the commands, firing off two shots in the direction of one officer and then a third. That prompts four officers to fire off 30 shots at him. About 15 shots hit Heath, who rolls on the ground. A dispatcher can be heard saying "shots fired, one down" before officers approach Heath, who lays motionless.

Toxicology test later revealed that Heath tested positive for several drugs, including fentanyl and methamphetamines.

"Based on the facts and circumstances in the case, the attorney general has concluded that **Douglas Heath** created a dangerous and life-threatening situation, in which he placed in direct harm numerous people in his vicinity," according to report on the shooting involving State Troopers Haden Wilber and Nathaniel Goodwin and Rochester Police Detectives Geoff Moore and Michael Lambert.

"Consequently, it was reasonable for law enforcement faced with an ongoing deadly threat ... to use deadly force against **Douglas Heath** in order to protect their own lives and those of other people in the area," the report added.

Officers were trying to stop Heath, who was wanted on three outstanding warrants, including one for trafficking narcotics and another for fleeing from Maine troopers. The highway chase reached upward of 80 miles per hour before Heath missed a turn and crashed into a building.

There have been three-officer involved shootings this year in New Hampshire.