

Tesla in Seattle-area crash that killed motorcyclist was using self-driving system, authorities say

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Authorities in Washington have determined that a Tesla that hit and killed a motorcyclist near Seattle in April was operating on the

company's "Full Self Driving" system at the time of the crash.

Investigators from the Washington State Patrol made the discovery after downloading information from the event-data recorder on the 2022 Tesla Model S, agency spokesman Capt, Deion Glover said Tuesday.

"The investigation is still ongoing in this case," Glover said in an email to The Associated Press. No charges have been filed, he said.

Tesla CEO Elon Musk said last week that "Full Self Driving" should be able to run without human supervision by the end of this year. He has been promising a fleet of robotaxis for several years. During the company's earnings conference call, [he acknowledged](#) that his predictions on the issue "have been overly optimistic in the past."

After the crash in a suburban area about 15 miles (24 kilometers) northeast of Seattle, the driver told a trooper that he was using Tesla's Autopilot system and looked at his cellphone while the Tesla was moving.

"The next thing he knew there was a bang and the vehicle lurched forward as it accelerated and collided with the motorcycle in front of him," the trooper wrote in a probable-cause document.

The 56-year-old driver was arrested for investigation of vehicular homicide "based on the admitted inattention to driving, while on Autopilot mode, and the distraction of the cell phone while moving forward, putting trust in the machine to drive for him," the affidavit said.

The [motorcyclist](#), Jeffrey Nissen, 28, of Stanwood, Washington, was under the car and pronounced dead at the scene, authorities reported.

Tesla has two partially automated driving systems, "Full Self-Driving,"

which can take on many driving tasks even on city streets, and Autopilot, which can keep a car in its lane and away from objects in front of it. Sometimes the names are confused by Tesla owners.

Tesla says at present neither system can drive itself and that human drivers must be ready to take control at any time.

"Full Self-Driving" is being tested on public roads by selected Tesla owners. The company recently has been calling it FSD Supervised.

Musk has said the company will unveil a [dedicated robotaxi](#) vehicle that would use the system at an event on Oct. 10. The event was delayed from Aug. 8 to make changes in the vehicle that Musk wanted.

Musk has been telling investors that Tesla is less of a car company and more of a robotics and artificial intelligence company. Many investors have put money into the [company](#) based on long term prospects for robotics technology.

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