

**State of New Mexico
Corrections Department**

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“We commit to the safety and well-being of the people of New Mexico by doing the right thing, always.”

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Outlets Sent – Statewide Media Release

Reference: Transport Escape Roswell, NM

Date of Release: March 10, 2016

Details: The New Mexico Corrections Department (NMCD) and law enforcement agencies are searching for 32-year-old Joseph Cruz and 29-year-old Lionel Clah. On March 10, 2016, while being transported by New Mexico Corrections Department transport both men escaped. Preliminary investigation reveals that both men may have escaped from the transport van between Roswell, NM and Las Cruces. (See attachment for route details.)

Joseph Cruz was sentenced to prison on November 2, 2006 out of Colfax County for Murder in the First Degree; Attempted Murder in the First Degree and Child Abuse Not Great Bodily Harm or Death. He was being transported from the Penitentiary of New Mexico to the Southern New Mexico Correctional Facility.

Clah was sentenced to prison on April 22, 2009 out of San Juan County for Armed Robbery with a Deadly Weapon; Conspiracy to Commit Armed Robbery; Assault with Intent to Commit a Violent Felony Upon a Peace Officer (3 counts). He was being transported from the Penitentiary of New Mexico to the Southern New Mexico Correctional Facility.

Both men are believed to be wearing white paper transport suits, fully shackled with leg irons, belly chains and handcuffs. While both men have numerous tattoos, specific attention should be drawn to the following more detailed and visible tattoos for each.

1. Joseph Cruz- “Alias” on the back of neck, Tribal symbol on right ear, and “13 smiley” on right elbow.
2. Lionel Clah- Tattoo of a feather on left cheekbone and multiple tattoos on arms.

They should be considered armed and dangerous. Anyone with information is asked to call 911.

This incident is being investigated by the New Mexico State Police. Please direct any questions to them.



Thank you.

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