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# Driver charged in California tour bus crash that killed 8

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Posted: Wednesday, November 18, 2015 7:36 pm | Updated: 9:00 pm, Wed Nov 18, 2015.

Associated Press |

SAN BERNARDINO, Calif. (AP) — The driver of a tour bus that crashed on a Southern California mountain road nearly three years ago, killing eight people, was charged with vehicular manslaughter, prosecutors said Wednesday.

Norberto Bravo Perez, 55, of San Ysidro, was arrested on Wednesday on eight felony counts that were filed earlier this month, according to the district attorney's office.

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He could face up to 15 years in state prison if convicted.

Perez remained jailed while awaiting arraignment and it was unclear whether he an attorney.

Investigators said the bus brakes failed in February 2013 while returning tourists to Tijuana, Mexico after a day trip to the snow in the San Bernardino mountains. The bus smashed into a sedan on State Route 38 near Yucaipa, flipped, slammed into a pickup and overturned, littering the ground with bloody bodies of the dead and injured.

The bus was carrying 38 tourists. Six were thrown from the bus. Four people were in the two cars.

Seven passengers and the driver of one car were killed.

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The criminal complaint against Perez alleges that he was driving "in an unlawful manner, and with gross negligence" but provides no details and a press statement said none would be released.

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The bus was operated by Scapadas Magicas, based in Tijuana, which had a history of safety violations.

Lawsuits filed by families of victims contend that Perez had radioed in to report brake problems earlier in the trip but was told to continue the journey.

Days after the crash, federal regulators ordered Scapadas Magicas to immediately stop operating in the U.S. because of problems with its bus maintenance and driver qualifications. The company apparently is no longer in business. Its phones aren't answered and its Facebook page says it is permanently closed.

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