



Ohio Attorney General's Office
Bureau of Criminal Investigation
Investigative Report



2022-1726
Officer Involved Critical Incident – 15266 Gilchrist Rd., Mt.
Vernon (L)

Investigative Activity: Interview with Officer
Involves: Deputy Ryan Burgess (W)
Date of Activity: 09/01/2022
Activity Location: Knox County Sheriffs Office – Business – 11540 Upper Gilchrist Road, Mt Vernon, OH 43050, Knox County
Author: SA John P. Tingley, #154

Narrative:

On September 1, 2022, at approximately 1046 hours, Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) Special Agents (SA) John Tingley (Tingley) and SA Joe Goudy (Goudy) interviewed Deputy (Dep.) Ryan Burgess (Burgess) of the Knox County Sheriff's Office (KCSO) who was accompanied by Douglas Behringer, attorney, from the Fraternal Order of Police/Ohio Labor Council. The interview took place at the Knox County Sheriff's Office which is located at 11540 Upper Gilchrist Road, Mt. Vernon, Ohio. The interview was audio recorded.

Dep. Burgess was identified as being a law enforcement officer who witnessed and/or had some level of involvement in the August 20, 2022 Officer-Involved Critical Incident which occurred in the area of 15266 Gilchrist Road, Mt. Vernon, Knox County, Ohio. Reportedly, Dep. Burgess did not discharge a firearm during the course of the incident. The purpose of the interview was to obtain all relevant information of the incident known or observed by this officer.

This report only summarizes the information deemed by the author to be of the most relevance to the investigation and does not purport to contain all questions and answers from the interview. Further, this report was placed in a chronology to aid the reader's overall understanding of the information obtained during the interview and may not be reflective of the actual sequencing of questions nor is it a word for word translation of either the questions or answers. It is suggested that the full recording be reviewed to clarify any content or contextual questions regarding the information from the interview.

Prior to the interview, SA Tingley advised Dep. Burgess that BCI was conducting a criminal investigation separate from any internal investigation and that this interview was voluntary. Dep. Burgess verbally confirmed he understood and acknowledged that he would like to continue with the interview.

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The interview then began at approximately 1046 hours.

Dep. Burgess stated his radio call sign on August 20, 2022 was 4239. During the incident, Dep. Burgess wore his standard green tactical uniform with KCSO patches on each shoulder. He also wore an outer carrier tactical ballistic vest. Dep. Burgess stated that he does wear corrective lenses, but does not have any other physical disabilities or issues. His normal shift is 0800 to 1600 hours Sunday through Thursday with Friday's and Saturday's off. When asked, Dep. Burgess stated that he was not wearing a body camera. Dep. Burgess was then asked to describe his knowledge of the Officer-Involved Critical Incident.

Dep. Burgess stated he received a call out at about 0548 hours by the KCSO SWAT team leader Lieutenant Feeney. He responded to the parking lot of Cumberland Gas and checked in at the Command Post. He was assigned to contact Brian Hoeflich (Hoeflich), a family friend of the Wilhelm brothers, in order to obtain any useful information about Randy or Bradley Wilhelm's intentions or generally unknown information about the property. However, Hoeflich was unable or unwilling to provide any useful information. Dep. Burgess was then sent to collect Jackie Hager (Hager), Bradley Wilhelm's girlfriend, who had left Bradley Wilhelm's house on Gilchrist Road early in the morning and had been taken into custody by one of the tactical teams. He was to transport Hager back to the Command Post so she could be questioned. After arriving back at the Command Post, Dep. Burgess was assigned to join up with a Delaware Tactical Unit (DTU) which was operating out of a Marysville Police Department armored vehicle (BATT).

Dep. Burgess advised that the DTU then proceeded to the area of the intersection of Danville-Amity Road and Monroe Mills Road where they parked awaiting further instructions. The orders came for the DTU to proceed to Randy Wilhelm's house, located at 15159 Monroe Mills Road, Mt. Vernon, and to coordinate with the Richland County Allied Special Operations Response Team (ASORT), who were in the ASORT BearCat, to enter the property. Upon approaching the property, the DTU in the BATT found that the gate at the driveway to Randy Wilhelm's house had already been breached by the ASORT BearCat and the DTU proceeded down the driveway.

Dep. Burgess continued by stating that as the DTU was making its way down the driveway towards the house, they heard a radio call advising "Shots fired". He stated that they could also hear and see the rounds hitting the ASORT BearCat. The DTU BATT stopped, opened the turret on the BATT, and Dep. Burgess accessed the turret but did not initially see anything of importance. The BATT front seat passenger then called out that "He is in the upstairs bedroom." The subject in the upstairs bedroom window then fired at the BATT, striking the BATT in the driver's side front windshield causing damage. The driver stated that the window was compromised and the driver began backing down the driveway away from the house. The subject in the residence then fired a second round striking the BATT in the front passenger side front windshield causing damage.

Dep. Burgess stated the BATT exited the driveway and took up a position on Gilchrist Road at the entrance to the driveway. He then heard radio traffic indicating that Randy and Bradley Wilhelm were leaving Randy Wilhelm's residence in a side by side ATV vehicle and were heading towards their mother's house on Gilchrist Road at a high rate of speed. Once the BATT was stopped on the road, Dep. Burgess used binoculars to watch Randy Wilhelm's house for signs of any further persons or activity. He then heard radio traffic advising of two (2) individuals down.

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SA Tingley asked if Dep. Burgess lost sight of the Wilhelm brothers in the side by side ATV once they went around the north side of Randy Wilhelm's house. Dep. Burgess replied that he never saw them leave the house or leave in the side by side ATV.

SA Tingley asked what radio frequency Dep. Burgess was monitoring. Dep. Burgess stated that he was monitoring SO21.

SA Goudy asked where Dep. Burgess was when the BATT started taking fire. Dep. Burgess advised that he was two seats behind the driver.

SA Goudy then asked where the BATT was when it started taking fire. Dep. Burgess replied approximately twenty-five (25) yards from the house in front of the garage.

SA Goudy asked Dep. Burgess if he saw what the subject in the house was firing at the BATT with. Dep. Burgess stated a "long gun".

SA Goudy then asked how many rounds did the subject in the house fire at the BATT. Dep. Burgess advised two.

The interview then concluded at approximately 1103 hours.

This interview was audio recorded and is attached to this case file. Please review the audio recording for further details.

Attachments:

Attachment # 01: 2022-1726 KCSO DEPUTY BURGESS INTERVIEW