



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



2024-3294

Officer Involved Critical Incident - Portage Hike and Bike
Trail near North Freedom Street, Ravenna, Ohio 44266

Investigative Activity: Review of Body Worn Camera Footage
Involves: [REDACTED] (S), Matthew Fries (S)
Activity Date: 12/02/2024
Activity Location: BCI - Richfield
Authoring Agent: SA Allison Fletcher

Narrative:

On Wednesday, October 23, 2024, Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) Special Agent (SA) Allison Fletcher (Fletcher) received video footage from Ravenna Police Department (RPD) Captain Jason Smallfield (Smallfield). SA Fletcher was informed that the videos contained footage from the body camera worn by RPD [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Note that the video times referenced in this report will refer to the elapsed time of the video.

One video file containing video footage from [REDACTED] BWC was provided. The file name was [REDACTED]_62542_102224164301_4 - [REDACTED]

SA Fletcher reviewed the video recordings and noted the following:

Throughout this report the percussion sounds consistent with the sound of gunfire may be referred to as gunshots or gunfire. It should be noted those references are based on the totality of corroborating information and evidence gathered throughout this investigation. It in no way suggests that the percussion sounds referenced could not have originated from some other unknown source. Screenshots were taken of relevant moments in the video.

ADDITIONAL FACTORS FOR EVALUATING THE VIDEO RECORDINGS

There are numerous other factors that need to be considered when reviewing and evaluating the videos and audio recordings of this incident. Those factors are:

A. Video recording devices record within the video and sound capabilities available, and they record objectively. Video recordings lack the history, perspective, and interest of the people involved. The positions, angles, obstacles, lighting, and distance from the incident are also factors that need serious consideration.



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B. Video recording devices also record more information about a particular scene or incident than the person(s) involved in the incident can process during the critical incident. Video recording devices rarely record an event from the same perspective of the officer. It captures the action but not the perception, decision making, focus, or intent of the officer. Video recordings often miss tactile cues or other actions of a subject.

C. The speed of the incident is remarkable. The speed and complexity of rapidly evolving situation(s) that occur during use of force encounters are difficult concepts to comprehend by only watching the video.

██████████ 62542_102224164301_4 - ██████████

The video was 39 minutes and 19 seconds in duration. The video began with ██████████ driving his police cruiser. Audio on the recording began at 00:10 and sirens could be heard in the background.

At 02:54 ██████████ stopped his police cruiser. Radio traffic could be heard in the background with a female officer ██████████ stating, "I got one walking up here."

██████████ exited his cruiser and began walking towards the hike and bike trail.

At 03:29 a male officer (Officer Joshua Twigg) stated over the radio that a male was approaching him with a knife. ██████████ began running towards officers who were already present on the hike and bike trail.

At 03:49 ██████████ continued running while a male on a bicycle passed him. It appeared the bicyclist came from the direction of the subject (██████████ BWC 1).

Shouting could be heard in the background. This was likely Officer Twigg, ██████████ and Officer Matthew Meyers (Meyers) giving commands to the subject.

At 03:56 ██████████ drew his firearm as he continued to run towards the other officers (██████████ BWC 2).

At 04:01 ██████████ continued to approach Officers Meyers, ██████████ and Twigg. Officer Meyers was on the left side of the hike and bike trail. ██████████ was on the right edge, and Officer Twigg was standing just off the trail closer to the railroad tracks. The subject could be observed between Officers Meyers and ██████████ (BWC 3).

At 04:06 ██████████ reached the other officers and stood between Officer Meyers and ██████████ then pointed his firearm at the involved subject.



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Officer Twigg could also be observed pointing his firearm at the involved subject [REDACTED] BWC 4; [REDACTED] BWC 5).

Officers continued to give commands to the subject to "get on the ground" and "put it down." The subject repeatedly yelled "fuck off" at the officers.

At 04:17 an officer could be heard stating he [involved subject] has another knife in his hand. This was likely [REDACTED]. Officers appeared to be backing up while continuing to give commands to the subject.

At 04:24 someone said "alright, shots fired" and the first gunshot could be heard.

At 04:27 someone said "stop" and gunfire ended. Approximately thirteen (13) rounds were fired.

Someone then notified dispatch using their portable radio that shots were fired. Officers appeared to move to the right. [REDACTED] continued to point his firearm at the involved subject. Moaning could be heard in the background. The subject then became visible. He was lying on the trail with his head on the axe. Officers could be heard giving commands to "rollover" ([REDACTED] BWC 6).

[REDACTED] then requested additional fire personnel to respond to their location. Officers began approaching the subject and moved the axe and knife away from Fries.

The remainder of the video included the rendering of aid to the involved subject, who was later identified as Matthew Fries (Fries) and the transportation of [REDACTED] to the hospital for evaluation.



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██████ BWC 1



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■■■■ BWC 2



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■■■■ BWC 3



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██████ BWC 4



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██████ BWC 5



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■■■■ BWC 6

The thumb drive containing the video footage was submitted to the physical BCI case file as item E for reference only.

References:

Reference Item E- BWC Ravenna PD

Attachments:

1. ■■■■ BWC 1-6











