



Ohio Attorney General's Office  
Bureau of Criminal Investigation  
Prosecutor Summary



**Involves:** Rodney D. Helman (S), Elaine M. Helman (S)  
**Date of Activity:** 08/02/2023  
**Activity Location:** – Terminal Road by Dayton Airport, OH  
**Author:** SA Richard Ward, #55

**To:** Montgomery County Prosecutor, Matt Heck

**CC:** Special Agent Supervisor, William Jones

**From:** Senior Special Agent Richard Ward

**Date:** September 19, 2023

**Case Title:** Officer-Involved Critical Incident (OSHP)

**Case Number:** 2023-2008

The following prosecutor summary serves as an overview of the criminal investigation of an Officer-Involved Critical Incident (OICI) that occurred on Wednesday August 2, 2023. The Ohio State Highway Patrol requested the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) conduct an independent investigation into the facts and circumstances surrounding the OICI. The incident occurred on Terminal Road (Dayton International Airport Access Road) in Montgomery County, Ohio. The incident stemmed from traffic stop of Rodney and Elaine Helman, who were stopped for no rear tail lights by a London Police officer. The Helmans fled from the traffic stop; drove to a Travel America, fled on foot and entered a parked semi-truck. Once inside the semi, Rodney Helman shot and injured the driver, commandeered the semi-truck and led police on a extended pursuit, which ended on Terminal Road, Montgomery County. After prolonged and unsuccessful negotiations, a breach of the semi-truck by OSHP Special Response Team resulted in the shooting deaths of Rodney and Elaine Helman.

**Preface:**

This report only summarizes the investigative activity and information gathered by BCI. Not all facts and details are presented in this report. Therefore, it is recommended that each individual report from which this document is derived be reviewed in order to obtain a complete understanding of this investigation. Audio and/or video recordings exist for some of the interviews conducted, revealing further details of the statements made regarding the incident.

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**Investigative Team:**

BCI Senior Special Agent Richard Ward was assigned as the lead Special Investigations Unit (SIU) case agent. BCI Special Investigations Unit Special Agents Steven Seitzman, Douglas Eveslage, Kenneth Smith, Perry Roeser, and Lauren Frazier, as well as Kevin Wagner from the BCI Crime Scene Unit processed the scene of the incident and the involved officers, documenting, preserving, and collecting possible evidence. The investigation was supervised by Special Agent Supervisor Will Jones. Additionally, personnel from the BCI Crime Laboratory performed scientific analysis on submitted evidentiary items.

**Synopsis of Events:**

In the early morning hours of Wednesday, August 2, 2023, London Police Officer Mike Orahood observed a Dodge Caravan operating without rear tail lights and no visible rear license plate. Orahood conducted a traffic stop on the Caravan on Layette Street and made contact with Rodney and Elaine Helman who provided false information to Orahood about their identity. The Helmans attempted to avoid the detection of several felony warrants issued for both by claiming their personal information was stolen. When Orahood walked toward his patrol vehicle to verify their identity, Rodney Helman (driver) revved the engine and fled from the traffic stop. Orahood pursued the Helmans into the parking lot of a Travel America on US Route 42; the Helmans abandoned the Caravan and fled on foot. When Orahood approached Rodney Helman, he pointed a handgun at Orahood who had his Taser already deployed. After he discharged the Taser, Orahood transitioned to his service weapon and informed other responding officers the subject had a handgun. Note: Orahood's in-car and body-worn camera captured the interaction with the Helmans, which included the vehicle pursuit and foot chase. Additionally, the video obtained from the Travel America captured the traffic stop and the Helmans fleeing on foot from Orahood and towards the parked semi-trucks.

Rodney and Elaine Helman entered a parked Warner Trucking Co. semi-truck (without the trailer), which was occupied by the operator, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] who was sleeping at the time the Helmans entered his semi-truck, picked up a hammer to defend himself and was shot in the right hand by Rodney Helman. [REDACTED] remained in the semi-truck until several hours later. The responding officers established a perimeter and were able to deploy stop sticks to the rear wheel of the semi. After a short period of time, the semi-truck, operated by Rodney Helman, moved from its location and struck a London patrol vehicle when it exited the parking lot. The semi-truck, which was pursued by numerous police agencies, traveled north onto US 42; entered onto surface streets and ultimately onto SR 40 traveling west in the eastbound lane. The semi-truck merged onto westbound I-70 then used the crossover and continued east onto I-70 E. Trooper Brian Garloch positioned his patrol car on the on-ramp to block access to State Route 72; however, the semi exited onto SR 72, collided with and disabled Garloch's patrol vehicle. As the pursuit passed through Huber Heights on I-70, Huber Heights Police successfully deployed additional stop sticks near the SR 202 exit. The pursuit eventually concluded on the Dayton Airport access road (Terminal Road) in Montgomery County just before 0300 hours. Note: The in-car camera of OSHP Trooper Garloch's patrol vehicle captured the semi-truck traveling westbound in the eastbound lane on SR 40. Additionally, OSHP aviation captured the pursuit from TA at 0128 hours and ended on Terminal Road at 0256 hours.

The semi-truck sat stationary and faced north on Terminal Road between SR 40 and I-70. OSHP

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Special Response Team was requested and arrived on scene. In addition, Montgomery County Detectives Melanie Phelps-Powers and Mathew Gallagher arrived to assume negotiations with the Helmans. During negotiations, The Helmans requested and received bottles of Mountain Dew and cigarettes. The interior of the semi-truck cab was concealed with a dark colored curtain which obstructed the view into the cab. Prior to Montgomery County Sheriff's negotiators arrival, OSHP and SRT Commander Lt. Bryan Mangin communicated with the Helmans who used handwritten notes displayed from underneath the curtain. On one occasion, Mangin observed Rodney Helman using a handgun to move aside the curtain. Mangin ordered the air lines severed on the rear of the semi-truck to restrict its mobility.

Once additional SRT assets arrived, Lt. Mangin moved the BEAR parallel to the driver's side (west) of the semi-truck. After negotiations stalled and became unsuccessful, SRT Commander Lt. Mangin, Lt. Seth Douthitt and Captain Jim Tracy agreed to assault the semi-truck. At approximately 0726 hours, from his location at the front of the BEAR, Douthitt deployed distraction devices to the front of the semi. Mangin, Sergeant Erik Lofland and Trooper Hector Burgos approached the passenger door (east); Lofland broke the passenger window and Burgos jumped onto the side step and began to shout commands into the cab. On the driver's side, Trooper Matt Robinson provided cover with the ballistic shield; [REDACTED] broke out the driver's window and Trooper [REDACTED] provided lethal cover. After the window was breached, [REDACTED] moved clockwise to the passenger side of the semi. While Burgos shouted commands for the occupants to show their hands into the passenger side of the semi cab, Rodney Helman pointed a handgun at Burgos who verbalized to other SRT members a gun was pointed at him. Moments later, Rodney Helman displayed and fired a SCCY 9mm handgun at SRT members. [REDACTED] immediately returned fire from his issued service weapon and [REDACTED] who was positioned at the front driver's side (northwest corner) discharged his rifle through the windshield in two separate volleys. Trooper [REDACTED] who was positioned a greater distance away on the embankment east of the semi fired twice from two different positions into the semi. Once the shooting stopped, Mangin deployed a gas canister into the passenger side window. Moments after, the hostage, [REDACTED] exited from the passenger side of the semi and was ushered to the rear for medical treatment. Lt. Douthitt deployed a gas canister into the driver's side of the semi. Both Rodney and Elaine Helman were extracted from the passenger side of the semi truck and were provided life saving efforts from SRT members and medics for gunshot wound(s) both of whom sustained. Both Rodney and Elaine Helman succumbed to their injuries at Miami Valley Hospital later the same day. Note: Body-worn camera and aviation videos captured the assault on the semi-truck. Analysis of the video through sub-clips captured Rodney Helman display and then discharge the handgun at SRT members from the passenger window of the semi. The OSHP aviation video captured a muzzle flash that emanated from the interior passenger side of the semi, which coincided with Burgos and [REDACTED] body-worn camera videos.

**Summary of Investigative Process:** The following is a partial list of investigative activities or methods that were used during the course of this investigation:

- Processing the scene by BCI Crime Scene Units.
- Recorded interviews with SRT OSHP Troopers [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] (SGT) Erik Lofland, Hector Burgos, Matt Robinson (LT) Bryan Mangin and (LT) Seth

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Douthitt.

- Recorded interviews with London Police Officer's (SGT) Mike Orahood and Hunter Carty.
- Body-worn camera / In-car cruiser car video collected and reviewed from SRT OSHP Troopers [REDACTED] (SGT) Erik Lofland, Hector Burgos, Matt Robinson (LT) Bryan Mangin, (LT) Seth Douthitt, Sergeant Davis and Brian Garloch.
- Body-worn camera video / In-car cruiser video from London Police Department of (SGT) Mike Orahood and Hunter Carty collected and reviewed.
- OSHP aviation video / Travel America parking lot video / Warner Trucking Company video collected and reviewed.
- Personnel, deployment and training records collected and reviewed for OSHP Troopers [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]
- Supplemental reports collected and reviewed from OSHP Troopers Lt. Root, Lt. Thompson, Sgt. Adams, Sgt. Colbert, Sgt. Davis, Sgt. J. Davis, Sgt. Weeks, Sgt. Slanker, Bailey, Corbin, Garloch, Patterson, Pohllabel, Rucker and Whitner.
- Supplemental reports collected and reviewed # 23-0006657, from Montgomery County Sheriff's Deputies Bradley Gulley, Melanie Phelps-Powers and Michael Profitt.
- OSHP SRT *Detailed Incident Reports* #P230802000000306 and P23080200000070, collected and reviewed.
- London Police Supplemental report #1-23-000813, prepared by Sgt. Mike Orahood collected and reviewed.
- Huber Height Police Department supplemental reports #HH 230003418, prepared by Officers Bailey, King and Sanchez.
- Montgomery County Sheriff's Office *Detailed Incident Report* MC230802000000023, collected and reviewed.
- Search warrant for 2005 Dodge Caravan prepared by London Police Sgt. Mike Orahood Department collected and reviewed.
- BCI Firearms Laboratory Examination of Ballistic Evidence and firearms.
- Photographs of damaged OSHP and London patrol vehicles collected and reviewed.
- e-Trace SCCY CPX-2 9mm serial number C232709, possessed by Rodney Helman received and reviewed.
- OSHP SRT radio traffic collected and reviewed.
- Montgomery County Coroner's Office autopsy findings on Rodney and Elaine Helman collected and reviewed.
- OSHP *Use of Force* policy collected and reviewed.
- Recorded interviews with paramedics Amanda Everett, Matthew Buker and Jacob Walters.
- Obtained open and closed-source records for Rodney and Elaine Helman.

#### Investigative Interviews:

Multiple neighbors and officers were interviewed during the investigation. Below listed the interviews, which best summarize the events on Sunday, August 2, 2023.

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Mr. [REDACTED]

While parked at the Travel America, [REDACTED] stated a female subject came in on the passenger side and described her as a chubby White female, later identified as Elaine Helman. He stated that a male subject came in on the driver's side, described as a White male approximately the same age as him, later identified as Rodney Helman. [REDACTED] stated that he grabbed a hammer, waved it around, and told them to "get the hell out of [his] truck." He said that the male subject was sitting on the driver's seat when he pulled out a gun and shot [REDACTED] in the hand. [REDACTED] described the gun as a smaller handgun, approximately 6-8 inches, and silver in color. [REDACTED] stated that the female was "panicking" in the passenger seat.

At this time, [REDACTED] said that the male wanted to get the truck moving. [REDACTED] said that he was sitting on the back bunk and was compliant to everything they wanted. [REDACTED] told the subject how to start the truck and that they needed to run the truck for a while before leaving. [REDACTED] stated that after the male subject shot him, the subject opened the curtains slightly and he was able to see blue police lights outside in the parking lot. Soon after, the male subject pointed the gun at [REDACTED] and said that they needed to leave. The male subject started the truck, began to drive, and hit a police car in the lot while he was leaving.

[REDACTED] advised that the male subject drove around back roads for a few hours, possibly going speeds up to 65 mph, where trucks shouldn't be driving. [REDACTED] said that he could see police lights outside and thought that the male subject was going to flip the semi when he drove around police cars and trees. At some point, [REDACTED] said that the police put down stop sticks, which disabled a few of the tires, but the male subject continued driving. [REDACTED] said that the driver's side front tire blew and possibly took out an air line, eventually disabling the semi.

[REDACTED] said that police were there immediately. The subjects did not have a cell phone and [REDACTED] gave them his cell phone to use. The police were attempting to make contact with the subjects and [REDACTED] said that they received approximately 20-30 calls from police. [REDACTED] said one of the negotiators made contact with the male subject. [REDACTED] said that the police wanted [REDACTED] to get out of the passenger door and run, but [REDACTED] said he did not feel safe trying to leave with a gun pointed at him. [REDACTED] described that he and both subjects were now sitting on the bunk because the subjects didn't want to be close to the windows.

After a few hours, [REDACTED] stated that police breached the truck and broke the front windows. [REDACTED] said that he could see a police officer outside of the truck on the front passenger side. [REDACTED] observed the male subject inside on the passenger side, lean over the front seat, point a gun towards the front of the truck, and fire shots at officers. [REDACTED] could not recall how many times the subject fired, but possibly more than once.

[REDACTED] saw at least one officer outside and saw officers return gunfire towards the male subject, but he could not recall how many shots were fired by police. [REDACTED] observed the male subject fall to the ground and the female subject went to help him. [REDACTED] could not recall what happened with the gun after the subject fired at officers but stated that the last time he saw the gun it was in the male subject's hand. [REDACTED] saw bullet holes in the front windshield, before he exited the passenger side door and ran towards police. From there, police placed [REDACTED] in a cruiser and transported him to medics already staged on scene.

█████ stated that both subjects ate 3-4 bottles of his prescribed medication, which he described as a 90 day supply that had been filled approximately two weeks ago. █████ also noted that his semi has an outside forward facing camera, but no interior cameras.

**Ms. Barbra Taylor:**

On Friday, August 25, 2023 at 1310 hours, Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigations (BCI) Special Agent Richard Ward accompanied by Moraine Police Officer Tyler Dennis met with Barbara Taylor at 3149 Pinnacle Park Drive, Moraine, Ohio, for the purpose of an interview.

Taylor is the mother of Rodney Helman and registered owner of the handgun found in the possession and used by Rodney. Taylor was currently residing with her sister, Carol Davidson, at this above listed address. According to Taylor, Rodney and Elaine Helman were addicted to narcotics and were wanted for several crimes committed in the area. Furthermore, Taylor stated Rodney had taken her handgun when Rodney and Elaine resided with her in the state of Kentucky. In December of 2022, Taylor had observed Rodney with the handgun and stated she informed the Moraine Police Department at some point about the handgun.

Also in December of 2022, she was inside a vehicle operated by Rodney when he was stopped by a City of Moraine police officer. Rodney had pushed her from the vehicle and fled police. Taylor stated she provided the Moraine police with Rodney's information. Taylor stated Rodney informed her niece, Regina Crosley, he would never go to jail and would shoot it out with the police. Carol Davidson stated Rodney and Elaine had stayed with her for a couple of weeks previously, but she kicked both out of her residence. Agent Ward provided Davidson with a business card and requested Crosley contact him. Agent Ward informed Taylor and Davidson about personal items in possession of Miami Valley Hospital and available to be released.

**Officer Interviews:**

**OSHP SRT Lt. Bryan Mangin:**

On Wednesday, August 2, 2023 at approximately 0150, Lt. Mangin was contacted by Lt. Douthitt and informed a commercial vehicle had been stolen with a potential hostage situation. Additionally, the hostage taker(s) may be armed with a handgun and were traveling westbound on I-70 toward Springfield from the London area. Based upon the circumstances, the local OSHP post had requested an SRT response. Mangin began to contact SRT members closest to the area of the incident to get SRT assets on scene, which included team leader OSHP Sergeant Erik Lofland. Mangin was further briefed by Douthitt that London Police attempted a traffic stop on a male and female; the officer unsuccessfully attempted a Taser deployment and a handgun may have been pointed at the officer. A 9mm live round was located in the vicinity where the male subject fell, which bolstered probability of a handgun was in play.

Lt. Mangin who resides close to the oncoming pursuit, proceeded to the location with the BEAR, a tactical vehicle. Mangin had the BEAR for an event the previous day at his residence and was able to intercept the pursuit on I-70 near I-675. Once the pursuit stopped, Mangin remained back several yards from the semi-truck until other SRT members arrived who could utilize the BEAR for cover. Once three SRT members arrived, Mangin moved the BEAR parallel to the semi's west side. Mangin began communications via the public announcement system

(PA) in the BEAR with the occupants of the semi. Mangin stated visibility inside the semi was purposely obstructed from view with a black curtain placed on the interior windows. This was also indicated by Trooper/Sniper [REDACTED] who had attempted various positions to obtain visual on the semi's interior. When the subjects were asked by Mangin how many people were inside the semi, a hand appeared from underneath the curtain which indicated four.

After a few minutes on the scene, the London Police Chief Glenn Nicol arrived and provided Mangin with additional details, which confirmed there was a person, possibly a hostage/truck driver, inside the semi. When the subjects were asked by Mangin if everyone one inside was okay, via the PA, he received three to four thumbs up through out in the same manner, which indicated everyone was okay. Mangin was able to obtain the truck driver's [REDACTED] cellular telephone and spoke with male hostage taker [Rodney Helman]. During his conversations with Helman, Mangin stated Helman did not appear to be agitated nor did he make any threats. The only time Helman became upset was when the wrong type of cigarettes were delivered to him. Helman informed Mangin he would not let the hostage go because he needed him for leverage. Mangin communicated only with Rodney, but once the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office negotiators arrived; the two deputies assumed negotiations utilizing Mangin's work cellular phone. Mangin overheard some of the ongoing negotiations and knew there was communications with the female, Elaine Helman. The Helmans made several requests that were fulfilled; specifically, Mountain Dew and additional cigarettes, but the requested eye drops were withheld. Mangin stated the requested eye drops were withheld for the purpose to be used as a bargaining chip.

Lt. Mangin stated on more than one occasion, he observed Rodney Helman, who he could see periodically display the handgun from around or underneath the drivers' side area curtains. On one occasion, Rodney Helman pointed the handgun in Trooper [REDACTED]'s direction while he had moved to the front of the BEAR. Because Helman kept revving the engine and the brake lights would activate, Mangin had commercial spikes placed between the driver's side rear tires and had the "air lines" cut to the brakes to stop the semi from becoming mobile again.

Lt. Mangin stated the prolonged negotiations with the Helmans were unsuccessful and other options were discussed. Once Lt. Seth Douthitt and Captain Jim Tracy arrived, a plan was devised to assault the semi. According to Mangin, the plan was a collaborative effort between Douthitt, Tracy and himself, but the execution of the assault was his responsibility. Mangin stated the plan was to have a team approach the driver's side of the semi with a shield, rake&brake tool with lethal cover and the passenger side team with the same. Lt. Douthitt would deploy two distraction devices to the front of the semi and a sniper [Trooper [REDACTED]] was positioned on the fence line east of the semi facing the passenger side. Once the distraction devices were deployed, the driver's side team would rake and brake the window then move to the front of the BEAR for cover. According to Mangin, if any shots were to be fired, it would be from the driver's side team to use the BEAR as a backstop. Mangin communicated via the radio, "I have control...assault...assault...assault." Douthitt deployed two distraction devices to the front of the semi followed by both teams moving to their respective sides of the semi. Both driver and passenger semi windows were broken out by SRT members and Mangin pulled a curtain from inside the semi out from the passenger window.

Agent Ward presented the aviation video to Mangin where he identified Trooper Hector Burgos

looking into the semi's passenger side window when Burgos yelled, "He has a gun!" and stepped down. Agent Ward asked Mangin if he heard a gunshot and he stated no. Agent Ward asked Mangin about a particular portion of the video where an apparent gunshot is observed. Mangin stated, "somebody shot" either the suspect or [REDACTED] Trooper [REDACTED] Prior to shots fired, Mangin communicated to his team if they had nothing, the team would pull back and reassess the situation now the curtains were out. Moments after that statement, Mangin stated the shooting began. From the aviation video, Mangin identified Trooper [REDACTED] had discharged his handgun and Trooper [REDACTED] discharge his rifle.

After the shooting stopped, Lt. Mangin stated Trooper [REDACTED] requested a shield and he moved toward the front. Mangin deployed a gas cannister into the passenger side of the semi and approximately 10 seconds later the hostage exited the interior of the semi via the passenger side door. Agent Ward asked Mangin if he knew when Trooper [REDACTED] fired and Mangin stated after the gas was deployed and the hostage exited is when he heard [REDACTED] round strike the BEAR. Mangin believed that was [REDACTED]'s second shot, which both rounds struck the BEAR.

Once the hostage was out, SRT members withdrew back to the BEAR. Commands were shouted to the Helmans who remained inside the semi, but no movement was observed from the Helman's. Another gas cannister was deployed by Lt. Douthitt from the BEAR into the driver side door of the semi, which appeared to drop onto Rodney Helman's lap. Commands continued to be shouted to show their hands and eventually, Mangin observed enough of Rodney Helman's hands that he instructed the SRT members outside to move up, which they did with double shields to the passenger side door. Rodney Helman was removed to the rear of the semi where life saving efforts were performed. Secondly, Elaine Helman was removed from the semi and life saving efforts were started on Elaine until medics arrived. Mangin stated once both were extracted, the interior of the semi was cleared. During the interior of the semi being cleared, Mangin observed a handgun between the two seats and believed Rodney Helman would have been seated on the handgun.

**OSHP SRT Lt. Seth Douthitt:**

While travelling to the scene and monitoring the radio traffic, Lt. Douthitt learned Lt. Mangin fell into the pursuit while operating the armored vehicle (BEAR). Douthitt diverted briefly to retrieve the equipment truck located at SRT headquarters (Columbus). According to Douthitt, aviation was overhead and SRT members assigned overnight to the Ohio State Fair responded to the scene rather quickly. The semi-truck was somewhat disabled because of stop sticks deployed along the pursuit route, which was able to deflate both front tires of the semi. The pursuit eventually concluded near the Dayton International Airport.

Lt. Douthitt arrived on scene at approximately 0530 hours, and was briefed by Lt. Mangin reference the limited communications with the suspects and observed the BEAR was positioned alongside the driver's side of the semi, which provided a decent view to the semi. Montgomery County Sheriff's Office negotiators were on scene and were in communications with the subjects. Douthitt stated the subjects informed the negotiators once they received requested items (mostly provided) they would exit the semi-truck, but the surrender never materialized and the standoff "dragged on".

Lt. Douthitt stated a plan was devised to rescue the hostage, whose medical condition was unknown, and place the subjects into custody. The plan was prepared in a collaborative effort between Douthitt, Lt. Mangin and OSHP Captain Jim Tracy. The plan that was settled on would have two teams approach the semi on either side while he would deploy distraction devices (flashbangs) from his position at the front of the BEAR. Once the flashbangs were deployed, Douthitt would merge with the SRT members who approached the driver's side of the semi. The flashbangs were deployed by Douthitt, the teams approached and broke out the windows of the driver and passenger sides of the semi. A curtain, which concealed the interior of the semi was removed. Trooper [REDACTED] who was initially at the driver's side, would marry up with the team at the passenger side. Douthitt, [REDACTED] and Robinson were positioned at the left front of the semi as [REDACTED] moved toward the passenger area when "in a split second" he heard a "pop". Douthitt stated he knew the gunshot was not a SRT member's. Agent Ward asked Douthitt how he could differentiate the initial gunshot from that of a SRT member. Douthitt stated from his position, he observed [REDACTED] and determined he was not the origin of the gunshot. Moments after the initial gunshot, Douthitt observed [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] shoot. Douthitt placed [REDACTED] beside him when he discharged his rifle and placed [REDACTED] near the front right of the semi moving clockwise when he discharged his pistol.

Following the gunshots, Lt. Douthitt observed the male subject point a handgun toward the passenger side of the semi and [REDACTED] discharged his rifle a second time. Agent Ward played the interior truck video for Douthitt, which captured [REDACTED] gunshots. When asked the sequence of shots, Douthitt stated the initial gunshot, followed almost simultaneously by [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] firing shots. Douthitt believed the subject was seated behind the passenger seat when he first fired/displayed the handgun, but did not see the gunshot/handgun. On the second occasion when he observed the handgun, Douthitt placed the subject in-between the seats and more forward when [REDACTED] fired the second time.

After [REDACTED] engaged the subject the second time, Lt. Douthitt and Trooper [REDACTED] moved to the passenger area. Douthitt heard the female subject "wailing" and observed the hostage's head inside the cab. Douthitt stated gas was deployed inside the semi and he moved to the rear passenger of the BEAR to view the passenger side of the semi. Douthitt heard he's coming out and observed the hostage, he recognized from pictures provided earlier, exit the passenger side of the semi. The hostage was passed off to uniformed troopers. Agent Ward asked if he knew Trooper [REDACTED]'s location and Douthitt stated while he was at this position (rear passenger of the BEAR), he felt a 'thud' impact to the BEAR, which may have been a shot by [REDACTED]

Lt. Douthitt relocated to the passenger interior of the BEAR with Lt. Mangin and Trooper [REDACTED] where he observed some movement from the subjects. At one point, the male subject sat up and Douthitt observed blood on his face and in his hair. Other than an occasional hand movement, there was no response from either subject to the command issued via the PA system to surrender. Douthitt deployed a gas cannister into the driver's window from his position in the BEAR.

Lt. Douthitt exited the BEAR and rejoined the team at the passenger side of the semi. Because of the danger presented by the subjects, Douthitt broke out another window more positioned to the passenger rear. Trooper [REDACTED] utilized a ladder to view through the window inside the sleeper portion of the semi and observed the female subject. The male subject, although

positioned in-between the seats, feet were near the gas and gear peddles. Douthitt believed the male subject wanted to place in the truck into gear and leave.

Lt. Douthitt and Trooper Robinson entered the semi and he observed the male subject between the seats leaning against the passenger seat, but tucked away. Douthitt grabbed the male subject's hand and the subject went "nuts". The male subject, despite resisting and screaming, eventually was removed from the semi. Once the male was removed, Douthitt observed the silver semi-automatic handgun positioned to the subject's right side. When the male subject was removed onto the pavement, he was handcuffed then treated medically for his wounds until medics arrived. Douthitt stated the female had also been removed from the semi.

OSHP SRT Trooper [REDACTED] written statement:

*"At approximately 7:30am, I got in position with several SRT members. Lieutenant Bryan Mangin gave the go, stating "assault, assault, assault." I approached the driver's side door (west) of the semi between the BEAR and semi with my rifle. I was behind Trooper Matt Robinson, who held a shield, and Trooper [REDACTED] who was equipped with a x-ball (similar to a rake and break). I heard flashbangs deployed at the front of the vehicle. Trooper [REDACTED] used the x-ball pole to break the driver's side window. We were unable to see any of the suspects at this point, so I moved behind Trooper Robinson, who held the shield blocking my body from the driver's side window and stationed myself near the driver's side front (northwest corner) of the semi (northeast corner of the BEAR) so I could look through the front windshield. Trooper Robinson was standing to my right in front of the BEAR. Staff Lieutenant Seth Douthitt was to Trooper Robinson's right. I was approximately 15 to 20 feet from the semi.*

*I could see a white male wearing a white shirt, who I assumed was the male suspect, close to the sleeper berth. I could not tell if he was in between the seats or further back in the berth. Trooper Robinson moved to shield us. I saw Trooper Burgos, who was standing on the step of the passenger side door, jump down. I asked Trooper [REDACTED] who was now on the passenger side of the vehicle, what he saw. I then heard a gunshot. I am not sure if the suspect or another member of the SRT team fired. I could still see the suspect, but I do not believe I saw the suspect's weapon at this point. I fired five (5) to six (6) times in a volley at the windshield in a southeast direction, slightly pointed up as I was on the ground and the semi cab was higher than I was. I could see the suspect move up closer to the windshield of the semi with his gun tracking Trooper [REDACTED] on the passenger side of the vehicle. I moved to the front of the semi (to the east) and fired an additional five (5) to seven (7) times, again in a volley through the windshield.*

*I called a cease fire when I saw the suspect drop as I rounded the northeast side of the semi. I could no longer see the suspect. I moved to the passenger side (southeast of semi) and backed away.*

*I stood at the passenger rear of the semi with Trooper Robinson and Trooper [REDACTED]. At some point, an OC canister was thrown in the passenger side window by Lieutenant Mangin. I ordered the hostage out of the semi several times. The hostage, [REDACTED] a white male, with an orange shirt, eventually came out the passenger side door, leaving it open. He went to my right and then behind me (southeast). We all then backed away from the semi and I went behind the BEAR. I tactically reloaded. Lieutenant Mangin ordered me up to the front of the semi.*

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I got in the driver's side of the BEAR, moving to the passenger side window which was level with the semi's side window. I could see movement in between the front seats of the vehicle. I was having a difficult time seeing in due to the BEAR's location. The BEAR was moved forward a few feet, so I could better see in. I could see the male suspect on the floor between the seats. He was moving, sitting up between the seats. It was obvious that he had been hit. He was ordered to put both of his hands up. I saw his hands and he was no longer armed, which I relayed over radio. I could not see the female suspect. I opened the passenger side door of the BEAR so that Staff Sergeant Douthitt could deploy a gas can through the broken driver's side window. I could then see both the male and the female suspects move.

I exited the BEAR at the rear. I stationed myself at the passenger side of the semi just south of the door behind the shield. There were repeated calls for the suspects to show their hands which went on for several minutes. I eventually approached the passenger side of the semi with my rifle exited the BEAR at the rear. I stationed myself at the passenger side of the semi just south of the door behind the shield. There were repeated calls for the suspects to show their hands which went on for several minutes.

I eventually approached the passenger side of the semi with my rifle with several other Troopers with shields. Several more minutes went by as Trooper [REDACTED] and others tried to coax the male suspect from the vehicle. I eventually exchanged my rifle for a shield. Troopers went into the vehicle to get the male suspect once it was confirmed that neither suspect was armed. The male suspect was taken from the semi (to the southeast) and rolled over on his stomach on the road, then handcuffed. I checked for bullet wounds and asked for my medic bag. I applied wound sealers and medics arrived. At the time, the male suspect was still conscious, though incoherent. He was covered in blood. After the medic arrived, I moved to the female suspect, who was being taken care of by Trooper [REDACTED]. I cut off her top and bra, so we could better see her wounds. There appeared to be a gunshot to her upper chest. We turned her to look for an exit wound. We applied several wound sealers, but she was bleeding steadily, and they would not stick to her. She was conscious, though becoming more incoherent as we worked. The medics arrived with a gurney. I picked up my medic bag and had no further involvement in the incident.

I now know I fired a total of twelve (12) times. When I fired, I was aware that the suspects had carjacked the semi with a weapon, engaged in a pursuit with local law enforcement, were keeping a hostage, and had refused to comply with the orders of negotiators. I saw Trooper Burgos jump down from the passenger side of the vehicle. I could see the male suspect in cab of the semi. I heard a gunshot. I fired six (6) times from the driver's side front of the semi, firing southeast and slightly upward from my position on the ground. I fired at the suspect's center of mass using my optic. I fired with both hands. I fired from a standing position. My backdrop was the back and top of the semi cab. I was approximately 10-15 feet from the front of the semi at the time I fired. The second time I fired, I could see both the male suspect and his weapon, which was pointed at and tracking Trooper [REDACTED]. I moved to the front of the semi (to the east) and fired another volley of six (6) shots through the windshield. This times the shots were fired south and again slightly up. I fired at the suspect's center of mass using my optic. I used two hands and was standing.

*My backdrop was the back and top of the semi cab. I was approximately 10-15 feet from the front of the semi at the time I fired. I stopped firing when I saw the suspect fall. I estimate that it was approximately 30 seconds from the time I first fired until I saw the suspect fall and ceased firing. At the time I fired, I did not believe and still do not believe I had any other reasonable alternative other than to fire to protect the life of my fellow officers and myself. We were in imminent danger of death or severe bodily injury. The first time I fired, I saw the suspect in the window of the semi and heard a gunshot. The second time I fired, I saw the suspect pointing his weapon at Trooper [REDACTED] The suspect could have easily shot him or another member of my team at any time. I was in fear for the lives of my teammates as well as myself".*

**OSHP SRT Trooper [REDACTED] written statement:**

*"While I was still westbound on I-70, it was aired that the suspects had stopped on the Dayton International Airport Road, north of I-70. Before I got to the scene, SRT Lieutenant Bryan Mangin had parked the SRT Bear (a large, armored vehicle) next to the driver side of the semi. He was communicating with the suspects via the Public Address (PA) loudspeaker in the Bear. The suspects would then respond by holding notes up to the window of the semi. I learned the suspects wrote down a phone number, and that the semi had the curtains drawn. I believe deputies with the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office were also on scene. I believe I got to the scene around 3:30 a.m. There were numerous OSP members already on scene. I parked on the right (eastern) side of Dayton International Airport Road next to another cruiser about 50 yards south of the semi. I got out, put on my helmet, then went to the back of the Bear. The semi was parked in the right lane, facing north. There was no trailer attached to the back. The Bear was parked next to the driver's side of the semi, in the left lane and facing north. Several other SRT members were gathered near the back of the Bear: Lt. Mangin and Troopers Matt Robinson, [REDACTED] and Hector Burgos.*

*I learned that troopers were communicating with the suspects over the phone. Before I got there, the suspects had demanded Mountain Dew and cigarettes. Troopers had already given the suspects Mountain Dew and one kind of cigarettes. Apparently the suspects were not happy with the type of cigarettes they got, so troopers were working on getting a different type. No hostages had been released and both suspects were still inside the semi. Occasionally, I would hear Lt. Mangin tell the suspects over the PA to pick up the phone. No one had been able to see inside the semi, so I told the other troopers that I would head out to the east to see if I could see inside the windshield or passenger window. I went back to my Tahoe and grabbed my sniper rifle, sniper bag, and binoculars. I walked east toward the grassy area that ran parallel to the freeway. I cut through the right of way fence that ran about 20 yards east of the freeway. I made my way north and once I was about parallel to the semi, I used my sniper scope to try to see inside; but the curtains were drawn.*

*I continued north and tried to see inside from different angles, but I still could not see anything. I stopped near a billboard about 120 yards northeast of the semi, but the curtains were drawn from every angle; though I could tell a light was on inside the cab. I aired that the curtains were pulled covering the windshield and passenger door window. I went back to my Tahoe and exchanged my sniper rifle for my M4 rifle. I returned to the Bear. Sgt. Lofland had arrived. I discussed the situation with other SRT members. I have a Commercial Driver's License and am familiar with the mechanics of semi-trucks. I suggested cutting the semi's airlines so that*

*the vehicle would become immobile. Or alternatively, if the airlines were tethered to the Bear, they would be ripped out if the suspects tried to drive the semi away. When the second kind of cigarettes were delivered to the suspects, I showed a few other troopers where the airlines were.*

*Ultimately, the decision was made not to cut the airlines at that time since an alarm inside the cabin would go off and risk angering the suspects. Since there was no containment on the east side, I volunteered to cover the semi from the grassy embankment near the fence line. Sgt. Lofland told me to bring another trooper in case either suspect tried to flee on foot. I took a trooper with me (I do not recall his name, but he was not an SRT member) and went back to the fence line. At first, I posted up on the eastern side of the fence northeast of the semi, but I became concerned that I did not have a good angle if I needed to fire. So I moved south and posted up about 30-40 yards from the semi. Specifically, I was roughly parallel to the back passenger side tire of the semi. From there, I had an unobstructed view of the exterior passenger side of the semi. The other trooper and I were the only ones covering the eastern side of the semi.*

*The grassy area I was posted in sloped up from the highway and formed a ridge such that I was about 6-8 feet elevated from the highway. The fence line ran near the top of the ridge. The grass was also fairly high, and I believed I was likely concealed from the suspects' view. At first, I covered the semi from a kneeling position, but after some time I laid on my stomach and rested the barrel of my rifle on the wire fence. I was monitoring the SRT radio channel from my earpiece. I had a spare radio with me as well and monitored the OSP radio channel. I covered the semi for several hours as troopers continued negotiations with the suspects. The semi curtains never opened during that time, and I could not see inside. At some point I asked what the suspects were wearing: I recall being told that the male suspect had on a white shirt, but I do not think anyone said what the woman was wearing.*

*After a few hours (before daylight), I was told that the suspects were surrendering and would be getting out of the passenger door. I continued covering the passenger side, but no one got out. Over the next hour, I was told a few more times that the suspects were giving up, but that never happened. Around daybreak, someone inside the semi started revving the engine and I saw the brake lights turning on and off such that someone was repeatedly pressing down on the brake. A brief time later, Trooper Burgos cut the airlines with a pocketknife and disabled the semi. A short time later, a trooper radioed that one of the suspects was going to toss their weapon out of the passenger window. That did not happen, however. By 7:00 a.m., I had been covering the semi for several hours. Neither suspect had surrendered, and no one had been let go.*

*Sgt. Lofland asked on the radio if I had my cell phone on me and then he called me on the phone. He said that if the suspects continued refusing to surrender or give any signs of compliance, then troopers would need to conduct an assault. I got off the phone and relayed the plan to OSP Sergeant Chris Colbert, who was now with me and had taken the place of the other trooper some time ago. I told Sgt. Colbert that troopers would throw flashbangs and conduct an assault to try to save the hostage(s) and extract or, if necessary, engage the suspects. Shortly after the call with Sgt. Lofland, I could see SRT members prepping at the back of the Bear. And after about 15-20 minutes, neither suspect had given up, released any*

hostage(s), or thrown out any weapons. Just before 7:30 a.m., several SRT members were situated behind the Bear, and Lt. Mangin aired the code to begin the assault. A moment later, flashbangs were thrown near the front of the semi, and several SRT members went up the passenger side of the truck and broke the passenger window with a rake and break tool. I believed there were also SRT members doing the same on the driver's side, but I could not see them from my position.

I quickly got into a kneeling position and continued covering the passenger side of the semi. Trooper Burgos got up on the passenger side step and peered into the cab of the truck right after the passenger window was broken. Two or three SRT members flanked him on either side, one providing cover with a shield. Trooper Burgos was yelling "hands!" repeatedly. Moments later, Trooper Burgos flinched back, then peered inside again and immediately jerked back and jumped off the semi while yelling "gun!" By that time, I was moving north to get a better angle. Seconds after I started moving north, SRT members [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] started firing into the cab from the passenger side and front of the semi, respectively. I quickly moved north several more yards, knelt, and trained my rifle on the cab. As shots were still being fired, I saw a white arm/hand holding a silver semiautomatic handgun appear in the cabin from between the front driver and passenger seats. An instant later the gun started angling towards the broken passenger window near where Trooper [REDACTED] was standing, and it was then I fired a single round. The gun immediately disappeared back into the cab right after I fired. Troopers [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] had stopped firing and moved south towards the back of the semi along with the rest of the troopers. To my knowledge no one had gotten out of the semi.

After a few moments, troopers moved up the passenger side with a shield and threw gas into the cabin. Within seconds, I saw a male white wearing an orange shirt quickly get out of the passenger door of the semi with his hands in the air. I knew the male suspect was reportedly wearing a white shirt, so I believed that individual was a hostage. Troopers directed him to run towards the back of the Bear, which he did. Moments later, suddenly again I saw the arm/hand of one of the suspects holding a silver handgun and leveling the weapon towards the passenger door/window from between the driver and passenger seats, and I fired another round. The suspect yet again immediately pulled back into the cab away from my view. I aired on the radio that the suspect was pointing the gun out the door again, and the troopers at the back of the semi took a few more steps back (south). Briefly after I fired the second round, a trooper inside the Bear aired that he could see one of the suspects laying between the driver and passenger seats. Troopers advanced along the passenger side of the semi, and around that time the male suspect sat up and I was able to see his head (which appeared bloodied). One of the troopers peered inside the passenger window and aired that the female suspect's legs were on top of the man's shoulders/torso.

At that time, I was able to see her calves and soles of her feet on the male suspect. Troopers began extracting the suspects from the semi while I continued providing cover. The male was extracted without incident. At that time, I believed it was safe for me to return to the scene. I headed back towards the scene with Sgt. Colbert while troopers worked to remove the female. Troopers were securing and beginning to render aid on the man by the time I got to the scene. The female was out of the semi a short time later. Around that time, medics began rendering aid on both suspects. Troopers recovered a handgun from inside the semi. I waited at the scene for a bit longer, and then I was transported to the Dayton OSP Post. This ended my involvement

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with this incident. I met with BCI investigators at the OSP Post and had my photo taken and weapon collected as evidence. I fired two rounds during this event. I would estimate that there was about a minute between each round. I fired both rounds in a westerly direction.

I believe I was about 30-40 yards from the suspects when I fired each round. I believe I was kneeling when I fired. I used my rifle's red dot sights and fired with a two handed grip. By the time the assault occurred, the sun was up and there was plenty of natural lighting. The ridgeline, brush and fence provided some concealment, but I had no cover during this incident. One or two troopers on the assault had a shield, but I believe Troopers [REDACTED] Burgos and possibly others were exposed with no cover or concealment for much of the assault. My target was what I believed was the suspect's center mass based on the position of the suspect's hand/arm. I fired through the passenger side of the semi, a few inches left of the passenger window. Because the ridgeline was elevated, I would estimate that I was almost equal in height to the semi's passenger window such that I was shooting almost straight into the semi. My backdrop was the interior of the cab and the exterior of the Bear parked immediately next to the semi. I did not believe there were any troopers in my backdrop at the times I fired; but I also knew from my elevated position my shots were aimed about 8-10 feet above ground. And after this incident, I saw that both of my shots did in fact penetrate the semi and strike the exterior of the Bear, near the roofline about 8-10 feet high. The exterior of the Bear is reinforced and rated to stop up to a .50 caliber round, a much more powerful round than what I was firing.

There were no troopers in my line of sight at the times I fired. When I fired my first shot, Lt. Mangin and Trooper Burgos were near the back passenger side of the semi.

Trooper [REDACTED] was south of the passenger door and moving towards the back. And Trooper [REDACTED] was near the front of the semi moving towards the passenger side. I believe Troopers [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were each firing when I fired my first shot. All the troopers were positioned near the back of the semi when I fired my second shot. I was in fear for the lives of Lt. Mangin and Troopers Burgos, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] at the times I fired my weapon. The assault occurred over six hours after the suspects took the truck driver hostage and fled from law enforcement for quite some time. Once the pursuit ended, law enforcement tried for several hours to negotiate with the suspects and secure their surrender and the release of the hostage.

To my knowledge, neither suspect ever gave any sign of surrender or an indication that they would release the hostage. Troopers met the suspects' demands for Mountain Dew and cigarettes—even working to get the suspects their preferred type of cigarette—but the suspects still refused to surrender or release the hostage. Even after assuring law enforcement multiple times that the suspects would toss their weapon or surrender, they refused to do so. Once negotiations failed and it was clear the suspects were not going to peacefully give up or release the hostage, Lt. Mangin, as the scene commander, made the decision to conduct an assault to try to rescue the hostage. After the flashbangs went off and the windows were broken, one of the suspects pointed a weapon at Trooper Burgos from point blank range. Moments later Troopers [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] opened fire.

I believed a suspect had aimed a weapon and/or shot at Troopers [REDACTED] and/or [REDACTED] which caused them to fire, but initially I could not see either suspect or a weapon. But then suddenly I saw the hand/arm of one of the suspects level the barrel of a silver pistol towards the open passenger window from between the driver and passenger seats. At that time, Trooper [REDACTED]

was just south of the passenger window and Trooper [REDACTED] was near the front of the semi making his way towards the passenger side. I believed the suspect intended to shoot Troopers [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and that one or both would be seriously injured or killed, and it was then I fired. Troopers [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] stopped firing a second or so later. After the other troopers and I stopped firing, there was a lull of about a minute or so where no shots were fired. Once troopers put tear gas into the semi and the hostage escaped, I thought the suspects would get flushed out and possibly surrender. Instead, though, seconds after the hostage escaped, I again saw the suspect's arm/hand level the barrel of the handgun towards the open passenger door/window from between the driver and passenger seats.

I believed the suspect again intended to shoot one or more troopers positioned south of the door. I was also concerned for my life and the life of Sgt. Colbert since we were positioned almost parallel to the passenger window/door and directly east without cover. I fired at the suspect just as the barrel of the gun came toward the open passenger door/window. Each time I fired my weapon, I did not believe I had any other reasonable alternative to protect my life or the lives of the other troopers from the deadly threat presented by the suspect's actions. I may have been sent the suspects' names before I got to the scene; but in any case, I now know their names are Rodney Helman and Elaine Helman. I learned after this incident that the suspects were married, but I do not think I knew that during this event. I do not know either person, and I do not think I have met either one previously".

OSHP SRT Trooper [REDACTED] written statement:

"When I arrived between 6:00 and 6:30am, I saw a white semi-tractor was stopped on Dayton International Airport Road, which is a four (4) lane road with two (2) lanes each going north and south and a grass median in the middle. The semi was facing north in the north lanes and sat in between the lanes of the 2-lane road. The front tires were flat, which I assume were from the use of the stop sticks. The SRT's BEAR (Lenco) was parked on the driver's side of the semi (to the west) about 2-3 feet from the semi. The white SRT support/equipment vehicle then sat to the left (west) of the BEAR. Traffic was stopped in all directions. I was already wearing my kit when I arrived, and I waited to the rear (south) of the BEAR for instructions. From the rear of the BEAR, I could see the back driver's side wheels of the semi-tractor. While we were waiting, another Trooper showed me what the suspects looked like on his phone- a white male and a white female.

While we waited, it was my understanding that negotiators from another law enforcement jurisdiction were talking with the suspects. After negotiations were determined to be unsuccessful, the SRT Team discussed an assault on the semi. At approximately 7:30am, I and other SRT members got into place. Lieutenant Bryan Mangin gave the go for the assault, stating "assault, assault, assault." I approached the driver's side door of the semi with the x-ball (similar to a rake and break) behind Trooper Matt Robinson, who held a shield. Trooper [REDACTED] was behind me with his rifle. The space between the driver's side of the semi and the BEAR parked right next to it was narrow, approximately 2-3 feet. I heard the flash bangs deploy at the front of the semi. While Trooper Robinson shielded me, I broke the driver's side window. I was standing to Trooper Robinson's right. After the window broke, I backed out of the area to the northwest (front driver's side) pulling the curtain that had been covering the window with me with my right foot. Trooper Robinson and Trooper [REDACTED] were backing out

with me. I was unable to see any of the suspects at this point, so I moved to the other side of the vehicle (east) staying close to the semi's engine block to provide me with cover.

I announced my arrival to the passenger side of the semi. Lieutenant Mangin was holding a shield against the panel behind the passenger door. Trooper Hector Burgos was to his right (north) on the step of the cab looking through the window with his weapon drawn, giving verbal commands. Sergeant Lofland was directly behind Trooper Burgos (to the east). I put down the xball and attempted to unlock the semi through the broken window. When I was unsuccessful, I stood back from the passenger side door to the northeast with my service weapon drawn providing cover. Trooper Burgos got down off step and backed away slightly with his weapon pointed into the cab stating that the suspect had a gun. He ordered the suspect to show their hands. I could not see the weapon at this point, or either of the suspects or the hostage. Lieutenant Mangin suggested that we back away if we did not have anything. I then saw the barrel of a gun just over the top of the passenger seat pointed in my direction (northeast). I could not tell what color the gun was, but the barrel appeared to me to be silver.

I fired a few times as I first backed up to the northeast. I then saw the suspect reach over with his gun closer to the windshield like he might be moving between the seats. It appeared that he was trying to take aim at me again. I went forward and then back to the south. I continuously fired at the truck in the area I believed that the suspect would be standing in the sleeping compartment close to the passenger seat. I ceased firing when I ran out of ammunition and was on the southeast corner of the semi. I reported that I had seen a weapon. I reloaded my pistol. Lieutenant Mangin was closest to the semi with his shield, then I stood to his right (east).

Trooper [REDACTED] was to my right (east) with his rifle. Lieutenant Mangin ordered a gas can and threw the OC gas canister through the passenger window. Trooper [REDACTED] and others ordered the hostage out of the vehicle. A large white male with a bright orange shirt and shorts exited the passenger side door with his hands up. The hostage, [REDACTED] complied with our orders moving south/southeast, eventually going behind us. We then all backed up to the south, going around the back of the semi (west) and taking cover behind the BEAR. We waited there while directions were being given to the suspects (ordering that they show their hands so that aid could be provided). I went to my pack and pulled out my gas mask. I wanted to have it with me in case I had to enter the semi cab in which the OC canister had been thrown. I also was gloved up by Lieutenant Dallas Root in case I had to come in contact with the bodily fluids from the suspects. After several minutes, several of us including Trooper Burgos, Trooper [REDACTED] and Trooper Robinson again approached the passenger side door. I could see the male suspect between the seats. He would periodically show his hands. I encouraged him to come towards us. I could see the feet of the female suspect on the driver's side seat. Eventually, we could see both of the male suspect's hands, but I could not see the female's hands. I went to the BEAR to get a ladder so that I could look through the sleeper window of the cab behind the passenger door (to the south). Sergeant Lofland held a shield in front of me.

The female suspect was laying on her back, feet on the driver's seat, head towards the passenger side of the semi. I was finally able to see the female suspect's hands and reported it to the others. I kept talking to the female suspect as Troopers entered the passenger side door and retrieved the male suspect. After they removed the female suspect, they laid her on the ground to the east of the semi. She was bleeding heavily. Trooper [REDACTED] and I started

*treating the female. We had to remove her shirt and bra. It appeared to me that she had been shot above her left breast near her sternum about 1 or 2 inches to the left. I also saw a wound near her left armpit/shoulder blade, but I could not tell if it was an entry or exit wound. The chest seal we applied fell off due to the amount of blood. I asked her to keep talking to me until medics arrived.*

*When medics arrived, I helped them get her on the gurney. She was still conscious and talking at that time, though rather incoherent. I took one of the medic bags to the squad for them and returned to the scene. That was the end of my involvement with the incident. I fired a total of twenty-two (22). At the time I fired, I knew the suspects were armed, had carjacked a hostage, had been pursued by other law enforcement agencies, and had ignored repeated commands to release the hostage and exit the vehicle. When I saw a gun pointed in my direction from the passenger side of the sleeper car, I was in fear for my life. I began to fire. I do not know if the suspect fired at me. I continued firing when I saw the suspect come closer and seem to move to keep the weapon pointed at me. Once I could no longer see the window, I fired where I believed the suspect's center of mass would be in the sleeper cab of the semi due to his position when he pointed his weapon at me. I fired all my rounds from a standing position.*

*Most of my rounds were fired with two hands, however there were several shots at the very beginning that were fired while I held the weapon with only my right hand. I fired at the suspect's center of mass or where I believe his center of mass should be due to his body being hidden by the semi. When I began firing, I fired in a southwest direction. All of my shots were fired slightly elevated as the semi was set several feet above the ground. As I circled to the south, my shots went from a southwest direction to west to northwest- again all slightly up due to the elevation of the cab. My backdrop was the back and upper part of semi-tractor cab as I was shooting upward. I fired using my red dot optics. For at least some of the shots, my light was on as I was initially using it to see into the cab. I estimate it was less than 30 seconds from the time I began firing to the time I ran out of ammunition. At the time I fired, I did not and still do not believe I had any reasonable alternative other than to fire to protect myself and my fellow SRT members as we were in imminent danger of death or serious bodily harm. I was in fear for my life. The suspect was pointing his weapon at me and could have easily fired. He may have fired at me. He also could have pointed his weapon in the direction of many of the other team members that surrounded the semi at any time. I have now reviewed the video of the incident. The video does not materially change my recollection of events. I now know that the name of the suspects are Rodney and Elaine Helman. I do not remember having any prior interactions with suspects either person or professional".*

#### OSHP SRT Trooper Hector Burgos:

Burgos stated on August 2, 2023, he was working at the Ohio State Fairgrounds on a security detail when he was notified of the semi-truck hostage situation by Trooper [REDACTED] Burgos started on his way westbound from Columbus toward Springfield; he turned on his radio for updates and directions. Burgos explained that when he arrived at the location, he grabbed the needed equipment and approached the SRT BEAR for more specific details about the scene.

Burgos was given information about the facts of the situation by OSP Lieutenant Bryan Mangin. Burgos said when the OSP SRT BEAR was pulled up next to the semi-truck, he noticed the

curtains were pulled across the truck's windows. During the initial communications between the involved subjects and Lt. Mangin, a note from the truck's window asked for cigarettes and Mountain Dew. Burgos stated that SRT Troopers [REDACTED] and Matt Robinson and himself were asked to deliver a pack of cigarettes and Mountain Dew to the passenger's sidestep of the truck, which they accomplished.

Burgos said while negotiations were ongoing, he assisted with placing commercial spike strips between the rear drive tires of the truck. Burgos said when SRT Trooper [REDACTED] arrived on the scene, a discussion occurred about turning off the truck's air brake system. Burgos stated the team cut the air lines within the frame rails toward the back of the truck. Once the lines were cut, the truck's rear sat down a couple of inches.

Burgos said as the negotiations were ongoing, the communications stopped. A decision was then made to assault the truck and rescue the hostage. Burgos explained eight (8) SRT team members were at the scene with a plan for the assault. Burgos stated two teams were to simultaneously approach both sides of the truck from the rear, break out the windows, and remove the curtains. Burgos said he was assigned to the passenger's side and was to provide lethal cover for Troopers Mangin and Erik Lofland. Burgos said Lt. Mangin was to provide shield cover, and Lofland was to break out the windows and get the curtains removed. Once completed, Burgos was assigned to get onto the truck's steps, look inside the truck's cab for the hostage, and give commands.

Burgos said when the attack on the truck began, he was up on the step with his firearm; he looked inside the truck's cab and did not witness anyone in the front seats. Burgos said in the sleeper berth, he saw a male wearing an orange shirt with his hands raised in the air. Burgos knew from the briefing that the hostage wore an orange shirt. Burgos stated that as he continued to shout commands, he caught a glimpse of a white T-shirt and saw a gun with a hand extended forward. Burgos said that he jumped off the step and reported that a gun was pointed at his face. About the same time, Burgos said Trooper [REDACTED] came around the front of the truck and began firing his pistol.

Burgos was then shown the helicopter video of the assault on the truck. Burgos pointed out his location and the team members' location. While Burgos watched the video, he was asked if around was fired in his direction. Burgos believed he heard a shot or a muffled sound when he jumped off the truck. Burgos described the gun as a black barrel and silver slide.

Burgos stated after the shooting stopped, a canister of "OC" was tossed into the truck's cab. Burgos said soon after the OC was thrown into the cab's truck, the hostage exited the truck's passenger side door and took cover to the rear. Once the hostage was out of the truck, Burgos said time was now on their side.

Burgos was asked if he helped with the extraction of the subjects involved. He said, "yes" and explained that Trooper [REDACTED] climbed up a ladder and looked into the sleeper berth window for a better vantage point. Burgos stated they began to give commands to the female, but she was not communicating well. Burgos said due to the female's orientation inside the truck, she was a challenge to get out. The male was also helped out of the truck with medics. After the operation, Burgos and the SRT team traveled to the Dayton, Ohio, OSP post for a debrief. Burgos said at the Dayton post, a BCI Crime Scene Agent photographed him in the

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attire he wore during the operation. Burgos also confirmed he did not fire his service weapon.

**OSHP SRT Trooper (SGT) Erik Lofland:**

Lofland was asked how he became involved with the August 2, 2023, incident. Lofland said Lieutenant Bryan Mangin (Mangin) called and told him about a pursuit involving a stolen semitruck and a hostage. Lofland stated he responded to Montgomery County, Ohio, from his residence. Lofland said once he arrived on the scene, he waited for the negotiators to come and was in a holding pattern until other members of the SRT team arrived from across the state. Lofland said while in the SRT BEAR, he observed a handgun displayed from the semi's pulled curtains that covered the windows. Lofland said when the negotiations broke down and they had enough SRT team members on the scene, the decision was made to attempt to rescue the hostage, [REDACTED]

Lofland explained after the decision was made to assault the truck, he made up the assignments. Two teams would move on both sides of the semi, simultaneously break out the windows, and remove the curtains covering the windows. Lofland said his role was a breacher on the passenger side with Mangin, who provided shield cover, and Trooper Hector Burgos (Burgos) was to provide lethal cover. Once the order was given to move on the truck, Lofland said he hit the passenger's side window three times before it broke. After the window was removed, he supported Burgos, who was on the step looking into the cab of the truck. Lofland said while Burgos was positioned on the truck's step, looking into the cab, he shouted, "Gun!"

Lofland was then shown the OSP helicopter video footage. Lofland said when you see Burgos "squirm," he shouted gun. Soon after, Lofland said he began hearing gunfire and was unsure who was firing. Lofland said he repositioned toward the rear of the semi for cover. Shortly after the gunfire ended, Lofland handed Mangin a gas canister. After Lofland pulled the pin, Mangin tossed the device into the truck's cab. Lofland said the hostage, [REDACTED] exited the passenger's side door with his hands raised. [REDACTED] was ordered to the rear of the truck for safety.

Lofland said the SRT team regrouped behind the BEAR, and it was now a barricade situation. Orders were then given to the hostage takers regarding compliance. After it was safe, the male, Rodney Helman, was removed first from the truck, and then Elaine Helman was removed. Lofland said both Helman's had gunshot wounds, and SRT members rendered aid to both before the medics arrived and took over care. Lofland said he never entered the truck, but when Mangin was inside the cab after the Helman's were removed, Mangin indicated he saw a handgun between the driver's and passenger's seats.

**London Police Officer (SGT) Mike Orahood:**

On August 2nd, 2023 at approximately 0100 hours, Orahood observed a van with no taillights and conducted a traffic stop on the Dodge van at Layette Street. No visible license plate was present as Orahood approached the van from the passenger side and noticed a female passenger, a dog and male driver. Orahood described the male driver's view to be obstructed because of clutter inside the vehicle. Orahood explained the reason for the traffic stop and requested identification, which neither could provide. Rodney Helman informed Orahood his identification was stolen and could not provide or recall his social security number. Elaine Helman (passenger) identified herself as Barbara Taylor, but could not recall what information

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Rodney Helman (driver) provided.

Rodney informed Sergeant Orahood that he had recently purchased the van, but did not provide proof of ownership when asked. Orahood noticed a Colorado temporary tag affixed to the rear window of the van, which was nearly unreadable. When Orahood stepped away from the vehicle, Rodney revved the engine then fled the area. Orahood pursued the van into the parking lot of the Travel America on US 42; the van continued over the median that separated trucks from cars and both Rodney and Elaine Helman, fled on foot. Orahood pursued on foot, gained ground on Rodney and was nearly in range to utilize his Taser. As Orahood approached Rodney, he turned and faced him, and with both hands pointed a handgun "directly" at him. Still holding the Taser, Orahood lowered himself and discharged the Taser. Orahood dropped the Taser, shouted "gun" while he utilized a nearby vehicle for cover. Orahood observed Rodney Helman fall to the pavement and a [Madison County] deputy who had responded for back-up believed Orahood was fighting with Rodney and moved that direction, but stopped when he heard Orahood shouting "gun...gun...he's got a gun" from another location. Orahood described the handgun as a small semi-automatic handgun.

Sergeant Orahood observed the handgun still in Rodney's hand when he stood up from the pavement. Orahood continued to shout drop the gun, but did not hear Rodney or Elaine respond. Rodney (entered the divers' side) and Elaine (entered the passenger side) ran to and entered a semi-trailer, began to rev the semi's engine then activated the semi's high beams. The revving of the semi's engine and the high beams made it difficult to hear or see. Once other officers arrived including air support, the truck driver, clad in an orange shirt, was observed inside the semi-truck. A determination was made to deploy stop spikes, which was done while Orahood and other officers proved lethal cover. Shortly after the spikes were deployed, the semi began to move and struck a London police vehicle as it exited the parking lot of the Travel America.

**Montgomery County Detective Melanie Phelps-Powers:**

She received a phone call from Dispatcher Reeder on August 2, 2023 at approximately 0330 hours. She was informed that OSHP had a hostage situation near the Dayton International Airport and requested two negotiators. She advised that she quickly responded to the scene. Montgomery County Sheriff's Office Deputy Gallagher also responded. She observed a team of troopers walking up to the passenger side of the tractor unit. She learned that they provided cigarettes and Mountain Dew drinks to the Helman's. She was then directed into OSHP's armored BEAR, which was parked along the driver's side of the tractor unit. She said her location was unusual for a negotiator, as it was loud and not conducive to her task.

Det. Phelps advised that she was given preliminary information from OSHP troopers. She was told that the Helman's took the tractor unit from London, Ohio. She was told that Rodney shot at a London police officer, but the gun jammed. She initially thought there were two hostages, but she learned from Rodney that there was only one.

Det. Phelps said that an OSHP lieutenant handed her a phone. She was told that OSHP had conversed with the subjects inside the truck prior to her arrival, but she did not know the content of those conversations. She attempted contact with the subject, but they initially did

not answer. After a couple of attempts and prompts from OSHP via the loudspeaker, Rodney answered the phone. She said that she could tell Rodney listened to the conversation through the phone speaker because Elaine would occasionally respond during the conversation. She further said that Elaine seemed even more assertive than Rodney.

Rodney told Det. Phelps that he and his wife had drug addictions and no one to help them. He told Det. Phelps that he had a workplace injury and thereafter became addicted to pain medication. Det. Phelps told him that drug treatment was available, at which point Elaine Helman spoke up and said drug treatment facilities would not take them because they were still using. Det. Phelps continued to talk to them about seeking treatment for addiction, and they both seemed receptive.

Det. Phelps advised that she could see a small amount of the inside of the tractor unit from her position. She could see through a partially opened curtain. She was able to see Elaine Helman sitting in the front passenger seat. She also observed Rodney. She saw him holding a gun near his lap with his finger on the trigger. She did not see Mr. [REDACTED] until the conclusion of the incident.

Det. Phelps recalled that at some point during the negotiations, the Helman's said they would come out of the truck and hung up. After 10 minutes, Det. Phelps called them back to see if they were going to exit the truck. Rodney said, "I just want to spend time with my wife."

Det. Phelps advised that she spoke with Rodney for over three hours through multiple phone calls. She described his demeanor as calm. She said he did not demand anything during any of the calls with her. She advised that she briefly spoke with Mr. [REDACTED] to ensure he was okay. Mr. [REDACTED] said he was fine and never mentioned having an injury.

Det. Phelps said that she saw Rodney point his gun in the direction of OSHP SRT members who were positioned in front of the armored BEAR. She remembered his arm extended out while pointing the gun at the SRT members. She said Rodney tracked the team's movements with the gun. She said this occurred at least three times during the incident. She relayed her observations to the OSHP SRT members.

Det. Phelps said that during her final phone call with Rodney, he said he wanted the incident to "end peacefully." She then remembered that the curtain inside the tractor unit was pulled, which blocked her view inside of it. She could then see the truck moving, as if the subjects were doing something inside of it.

Det. Phelps advised that the OSHP SRT team informed her of the emergency action plan. She was told the plan was to deploy flashbang devices in front of the tractor unit to distract the subjects. The team was then going to break the windows on the tractor unit. OSHP SRT was then going to order the subjects out of the truck.

Det. Phelps advised that five or ten minutes had elapsed since her last conversation with Rodney, and then the OSHP SRT team carried out an emergency action plan. She recalled the flashbang devices being deployed and the team breaking the tractor unit windows. Shortly after, she heard what she believed to be three muffled gunshots coming from inside the truck. She further believed the shots were possibly fired through the passenger side because she did

not observe bullet holes on the driver's side. After she heard the shots fired from inside the tractor unit, the OSHP SRT members returned fire. She remembered hearing 12 or 13 shots. She recalled seeing an SRT member shooting through the tractor unit's windshield. She was uncertain how many SRT members fired their weapons.

After the shooting stopped, she heard yelling and observed a subject, later identified as Mr. [REDACTED] walk around the back of the tractor unit. She saw OSHP troopers take him away from the scene. She then saw Rodney being taken out of the tractor unit. As the SRT members tried to handcuff him, she noticed he continued to keep his hand underneath his stomach. She recalled fearing that he still had the gun; however, he was subsequently handcuffed, and the gun was not found on him. He was then removed from the scene for medical treatment.

Det. Phelps next saw Elaine being placed on a medical stretcher. She believed Elaine was unconscious, but at some point, she regained consciousness, pulled an IV out of her arm, and threw the IV bag away from her. She was surprised that Elaine was combative with medical staff.

**BCI Firearms Laboratory Report:**

*Pending*

**Montgomery County Coroner's Officer Autopsy Findings:**

Elaine Helman-[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Rodney Helman-[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**Summary:**

All persons known to have relevant information regarding this investigation have been interviewed, and all known records have been obtained and reviewed. BCI has striven to conduct a thorough and impartial investigation into this OICI. BCI will continue to assist in the investigation of any newly identified witnesses or information related to this criminal investigation. At this time, it appears that BCI's investigation into this OICI has concluded, unless new information or witnesses are identified through the grand jury or other processes.

As always, BCI remains available for consultation, and we look forward to your assessment of this investigation and your decision as to any additional efforts, processes, or further assistance you might determine to be necessary.

End of Summary

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