



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



2024-3649

Officer Involved Critical Incident - 6880 Sunset Strip Ave
NW, Room #220, North Canton, Ohio, 44720

Investigative Activity: Witness Officer Interview
Involves: [REDACTED] (W)
Activity Date: 01/30/2025
Activity Location: BCI Richfield Office
Authoring Agent: SA Matthew Armstrong

Narrative:

On Thursday, January 30, 2025, at 1210 hours, Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) Special Agent (SA) Matthew Armstrong (Armstrong) and SA Allison Fletcher (Fletcher) interviewed North Canton Police Department (NCPD) [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The interview took place in a conference room at the BCI Richfield Office located at 4055 Highlander Parkway, Richfield, Ohio. The interview was audio and video recorded. The audio recording has been attached to this report. The video recording has been stored as Reference Item I, in evidence.com

[REDACTED] was identified as being a police officer who witnessed and/or had some level of involvement in the November 18, 2024, officer-involved shooting which occurred in the area of 6880 Sunset Strip Avenue NW, Room #220, North Canton, Ohio 44720. [REDACTED] did not discharge a firearm during the course of the incident. The purpose of the interview was to obtain all relevant information about the incident known or observed by this officer. References to time stamps throughout the report correspond to the video recording.

[REDACTED] stated that his radio call sign on November 18, 2024, was [REDACTED]. However, he generally uses [REDACTED]. When he is assigned as a [REDACTED], he would identify as [REDACTED] and then a number. The number would depend on the side of the building he was positioned on. He has been a police officer for a total of [REDACTED] years and all his service has been with the NCPD. During the incident, [REDACTED] wore his standard SWAT uniform with a "POLICE" patch affixed to it. He also wore an external ballistic vest and duty belt. He rode to the incident as a rear passenger in [REDACTED], an armored SWAT vehicle marked with Canton Police emblems and emergency lights. He considered himself to be well-represented as a police officer during the incident. He stated that he was not under the influence of any substance that would impair his memory or judgment during the incident or during the interview

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with BCI. During the incident he was equipped with a body worn camera. However, it was not activated or recording.

On November 18, 2024, [REDACTED] was at the Canton Regional SWAT headquarters with multiple other officers and supervisors for training. During training, the SWAT team was requested to respond to 6880 Sunset Strip Avenue NW in North Canton, Ohio. The request was made via a telephone call to [REDACTED] who was also present at SWAT headquarters.

Prior to arriving, he learned that the subject had warrants through ATF. He was wanted for an investigation of a murder, he was barricaded and presented a firearm to the US Marshals.

When SWAT first arrived, he was assigned as a shield operator. He utilized a shield at the rear driver's side portion of [REDACTED]. The door to the motel room was closed, and they could not see through the window of the room. He believed commands were given for the subject to come out of the room. A breaching shotgun was used from a distance to open the door and then a drone was deployed. When the drone pushed the door open and entered the room, he heard gunfire and saw muzzle blasts inside the room. Although he could see into the room through the open door, he could not see the subject.

After the gunshots, he moved to the back of [REDACTED] and obtained an AR-15 rifle. He moved from the back of [REDACTED] to the rear passenger side portion of a black SUV positioned approximately 15 yards from the door of the motel room. He was trying to see into the room but was unable to see clearly. [REDACTED] was the team leader and asked him to utilize a sniper rifle to help see inside and locate the subject. Other team members then retrieved [REDACTED] .308 rifle, tripod and other equipment he had in a gray Yeti backpack.

Initially, [REDACTED] set up his rifle along a row of rooms east of the building the subject was in. He estimated he was approximately 25 yards away. He was unable to see from his position and decided to move back to his previous position behind the black SUV. He had a conversation with [REDACTED], and they decided that [REDACTED] would have a better view from the passenger side, rear quarter panel. [REDACTED] then set up there and used the magnification on his optic to see into the room. After setting up, he began scanning the room. He estimated he was scanning for approximately a minute before he heard a gunshot and realized he was shot. He described that moment saying,

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And I heard a, a gunshot, simultaneous pain, a lot of pain. So, and that's when I realized that I was shot. Um, I screamed for a couple seconds, uh, kind of was processing everything, realized I need to get on the ground to put a tourniquet on. Um, as soon as I got on the ground, um, [REDACTED], Sergeant Lee were right there. Uh, [REDACTED] was already getting, getting ready to put a tourniquet on me. I told them, I started rolling up my sleeve here. Um, and, uh, noticed that the gunshot wound was here (pointed to right forearm). I didn't know if there was an exit wound. I didn't really think about it at the time. I was just worried about the blood. They put a tourniquet on me. Um, Officer Sens from Canton. Uh, he then put the second tourniquet on me. Um, I did not know that until, until I saw the video. I saw, uh, that was Sens, um, he put the second, the second tourniquet on me. Then they, uh, they lifted me up. Um, ran, uh, we ended up running, uh, I was able to run on my own, but I did have two guys kind of holding me. They passed me off to a couple, to a couple officers. Uh, I want to say Volpe. I don't know if he's a sergeant or not from Canton. And I don't know how to pronounce the other guy's name. [REDACTED] or, uh, forget. He was, I think he's another Canon officer. Okay. They helped me, uh, run over to, uh, the Jackson medic (28:31).

At the moment he was shot, he did not remember if he was looking through the optic or if he was giving his eye a rest. When he watched the video, it appeared he was looking through the optic, but he said he did not remember seeing a muzzle blast which made him question if he was giving his eye a rest.

He remembered being afraid he was going to bleed out. After the tourniquets were placed on him, he remembered feeling like he was close to passing out, but he didn't.

He explained why he didn't fire during the incident, saying,

Uh, I, I didn't have to. Um, he had fired a few rounds. Uh, they appeared to be at the drone. Um, so I, um, I didn't feel like I, I didn't, uh, well, he didn't, he was firing at the drone at first. Um, I was trying to figure out kind of what was going on, then realized that he was shooting, but he was shooting, but I could only see the muzzle blast. I didn't wanna fire at something that I couldn't see properly see. Um, and for that whole time, I just couldn't properly see him and that that was the issue. And, um, I'm pretty positive that the next shot after the drones were fired was on me. So, um, you know, like I said, I couldn't, I couldn't see him, so I'm not gonna shoot at something I can't see (26:35).

The interview concluded at approximately 1238 hours.

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References:

Reference Item I – Officer Interviews

Attachments:

1. 2025-01-30 Audio Recorded Interview - [REDACTED]

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