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

2022-2876
Officer Involved Critical Incident – 256 N. Swain, LaRue, Ohio (L)

Investigative Activity:	Interview with Officer
Involves:	Jamie J Ralston (W)
Date of Activity:	12/20/2022
Activity Location:	Ralston, Jamie J – Business – 233 West Center Street, Marion, OH 43302, Marion County
Author:	SA Christopher Hamberg, #69

Narrative:

On December 20, 2022, the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) was requested to investigate the facts and circumstances surrounding an officer-involved critical incident (OICI) that occurred on the railroad tracks near Section Street, in LaRue, in Marion County, OH. The OICI occurred when the Marion County SWAT Team (MCST) [which encompasses deputies from the Marion County Sheriff's Office, along with police officers from the Marion, Ohio, Police Department] came in contact with Travis Hellinger (Hellinger) as the MCST was attempting to execute a search warrant at the Hellinger residence. Hellinger succumbed to his injuries.

On December 20, 2022, BCI Special Agents (SA) Chris Hamberg (Hamberg) and Josh Rammel interviewed Officer Jamie Ralston (Ralston) of the Marion Police Department. The interview took place in an interview room at the Marion Police Department. The interview was digitally recorded. The audio file is attached to the case file.

The purpose of the interview was to ascertain what Ralston may have witnessed at the scene of the of the OICI.

SA Hamberg asked Ralston to describe how the events unfolded and what he witnessed in regard to the OICI. Ralston stated he, along with Deputy Stacy McCurry, was together in a vehicle and was to be in the area, as the MCST was going to be executing the search warrant at the Hellinger residence. Ralston stated after they overheard radio traffic that Hellinger was walking down the railroad tracks heading westbound, they repositioned their vehicle. Ralston stated he observed Hellinger walking backwards on the railroad tracks, with the MCST following Hellinger and were giving out verbal commands for Hellinger to stop, not to put his hand on the gun, to drop the gun, when Hellinger yelled back, they were trying to take his freedom and something about taxes, and if you send the K-9 unit, he (Hellinger) was going to shoot the K-9.

Ralston stated that the verbal commands continued as Hellinger crossed Section Street and passed the crossing gate and proceeded on the railroad tracks westbound, when he took cover and heard the officers yelling that he (Hellinger) had the gun, when the K-9 was released, and gunshots were heard.

SA Hamberg asked Ralston if he observed the incident, when Ralston stated he could see the MCST firing rounds, but a tree was blocking the view of Hellinger. Ralston stated he heard several shots being fired, but he could not distinguish were all of the rounds were coming from.

Ralston had no additional information to share on the incident.

This report only summarizes the information deemed by the author to be of the most relevance to the investigation and does not purport to contain all questions and answers from the audio recording. Further, this report was placed in a chronology to aid the reader's overall understanding of the information elicited during the interview and may not be reflective of the actual sequencing of questions or responses. It is suggested that the reader refer to the audio recording in its entirety.

Attachments:

Attachment # 01: Interview with Jamie Ralston

Finalized by SAS Scott A. Stranahan on
01/10/2023