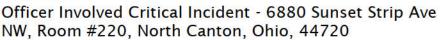


Investigative Report

2024-3649





Investigative Activity: Interview of Involved Officer

Involves: Canton Police

Activity Date: 11/27/2024

Activity Location: BCI, 4055 Highlander Parkway, Richfield, OH 44286

Authoring Agent: SA Nicholas Valente

Narrative:

On Wednesday, November 27, 2024, at 1156 hours, Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) Special Agent (SA) Nick Valente (SA Valente) and SA Matt Armstrong (SA Amstrong) interviewed Canton Police Department (CPD) who was accompanied by his attorney, Ty Graham. The interview took place at BCI, 4055 Highlander Parkway, Richfield, Ohio. The interview was audio and video recorded.

read, indicated he understood, and signed the BCI Criminal Investigation Notification form prior to beginning the interview.

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

Preliminary and Demographic Information:

Name:	Rank:		
Badge Number:	Cruiser/Vehicle Number:		
Radio Call Sign:	Immediate Supervisor: Sergeant Lee and		
Radio Channel Utilized: Spec Ops	Mobile Data Terminal: Present & Utilized		
Cruiser Description: Black and white colored marked patrol vehicle with light bar and police markings.	Occupants of Cruiser and Seating Positions: Solo		
Assignment:	Normal Shift:		



Investigative Report



2024-3649

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

In-Car Camera: Operational & Utilized	Spotlight: Present; Not utilized		
Emergency Lights: Present & Utilized	Siren: Present & Utilized		
Shift Day of Incident:	Duty Status: On-Duty		
Days Off:	Prior Overtime or Extra Details within Preceding 48 Hours: Did not recall		
Hours of Sleep Prior to Incident : At least 8	Consider Self Well Rested?: Yes		
Total Length as Officer:	Length at Current Agency: Previously worked for Uniontown and Boston Heights Police for a brief period.		
Physical Disabilities (to include hearing aid): No	Corrective Lenses: No Corrective Lenses		
Uniform Worn: Standard issue Canton Police Uniform worn to scene (blue pants and blue marked police shirt with patches, badge, etc.) and transitioned at scene into SWAT entry vest (plate carrier), helmet, etc.			
Ballistic Vest: External Armor	Body Worn Camera: Present & Used		
Other Recording Devices: No	Partner: None/ SWAT Team as a whole		
Injuries:	Equipment Damage: No		
Training or Areas of Specialty: CIT	OPOTC Certification: Munroe Falls Police		
trained, SWAT operator and	Academy,		
(collectively three full eight-hour days per month when scheduling allows),			
Military Experience/Training: No	Use-of-Force Training: Yearly with CPD and additional during SWAT trainings.		
Prior Shooting Incidents: No	Prior Discipline or Use-of-Force Complaints: Yes, in 2021 received a 75- day suspension related in part to a use of force incident where he struck a subject in the head.		
Medications, Prescriptions, Drugs, or	Medications, Prescriptions, Drugs, or		



Investigative Report



2024-3649 Officer Involved Critical Incident - 6880 Sunset Strip Ave NW, Room #220, North Canton, Ohio, 44720

Alcohol that might Impair Your Duties	Alcohol that might Impair You Now for	
at Time of Incident: None	Interview: None	

Officer's Firearm(s):

Weapon #1

Make: Unknown - Custom built rifle used or assigned to Swat took possession of and utilized the rifle after was shot, discarded the weapon, and was evacuated from the scene.	Model: Unknown	
Caliber/Gauge: .308 caliber	Serial: Unknown	
Type: Rifle	Method of Carry: In hand	
Magazine Capacity: Unknown	Total Rounds as Carried (including chamber): Unknown	
Extra Magazines: None but did have	Number of Rounds in Extra Magazines:	
additional loose cartridges in a bag.	N/A	
Discharged During Incident? Yes	Primary or Backup Weapon: Primary	
Rounds Remaining After Incident: Unknown	Number of Rounds Fired: 4	
Right/Left-Handed Carry: Right-Handed	Ownership: Did not know.	
Last Qualification Date: None, has fired the weapon before and was familiar with its use. Did qualify with a similar .308 Dan Ross bolt action sniper rifle in the recent past.	Type of Holster, if any: N/A	

Narrative:

stated he watched his body-worn camera (BWC) recording prior to the interview in totality once or twice and skipped through the video, watching bits or pieces approximately four or five times. And not watched any of the other involved officers' BWC recordings. The reported his recollection of the incident was similar to what he observed on the BWC recording.

Was driving to police headquarters to handle an unrelated call when he was called off from that assignment and dispatched to respond to the motel



Investigative Report



2024-3649 Officer Involved Critical Incident - 6880 Sunset Strip Ave NW, Room #220, North Canton, Ohio, 44720



Investigative Report



2024-3649 Officer Involved Critical Incident - 6880 Sunset Strip Ave NW, Room #220, North Canton, Ohio, 44720

mark) "pretty poor." Once the drone entered the subject's room, he observed muzzle flashes coming from the subject's room and heard the sound of gunshots coming from the subject's room. Another officer reported over the police radio that the subject shot the drone down.

After the subject shot the drone down, SWAT	Operator/
transitioned into a sniper role. then behind the Ford Explorer. partially behind the Ford Explorer and was loapproximately 30 seconds when	had his rifle on a tripod and was set up oking into the subject's room for heard a gunshot. Immediately after
hearing the gunshot, cover behind the Ford Explorer. shot and observed an injury to tourniquet on the then placed a second tourniquet on leave the scene of the shooting, walking sour	then heard say he was then placed a above the gunshot wound. Another officer helped
After successfully having helped returned to the group of SW control of rifle because (30:54 know, he's willing to use extreme amounts or removed the sniper rifle from the assupervisor, Sergeant Lee, of what he was doing as a sniper further back from the subject's set up approximately 200 feet from the subject between the motel parking lot and the parking restaurant southwest of the subject's motel in	AT operators. then took mark) "this guy's demonstrated, you of violence to prevent arrest." notified his ng, and looked for a better position to set is motel room. Eventually, ect's room on a hill or embankment ng lot of a neighboring Cracker Barrel
From his position on the hill/embankment, the rifle. also took off his vecomfortably operate the rifle from the position remained in this position for an unknown ambeen approximately 15 to 20 minutes. While subject's room through the scope on the rifle heard a gunshot. stated, (3 suspect has already pointed a firearm at deporiginal, uh activation for the team Um, I knew drone, uh, and I, uh knew he'd shot extremely confident that this suspect uh, was purpose of not just preventing apprehension	est and helmet so that he could on he was now in. Inount of time. He believed it may have in this position and looking into the saw a muzzle flash and 4:29) "So, at this point I know that the uty marshals, which was the reason for the lew he used a firearm to shoot down a at this point, uh, so I was so continuing to discharge a firearm for the



Investigative Report



2024-3649 Officer Involved Critical Incident - 6880 Sunset Strip Ave NW, Room #220, North Canton, Ohio, 44720

that end, uh, so with that knowledge, uh and with the belief it was necessary and justified to use lethal force to stop that suspect from continuing to hurt people, um, I made the decision to shoot the sniper rifle, uh, where I believed the suspect was at. Now, to again, to clarify, visibility into the room was pretty poor, even on a magnified optic at 200 feet. Um, I could see basically inside the room and then I think as a mixture of how dark it was in addition to the chemical munitions and everything that had been deployed visibility in the back of the room was pretty poor but I could, again I could hear the gunshot and I could see the muzzle flash. Um, based on my training, you know, if you can identify the source of the muzzle flash, uh, uh, you're, you can essentially, um extrapolate that that's where the suspect is at or at least in the area. So, I send uh, the first round into that specific area where I see the muzzle flash and believe that the suspect is probably at or at least holding the firearm. Um so, he fires once. I fire one. Um, so this happens twice more, uh within a short period of time he fires again. I respond, send uh, another round from the sniper rifle to that same area, um so, one, two, and three, in that, in that timeframe. After that initial engagement I get on the air, on the radio, and uh, say something to the effect of, you know f shots fired at the suspect.' It's not clear if he's hit at this point or, um, you know what effect those rounds that I fired had. However, he did stop shooting for a period of time. While I'm on the radio he shoots again. Um, so, uh, it's very obvious he's still able to do harm. Um, at some point I, I, don't recall exactly how long this, uh, this time frame was, within a few minutes. Uh, after the first round, uh, that I heard him fire, uh, I very well though that he was shooting at me or at least at other officers. Um, he shoots a fourth time and even after I lost, uh a significant, significant portion of my ability to hear after the first round I fired, um this, I believe it was the fourth round he fired at me or fired, I could hear came past me and I could hear the definitive like whiz sound basically of a round passing by my position. I again, out of fear for my own life and the life of the other officers on scene, um I believed it was necessary and justified to return fire or apply lethal force to that suspect. Did so again with the fourth round from the sniper rifle. Um, and uh, kind of retreated back into cover a little bit. It didn't take a lot for me to do that because I was able to lean back and out of the way and that was it. Took me out of the line of sight of that suspect. I'm there for a minute. He sends another round. Uh, the suspect fires another round that goes close by my position again. Again, I can hear that whiz. Uh, things are muffled but I can distinctly hear the gunshot and whiz of that bullet flying by. So, um, I made the decision to abandon that position that I had set up at and seek out a different one. Um, because it was clear to me the suspect knew where I was at and was shooting at me."

then briefly took up a position further back but quickly moved again. then moved up to the armored vehicle to attempt to see into the room



Investigative Report



2024-3649 Officer Involved Critical Incident - 6880 Sunset Strip Ave NW, Room #220, North Canton, Ohio, 44720

better from this closer vantage point. Leave learned from another SWAT operator that he believed the subject was in the right corner of the room behind a pile of bedding.
then returned to his previous position where he exchanged gunfire with the subject. The requested closer SWAT operators direct a green laser into the subject's room at the back wall to help orient himself to the subject's presumed location should he need to fire again. At that time, learned that other SWAT operators were able to utilize a drone to see into the subject's room, and it appeared the subject was unresponsive and lying face down in a pool of blood. Ultimately, the closer SWAT operators deployed flash bang grenades into the room and then sent SWAT operators into the room who stated the subject was deceased.
When asked, stated he believed the first three shots he and the subject exchanged occurred within approximately 30 seconds. The fourth and final shots he and the subject exchanged occurred very shortly thereafter, while was speaking on the radio.
described the incident as one of the scariest events he had ever been in.
When asked if he felt he perceived any other options available to him at the moment he fired, stated absolutely not.
When asked, stated he did not perceive any actions of any other involved officers to be criminal in nature.
has been a SWAT sniper for approximately two to three months and completed a 40-hour sniper course prior to becoming a sniper on the SWAT team.
last qualified with his assigned sniper rifle, which is similar in form and function to the rifle he fired during this incident, within the last month or two.
stated he was okay with agents reviewing his full BWC recording including any potential Garrity protected statements.
stated he was okay with agents obtaining and reviewing the results of a drug/alcohol screening he completed at the conclusion of the incident.
The interview concluded at approximately 1249 hours.



Investigative Report



2024-3649

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

The audio recording of the interview of was attached to this report.

The video recording of the interview of was saved as part of Reference Item I. The signed BCI Criminal Investigation Notification form was also attached to this report. Please see the attachments for further details.

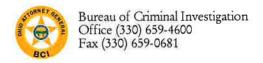
References:

I - Video Recorded Officer Interviews

Attachments:

- 1. 2024-11-27 Audio Recorded Interview -
- 2. 2024-11-27 Signed Criminal Investigation Notification Form -





Criminal Investigation Notification

- This investigation is being conducted in order to determine whether any criminal laws have been violated on the part of those involved in this incident. Specifically, to collect facts and information to be provided to the prosecutor and/or grand jury in order for them to determine whether the conduct involved is authorized or prohibited by criminal statutes.
- 2. Your participation in this interview is voluntary and you may decline to answer or cease the interview at any time. You are entitled to have an attorney present if you wish.
- 3. The criminal investigation is separate from any internal, administrative investigation which your employer may or may not be independently conducting. You are not being compelled to give any statement or answer any questions. This is **not** a "Garrity" interview (where you could be required to answer).

Printed Name of Interviewee	11/27/29 Date / Time	1153
Signature or interviewee		
SA Matthew Armskog BCI Agent (Printed)		
BCI Agent (Signature)		