



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: ██████████ (S)
Date of Activity: 01/03/2023
Activity Location: Marion County Sheriff's Office – Business – 100 Executive Drive,
Marion, OH 43302, Marion County
Author: SA Jason A. Snyder, #176

Narrative:

On 1/03/22, Special Agent (SA) Jason Snyder (Snyder) and Special Agent James Chandler (Chandler) with the Ohio Attorney General's Office, Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI), conducted a taped interview of Detective (Det.) ██████████ (██████████) with the Marion County Sheriff's Office (Marion SO). The interview was conducted at the Marion SO located at 100 Executive Dr., Marion, Ohio 43302.

Both SA Snyder and Det. ██████████ agreed to meet at this date and location. Det. ██████████ voluntarily agreed to speak with SA Snyder. Det. ██████████'s attorney, Robert W. Sauter (Sauter), with the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP), was also in attendance.

Before taping began, SA Snyder introduced himself and briefly explained who he was and why he was there. SA Snyder advised Det. ██████████ that he was conducting a criminal investigation. SA Snyder advised Det. ██████████ that he was not conducting a "Garrity" investigation. Det. ██████████ was given a Criminal Investigation Notification (CIN) form which he read. Sauter requested that the reading of the CIN be waived. SA Snyder granted the request. Det. ██████████ was asked if he understood the document and if he had any questions. Det. ██████████ stated that he understood the CIN and had no questions. Det. ██████████ signed the CIN acknowledging he understood what the form was notifying him of.

Det. ██████████ read a prepared statement to both agents (see statement of ██████████ for all details). In the statement, Det. ██████████ stated he has been employed by the Marion SO for six (6) years and has been a detective since 2022. During the incident, Det. ██████████ was wearing a tactical uniform with deputy "Sheriff" markings on the vest. As part of the uniform he had a body worn camera, which was active during the incident. He considered himself to be well rested before the incident. He stated he was not under the influence of any substance that would impair his memory or judgment during the incident or during the interview with

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BCI.

Det. ██████ attended Pleasant Local High School in Marion, Ohio, graduating in 1995. He also attended Columbus State Community College and Marion Technical College, studying courses in Criminal Justice. He also is certified as a firefighter, basic EMT and paramedic. He has no prior military service.

Det. ██████ carries a Glock 17 handgun as his primary duty weapon, which was issued to him by the Marion SO. He last qualified with this weapon on 09/20/22. He carried three (3) magazines which can hold seventeen (17) rounds of ammunition. That day, he had two fully loaded magazines and one with sixteen (16). One (1) additional round was in the weapon, which makes a total of fifty-one (51) rounds carried. He did not carry a backup weapon.

Det. ██████ had two (2) magazines for a 5.56 rifle which he did not have with him during this incident.

Det. ██████'s radio call sign is ██████. He was using a bullet resistant shield while he was using his weapon. The shield had "Sheriff" clearly displayed on it.

On 12/20/22, Det. ██████ attended the morning briefing for the officers who were going to execute the search warrant that morning. He arrived at the hanger for briefing at 3:15 a.m. Lieutenant (Lt.) Mike Wheeler (Wheeler) advised that they were going to execute a search warrant at 256 N. Swain Avenue, La Rue. The search warrant was a narcotics search warrant from MARMET Drug Task Force. The name of the suspect was Travis Hellinger (Hellinger). Lt. Wheeler advised that MARMET had narcotic buys on Hellinger up to that date. He advised Det. ██████ that Hellinger had a criminal history, including aggravated vehicular assault and drug charges. He also advised Det. ██████ that Hellinger had made comments to confidential informants that he was not going back to prison and that he would either run or get in a shootout with law enforcement. He was also known to carry a firearm.

When Det. ██████ was in route to 256 N Swain Ave, La Rue, OH 43332, the sniper team, who had deployed earlier in the morning, reported that Hellinger was already outside of the pole barn. He was looking for the drones which were in the area at that time. It was also reported that they could see a weapon in a holster.

When Det. ██████ arrived on scene, he positioned himself on the southwest corner of the trailer. He was being notified by the sniper team of the location of Hellinger, which was north of their position.

Det. ██████ and his team worked their way north onto the tracks, where they had contact with Hellinger. Hellinger was walking west on the tracks. During this time, the sniper team advised that Hellinger may have been wearing body armor and had a gun holster on his side.

Det. ██████ could see that Hellinger had a gun in a holster under his right arm. Hellinger was flashing the officers with a bright light. Several members of the Marion SRT told Hellinger that he was in custody, to stop walking and put his hand up. Hellinger refused to comply with officers' demands.

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Additional commands were given to Hellinger to put down his weapons. Det. ██████ believed Hellinger was going to be arrested due to him being a felon with a firearm which is an arrestable offense.

While Hellinger was walking west on the railroad tracks, officers continued to walk in the same direction, giving him commands to stop. Hellinger did not comply. Officers advised Hellinger that a K-9 would be released if he did not stop and give up. Hellinger said if they released the K-9, he would shoot it. One officer stated, "If you pull your gun, we will shoot you."

It was decided that the K-9 would be used in apprehending Hellinger. While the K-9 was approaching, Hellinger pulled out a weapon and fired in the direction of the K-9 and officers. Det. ██████ could see Hellinger while he was pulling out the weapon and the direction Hellinger was pointing. Det. ██████ feared for the officers in the area and himself due to Hellinger pointing the weapon in their direction.

Det. ██████ heard a shot and the K-9 "fall to the ground." Hellinger then moved his weapon further in the direction of Det. ██████ and other officers. Due to this, Det. ██████ engaged Hellinger with his Glock 17. He believes he shot at Hellinger at least twice. At that time, Hellinger fell to the ground.

Det. ██████ then secured Hellinger and started to medically treat him. Det. ██████ saw several gunshot wounds on Hellinger. He placed a tourniquet on Hellinger's right leg. Soon after, Tach Medic Ty Williams (Williams) took over medical treatment of Hellinger.

Det. ██████ showed agents a Google map of the area of the incident. He described the locations of people and items seen at the scene during the incident. This document was collected from Det. ██████ and added to the casefile.

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.

This report was written by SA Jason Snyder.