



**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: Involved Officer Interview
Involves: [REDACTED] (S)
Activity Date: 12/06/2024
Activity Location: FOP Ohio Labor Council
Authoring Agent: SA Matthew Armstrong

Narrative:

On Friday, December 06, 2024, at 0937 hours, Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) Special Agent (SA) Nick Valente (Valente) and SA Matthew Armstrong (Armstrong) interviewed Carroll County Sheriff's Office (CCSO) [REDACTED] who was accompanied by his attorney, Paul Siegfert Jr., from the Ohio Fraternal Order of Police. The interview took place at FOP Labor Council office located at 2721 Manchester Road, Akron, Ohio, 44319. 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. Prior to the interview, [REDACTED] read, indicated he understood, and signed the BCI Criminal Investigation Notification form. It has been attached to this report.

This report only summarizes the information deemed most relevant to the investigation. It 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. It may not be reflective of the actual sequencing of questions. The full recording should be reviewed to clarify any content or contextual questions related to the information provided during the interview. Time stamps listed throughout the report correspond with the video recording.

Preliminary and Demographic Information:

Name: [REDACTED]	Rank: [REDACTED]
Badge Number: [REDACTED]	Cruiser/Vehicle Number: [REDACTED]
Radio Call Sign: [REDACTED]	Immediate Supervisor: [REDACTED]
Radio Channel Utilized: Special Operations	Mobile Data Terminal: Not Present

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Cruiser Description: Black Lenco Bear which is a ballistic vehicle with Canton Police patches on both the driver and passenger door and equipped with lights and a siren	Occupants of Cruiser and Seating Positions: Seated in the front passenger seat. Rode with driver and multiple other SWAT officers.
Emergency Lights: Yes	Partner: Other SWAT officers
Siren: Yes	Spotlight: N/A
Assignment: SWAT Operator	Normal Shift: [REDACTED]
Shift Day of Incident: [REDACTED]	Duty Status: On duty
Days Off: [REDACTED] [REDACTED]	Prior Overtime or Extra Details within Preceding 48 Hours: No
Hours of Sleep Prior to Incident: 6.5 hours	Consider Self Well Rested?: Yes
Physical Disabilities (to include hearing aid): No	Corrective Lenses: No
Total Length as Officer: almost [REDACTED] years months	Length at Current Agency: [REDACTED]
Previous LE Experience: Has worked for numerous agencies throughout northeast Ohio.	OPOTC Certification: Trainers Police Academy in Jackson Township
Military Experience/Training: None	Training or Areas of Specialty: Attended Narcotics school, 80 hours instructor certification, Patrolman Leadership training, front line supervision, Ivory Tower, firearms instructor, less lethal instructor, taser instructor, and active shooter instructor
Use-of-Force Training: Monthly SWAT shoot/don't shoot scenarios, annual use of force exam	CIT/SWAT/Force Science Training: Basic SWAT, basic sniper, Urban Sniper, 40-hour CIT certification
Uniform Worn: Olive green pants and shirt, plate carrier with "Sheriff" placard on front and back, standard tactical belt, helmet and clear glasses.	Equipment and Less-Lethal Options Carried on Person/Belt/Vest: On vest: chem lights, 2 M4 magazines, flash bang, medical kit, duty on belt: firearm

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	and magazines
Ballistic Vest: Level 3A external vest with rifle plates.	Body Worn Camera: Not present
In-Car Camera: None	Other Recording Devices: None
Injuries: None	Equipment Damage: None
Prior Shooting Incidents: No	Prior Discipline or Use-of-Force Complaints: None
Were you under the influence of any substances that would impair your memory or judgment at the time of the incident: No	

Officer's Firearm(s):

Weapon #1

Make: Arrow Precision	Model: Freedom 15
Caliber/Gauge: 5.56	Serial: Unknown
Type: Rifle	Method of Carry: Sling
Magazine Capacity: 30 cartridges	Total Rounds as Carried (including chamber): 112 cartridges
Extra Magazines: 3	Number of Rounds in Extra Magazines: 28 cartridges
Discharged During Incident? Yes	Primary or Backup Weapon: Primary
Rounds Remaining After Incident: 3 full magazines	Number of Rounds Fired: Fired entire magazine in two volleys which would have totaled 28 rounds.
Right/Left-Handed Carry: Right-Handed	Ownership: Personally Owned
Last Qualification Date: twice in 2024	Type of Holster, if any: None - carried on two-point sling

Narrative:

██████████ had not reviewed any body worn camera videos from the incident but had seen a citizen recorded video which was aired on the local news. He said the video looked like it was recorded from "miles away."

On November 18, 2024, ██████████ was assisting with SWAT school at SWAT Headquarters when ██████████ relayed that the U.S. Marshalls had an armed barricaded subject at a location, and they were requesting SWAT. ██████████

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██████████ did not have a radio that day so he did not receive information over the radio during the incident. He remembered hearing other officers talk about some of the details that led to the incident. He was aware the subject was a white male approximately 65 years of age who had flashed a gun at the Marshalls when they tried to serve an arrest warrant. He believed the SWAT team was requested shortly before 1130 hours.

After they arrived, he was initially at the back of their armored vehicle, ██████████. They were doing some planning while additional officers were arriving and funneling into various positions. They began deploying gas into the room. ██████████ moved to the back of an SUV parked in front of the subject's room with ██████████. ██████████ did not like his position and returned to the back of the armored vehicle.

At some point, he heard gunshots and believed they were coming out of the room, past them, and toward the Cracker Barrel restaurant. At that time, he was at the back of ██████████ while ██████████ was positioned at the back of the black SUV. He yelled at ██████████ and asked if he wanted his sniper gear. ██████████ indicated he did. Officers in ██████████ retrieved the sniper gear and gave it to ██████████ who ran it to ██████████.

██████████ then set up along another building of rooms east of the subject's location. ██████████ heard more gunshots and believed the subject was shooting at them. ██████████ then took down his position and moved back to his original position behind the black SUV. While ██████████ was setting up at the rear passenger side corner of the SUV, the subject shot ██████████. Officers returned fire. Other officers began treating ██████████, and he was evacuated to an ambulance.

As the event proceeded, ██████████ learned they had sent a drone into the room and the subject had shot it down. He also heard that each time they tried to turn the drone back on the subject he shot at it. ██████████ explained there was a period where nothing was happening, and then the subject started firing again. At that time, he was positioned behind ██████████ near the front passenger side of ██████████. ██████████ fired and then turned toward him with his magazine. ██████████ told ██████████ he was up. ██████████ explained:

So, he moved and then I took a position kind of on the front, like where the windshield meets the hood of the armor. Uh, there was a shield across. I put my gun up. So, I can see like through a little hole and I can see diagonally through the door and I can see the, uh, this is north, so I can see the west wall.

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The west wall, yeah. Um, from like right here, I can see through the door into the west wall. I can just, you know, like half a wall. So, all I can see, um, at this time, [REDACTED] comes kind of out the side. We're talking about plans and whatnot. I asked him if I can take up [REDACTED] gun. He's like, Nope. Need you here. Um, I said at that time, like, we're directing fire back when he shoots. And he's like, standby on that. So, uh, he kind of sticks his head into Captain Marino. He's like, 'we're we're directing fire, directed fire?' Uh, captain Marino says, 'Yes, accurate direct fire is our response.' Uh, another round of shooting, uh, comes out of the, the room. Um, I can tell you that I leaned, uh, out, I leaned out from the right side of the armor, uh, knowing that like we were getting information that he was on the floor between the bed and the wall and they were calling outside of the room or whatnot.

One, two, three, and four. So, I knew that he was kind of in the back of this room and he was kind of on the floor. So, uh, the side of this building, like I'll say it's three feet up, has like a decorative piece of wood. I don't know what you want to call it. Uh, but I kind of focused on that thinking he had to be below it. Um, so when I lean out, I shoot a volley. Um, so I, I skipped some instructor certificates, but one of 'em is vehicle CQB instructor where they specifically kind of teach you how to shoot through pillars of cars and hard objects and how to effectively hit something. So, I fire my first volley and I try to keep 'em like right in a group on that, that three-foot-high spot. Uh, I don't know how many I shot in the first volley, but I know I fired and I quit.

I reassessed to make sure my rounds were hitting where I wanted 'em to hit and then there was still shooting going on. Uh, I then fired my second volley, uh, gun locks back. I get outta line, drop my magazine, another guy steps up, get my gun loaded, uh, just in time to hear and uh, reiterate the ceasefire that they called. So, they called it ceasefire after that volley. Uh, so I just get back in line. Uh, started doing some, you know, some team leader stuff. We're devising a couple different plans we might try. Uh, OSP was just north of us, so, uh, that's the SR. SRT-1. It kind of arrives over here on scene and uh, we come up with a plan. It eventually drives over and pushes the Dodge out of the way and takes up some hardcover in front. 'cause this guy's just shooting all the neighboring units and, uh, us and the restaurant like, so we tried to wall this place off so that the rounds wouldn't, you know, strike any people or, uh, you know, neighboring, neighboring rooms or whatnot (29:42).

[REDACTED] was asked to expound on the directive for directed fire from Captain Marino. He explained:

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So, uh, [REDACTED] had just fired, uh, I believe [REDACTED] too, but I didn't see [REDACTED] fire. So when I switched, when I switched [REDACTED] out, 'cause he was reloading and I took up his position and we're watching this kind of like a lull in the action, so to say, and I'm kind of looking in at that angle and I, you know, I wanted to make sure that, um, you know, if we were gonna take that action, that they wanted us to take that action. Uh, you know, we try not to, I, well as a team leader, like I don't want to give instructions that aren't, uh, what the team as a whole would want to do. Uh, so [REDACTED] uhh, [REDACTED] was behind me and that's when I turned to him like, we're, we're returning on, on being shot at. And he's like, we're gonna check that. And, or he, I think he said, we're gonna check that. And that's when he asked [REDACTED]. So, the armored door's open on the side and I'm, there's a, a man door right here, like kind of almost in the middle of the truck. Captain Marino was kind of sitting inside of it, you know, as his, uh, command post. So, [REDACTED] opens that door and I'm the door's kind of up here so I can kind of do this. And, uh, he says, yes, we're accurately returning directed fire. Um, should he shoot again? I think that was the gist of really that was about it. There wasn't like a huge discussion that I was part of. Okay. I was just kind of like a Yep. We're going to, I believe his words were accurate, direct, directed, accurate fire (42:44).

At some point, OSP's armored vehicle arrived and was positioned in front of the room to help block the subject's rounds because the subject was firing, and his rounds were going toward other buildings, people, and the restaurant. [REDACTED] had taken up [REDACTED] rifle and was positioned further east of the subject's room near a dumpster. The subject then started firing at [REDACTED]

He recalled that at another point officers were saying they could see the subject moving between the bed and the wall. He heard another exchange of gunfire followed by a lot of silence. They devised a plan to approach the room and deploy another camera. Once the camera was in, it appeared the subject was down. He and several other officers entered the room, called for medics, and they determined the subject was deceased.

[REDACTED] described the training he received related to accurate and directed fire. He stated:

We do, uh, a maneuver. We go to Ravenna Arsenal every year, probably for the last two or three years as a, the whole, so when the team trains, there's 35 of us, we go two days a month. So, the team is split during those into like 15-man teams so that everybody's work can accommodate. There are people being

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gone. But one week a year we all go together. Um, so that one week we spend in Ravenna using all the shoot houses and all their ranges and stuff so we can all be together. And, uh, [REDACTED] ran the, uh, fire maneuver type drill that, that year last, this well be this year. Uh, he ran that drill. And, um, essentially a group of guys returns accurate fire at a target. So, another group can move or they can, uh, set up what they're setting up. Um, not necessarily that you see the target, but per se there'd be somebody inside of a window and they know that we're shooting, they're shooting out at us, but we can't directly see them. But in order for us to gain an advantage to set up an, uh, a maneuver or to protect who's out there, we would directly and accurately, uh, you know, shoot for a better, like where that gunfire is coming from (46:02).

Throughout the incident, [REDACTED] was unable to see the subject inside the room. He did not hear the subject say anything at any point. There were numerous PA announcements given where they announced their presence and warned that if the subject did not come out, gas would be deployed.

[REDACTED] explained that being shot at "elevated the game." The subject was shooting at their sniper and had shot another officer. It was clear to him the subject intended to kill them and [REDACTED] was in fear for his life and the lives of the public.

[REDACTED] did not recall any previous encounters with the involved subject. He consented to agents reviewing the results of the drug screen he submitted to after the incident and to agents reviewing any written reports he may complete in the future.

The interview concluded at approximately 1019 hours.

References:

None

Attachments:

1. 2024-12-06 Signed Criminal Investigation Notification Form - [REDACTED]
2. 2024-12-06 Audio Recorded Interview - [REDACTED]

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Criminal Investigation Notification

1. 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).

[Redacted]
Printed Name of Interviewee

12/06/2024 0926
Date / Time

[Redacted]
Signature of Interviewee

Matthew Armstrong
BCI Agent (Printed)

SA M. [Signature] #146
BCI Agent (Signature)