



**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: U.S. Marshal Christopher Alstrom (W)
Activity Date: 12/03/2024
Activity Location: BCI - Richfield
Authoring Agent: SA Allison Fletcher

Narrative:

On Tuesday, December 03, 2024, at 0906 hours, Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) Special Agent (SA) Matthew Armstrong (Armstrong) and SA Cory Momchilov (Momchilov) interviewed U.S. Marshal Christopher Alstrom (Alstrom) from the U.S. Marshal Services (USMS). The interview took place at BCI - Richfield, which is located at 4055 Highlander Parkway, Richfield, Ohio 44286. The interview was audio and video recorded.

U.S. Marshal Alstrom 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 in North Canton, Ohio. Reportedly, U.S. Marshal Alstrom 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.

U.S. Marshal Alstrom has been employed by the USMS for about eleven years. He has been a police officer for a total of eighteen years. During the incident, U.S. Marshal Alstrom wore his standard USMS uniform with a USMS badge affixed to it. He also wore an external ballistic vest and duty belt. He responded to the incident in his unmarked USMS issued vehicle. He considered himself to be well-represented as a U.S. Marshal during 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 BCI.

In the days prior to the shooting incident, U.S. Marshal Alstrom became involved in an investigation regarding the apprehension of the involved subject, James Vanest (Vanest). His investigation began on the Thursday or Friday prior to the incident (11/14/24 or 11/15/24). During those initial days, he received a "collateral lead" from the USMS southern district indicating that Vanest had an active federal arrest warrant for felony possession of firearms. Vanest had ties to the Stark County and Canton,

This document is the property of the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation and is confidential in nature. Neither the document nor its contents are to be disseminated outside your agency.



**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

Ohio areas, and he was believed to have fled to this location. The arrest warrant for Vanest was the result of an ATF investigation; ATF then turned the warrant over to USMS for apprehension.

U.S. Marshal Alstrom conducted his investigation and determined Vanest was located at 6880 Sunset Strip Avenue NW, Room #220 in North Canton, Ohio. He formulated a plan for apprehension and requested assistance from two USMS Task Force Officers (TFO) and a uniformed patrol officer from the Jackson Township Police Department (JTPD).

Additional information about Vanest was gathered, and it was learned that Vanest had a history of firearms and multiple encounters with law enforcement that involved firearms. It was also believed that Vanest was the suspect in a cold case homicide, but no additional information was provided.

On the morning of November 18, 2024, U.S. Marshall Alstrom, the two USMS TFO officers and the JTPD officer arrived at the Rodeway Inn Motel located at 6880 Sunset Strip Avenue NW. U.S. Marshal Alstrom maintained surveillance on Room #220 while the JTPD officer spoke with the motel management to obtain a key for the room.

A short time later, the JTPD officer returned with a digital key card. The four officers then stacked up on the right side of the building next to Room #220. U.S. Marshal Alstrom knocked on the door softly to see if he could ascertain if anyone was inside the hotel room. He noted, based upon his investigation, that there was only one way in and one way out of the hotel room, which was through the front entry door where they were attempting to make contact. U.S. Marshal Alstrom then began knocking louder and giving announcements that he was a police officer, and he had a warrant for Vanest's arrest.

After multiple attempts of knocking on the door and giving loud verbal announcements, U.S. Marshal Alstrom used the digital key card to open the door, however, the key did not function properly, and the door would not open. The JTPD officer returned to the motel manager and requested a second digital key and the master "skeleton key."

The second attempt to unlock the door was a success. However, the door only opened approximately three inches, due to the security bar preventing the door from fully opening. U.S. Marshal Alstrom noted that since there was only one way in and out of the room, the security bar on the door indicated to him that someone was inside the room.

This document is the property of the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation and is confidential in nature. Neither the document nor its contents are to be disseminated outside your agency.



**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

U.S. Marshal Alstrom then peeked through the small gap in the open door and observed "a big bald head and a pistol pointing right at my face with both hands on it (the gun), like sighting through the sights ready to go" [27:15].

U.S. Marshal Alstrom quickly moved away from the door opening and pushed the other officers standing behind him further back. He then began attempting to negotiate with Vanest through the small opening in the door. Vanest never responded to any of his commands or requests. U.S. Marshal Alstrom then requested one of the TFO officers to deploy multiple rounds of pepper balls into the room through the small opening in the door. U.S. Marshal Alstrom explained the pepper ball gun was clearly different from that of a traditional firearm. He further explained that the pepper ball gun was yellow and did not make percussive sounds like a firearm.

During the initial negotiating period with Vanest, U.S. Marshal Alstrom requested the Canton Regional SWAT (Canton SWAT) team and the JTPD to respond to the scene for assistance.

Canton SWAT arrived on scene a short time later and U.S. Marshal Alstrom briefed them on the incident, then handed the scene over to them.

A significant amount of time after the U.S. Marshal initially arrived, he heard gunfire that sounded like "pop, pop, pop." He then observed holes in the side of the building where Room #220 was located. U.S. Marshal Alstrom believed Vanest was firing from his room towards the officers on scene. The initial gunfire took everyone by surprise and officers immediately began taking cover. U.S. Marshal Alstrom was unsure if any officers returned gunfire at that time, he just heard "a lot of gunshots" in a short amount of time.

U.S. Marshal Alstrom eventually took a position behind the Canton SWAT armored vehicle which was parked in front of the entrance to room #220. To his left, approximately 8-10 feet away, he observed a Canton SWAT sniper who had his long rifle positioned on a tripod. U.S. Marshal Alstrom heard gunfire and then heard the sniper officer yell in pain. U.S. Marshal Alstrom knew that the officer had been struck by gunfire. The sniper officer was assisted by other officers on scene and successfully taken to the ambulance that was staged in a safe location.

From the same position behind the armored vehicle, U.S. Marshal Alstrom observed a Canton SWAT officer fire his rifle multiple times in rapid succession towards Room #220. The SWAT officer was positioned at the rear of the Canton SWAT armored vehicle on the driver's side. U.S. Marshal Alstrom could not recall how many rounds were fired in total by that officer.

This document is the property of the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation and is confidential in nature. Neither the document nor its contents are to be disseminated outside your agency.



**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

The Ohio State Highway Patrol (OSHP) Special Response Team (SRT) armored vehicle arrived on scene. U.S. Marshal Alstrom got into the OSHP armored vehicle with multiple other officers that he believed at the time to be with the OSHP SRT. He later learned some of the officers in the OSHP armored vehicle were from the Canton Police Department (CPD).

After entering the armored vehicle, U.S. Marshal Alstrom stated they immediately used the vehicle to push Vanest's vehicle out of the way. Vanest's vehicle was parked in front of Room #220. The OSHP armored vehicle then took a position in front of the room.

U.S. Marshal Alstrom had difficulty seeing into Room #220. He recalled one of the OSHP SRT officers using a less lethal firearm to "shoot out" the window of Room #220 in an attempt to make it easier to see inside. At no point was he able to observe Vanest inside the room aside from his initial approach.

At some point during the incident, one of the officers inside the OSHP armored vehicle announced they saw movement inside Room #220. The officer then announced they saw a pistol and the officer fired approximately seven rounds through the open port on the side of the armored vehicle.

U.S. Marshal Alstrom described a multitude of tactics that were used throughout the duration of the incident. He had difficulty recalling specific times that the tactics were used. He mentioned Canton SWAT deploying a drone into the room and Vanest shooting at the drone. Flash bangs were also utilized at some point during the incident. He also recalled officers giving numerous commands throughout the incident.

After officers discovered there was no longer any movement from Room #220, officers from the Canton SWAT team entered the room.

U.S. Marshal Alstrom feared for his safety when he initially peered into the small opening of the doorway. He believed Vanest was going to shoot him. He did not fire his weapon because, based upon his training, he was not in a good position to shoot. He believed the best course of action was to request SWAT and the police department of jurisdiction for assistance.

U.S. Marshal Alstrom also feared for the safety of the other officers on scene and anyone else in the area. U.S. Marshal Alstrom added that the area was evacuated to the best of their ability prior to the shooting incident occurring.

The interview concluded at approximately 0941 hours.

This document is the property of the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation and is confidential in nature. Neither the document nor its contents are to be disseminated outside your agency.



**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

The interview was audio recorded. The audio recording was attached to this report. The signed BCI Criminal Investigation Notification form is also attached to this report. Please see the attachments for further details.

References:

Reference Item I – Officer Interview – Evidence.com

Attachments:

1. 2024-12-03 Audio Recorded Interview - Deputy Marshal Christopher Alstrom

This document is the property of the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation and is confidential in nature. Neither the document nor its contents are to be disseminated outside your agency.