



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: Video Review

Involves: Travis Hellinger (V), Marion County Sheriff's Office (O), Jacob Johnson (O), Briana Outcalt (O), Aaron Siegel (O), Deputy Larry Yoder (W), Sheriff Matt Bayles (O), Sgt. Dereck Keller (O), Sgt. Jason Flynn (O), Prosecutor Raymond A Grogan (O), Christopher Bates (O), Tracy Crabtree (O), Clarence Friend (O), Wendy Crabtree (O), Jeff McCleese (O), Richard Rudd (O), April Russell (O), Michael Cress (O), Brooke Price (O), Jeremiah Haile (O), Stacy McCurry (W), [REDACTED] (S), Imal Riley (O), Joseph Ralph (O), Chelsie Ralph (O), David Johnson (O), Ramon Diaz (O), Brian Gavaghan (O), Daniel Jividen (O), Colin Lowe (O), Matthew Baldrige (O), Matt Creps (O), Jay McDonald (W), Chris N Adkins (W), Jamie J Ralston (W), Phillip A Hetzel (O), Aaron Dickinson (O), Bryan K Schwartz (O), Mathew B Pate (O), Matthew J Cook (O), Mark J Kern (W), William G Bogantz (W), Timothy J Ryan (W), Robin F Valentine (W), Ken Rittenour (W), Ryan Zempter (O), Mike A. Wheeler (W), Jessica Tuttle (O), Samantha L. Byrd (O), Wendy Fown (O), Dean E. Bowsher (O), John "Jason" Dutton (W), Jesse L. Allen (W), Miss Amanda C Labounty (W), Bethany Taylor (O), Shawn Cress (O), Cameron Thrasher (O), Jack Stull (W), Hank Kern (W), Jamie Ralston (W)

Date of Activity: 12/20/2022

Activity Location: (by railroads) – S. Section Street , La Rue, OH 43332, Marion County

Author: SA David G. Horn, #48

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 La Rue, Marion County, OH.

On January 9, 2023, BCI Special Agent David Horn reviewed the video footage from the

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Delaware SWAT Team Drone of Travis Hellinger (V), which was uploaded into the NW SIU share folder.

There were three files, DJI_20221220053449_002_T (THERMAL), _W (WIDE), and _Z (Zoom), that were all consistent with one another. There is no sound.

The video was 10.11 minutes in length.

- Video showed footage of a white male (Hellinger) with a dark beard walking down a railroad track from SWAT members. The male is wearing jeans, work boots, a black PUMA hoodie, glasses and a hat.
- At 0:00:24, Hellinger is shining his flashlight at officers while officers continue to walk toward Hellinger, who continues to walk backward.
- At 0:06:41, Hellinger is still in the center of the railroad tracks and crosses the road.
- At 0:07:50, a K9 was released toward Hellinger. Hellinger discharged his firearm at the K9, discharging his gun twice.
- At 0:07:53, Hellinger is seen falling backward onto the railroad tracks after being shot by SWAT officers.
- At 0:08:17, SWAT officers reach Hellinger.

ADDITIONAL FACTORS FOR EVALUATING THE VIDEO RECORDINGS

There are numerous other factors that need to be considered when reviewing and evaluating the videos and audio recordings of this incident. Those factors are:

A. Video recording devices record within the video and sound capabilities available, and they record objectively. Video recordings lack the history, perspective, and interest of the people involved. The positions, angles, obstacles, lighting and distance from the incident are also factors that need serious consideration.

B. Video recording devices also record more information about a particular scene or incident than the person(s) involved in the incident can process during the critical incident. Video recording devices rarely record an event from the same perspective of the officer. It captures the action but not the perception, decision making, focus, or intent of the officer. Video recordings often miss tactile cues or other actions of a subject.

C. The speed of the incident is remarkable. The speed and complexity of rapidly evolving situation(s) that occur during use of force encounters are difficult concepts to comprehend by only watching the video.

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