



Ohio Attorney General's Office
Bureau of Criminal Investigation
Investigative Report



2022-1564
Officer Involved Critical Incident – 1132 Ashwood Drive, South
Charleston, OH (L)

Investigative Activity: Interview with Officer
Involves: Cole Matthew White (S)
Date of Activity: 08/25/2022
Activity Location: Ohio State Highway Patrol–SRT – Business – 1583 Alum Creek
Road, Columbus, OH 43215, Franklin County
Author: SA Richard Ward, #55

Narrative:

On Thursday, August 25, 2022 at 1016 hours, Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigations (BCI) Special Agents Richard Ward and Ken Smith met with Ohio State Highway Patrol (OSHP) Sergeant Erik Lofland at the Special Response Team (SRT) headquarters, 1583 Alum Creek Road, Columbus, Ohio, for the purpose of an interview. Lofland and members of the OSHP SRT team responded on Sunday, July 24, 2022, to Harmony Estates for the purpose of augmenting other tactical teams related to the shooting death of Deputy Yates and Jodi Arbuckle by Cole White.

Sergeant Lofland has been employed with the Ohio State Highway Patrol (OSHP) for 19 years and a member of the Special Response Team (SRT) for 17 years. Lofland stated on July 24, 2022, he was notified via text message of the incident and responded to Clark County and retrieved his equipment, shield, etc... Once on scene, Lofland met with Lieutenant Bryan Mangin who briefed him on the details. Lofland was provided the positioning; specifically, the numbering of the trailer, which said was different because of placement of the trailer related to the street. Lofland learned while on scene a deputy was inside the trailer, possibly deceased, and was instructed to position himself on the 2/3 (northeast) corner.

Agent Ward asked Sergeant Lofland what had happened prior to his arrival and he believed SWAT had attempted to retrieve Deputy Yates and were fired upon minutes before his arrival. Lofland described the 2/3 corner of the trailer had already been exposed with a gaping hole on its corner. Lofland stated he retrieved equipment for other personnel and assisted Nadi [Trooper Graham] with the deployment of an unmanned drone which captured a visual of Yates' position then crashed.

Sergeant Lofland stated another attempt to retrieve Deputy Yates was made with an initial barrage of less lethal munitions for 60 or 90 seconds followed by the entry of SWAT into

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side 1. Lofland had deployed two "double bag" flashbang distraction devices from the 2/3 corner, from the right side of the MRAP. Lofland believed neither of the two flashbangs he deployed went inside the opening that was created. He observed one flash bang bounced off an exterior wall, and the other landed to the right. Agent Ward asked if other personnel deployed munitions/flashbangs and he stated yes, with him was mostly Springfield police personnel. Other than him, Lofland stated a Springfield police officer had deployed flashbangs and believed between the two, five total were deployed toward the open corner.

Shortly after the retrieval of Deputy Yates, Sergeant Lofland observed smoke from the 3 side (south) window followed by a red glow and the trailer became completely engulfed in flames. Lofland provided cover for police personnel who had assist with fire suppression.

Agent Ward concluded the interview with Sergeant Lofland at 1027 hours. Attached below is the audio recorded interview with Lofland.

Attachments:

Attachment # 01: 2022-08-25 / Sgt. Erik Lofland audio interview

Exhibit 1

Included as a separate file.