



Ohio Bureau of Criminal Identification & Investigation
INVESTIGATIVE REPORT



12/18/12 INTERVIEW OF DARIAN LASKA

Summary

On Tuesday, December 18, 2012, Detective Jacobs of the Cuyahoga County Sheriff's Office and Special Agent Stranahan conducted an interview with Cleveland Police Officer Darian Laska regarding his involvement in the pursuit and officer involved shooting incident which occurred November 29, 2012 in East Cleveland, Cuyahoga County, Ohio.

Details

On Tuesday, December 18, 2012, at approximately 2040 hours, Detective Jacobs of the Cuyahoga County Sheriff's Office and Special Agent Stranahan were assigned to conduct an interview with Cleveland Police Officer Darian Laska regarding his involvement in the pursuit and officer involved shooting incident which occurred on November 29, 2012 in East Cleveland, Cuyahoga County, Ohio. The interview with Officer Laska was conducted at the Richfield BCI&I offices and was audio/video recorded.

At approximately 2043 hours, Detective Jacobs and Special Agent Stranahan met with Officer Laska, his attorney Patrick D'Angelo and Cleveland Police Patrolmen's Association Vice President Steve Kinas in the conference room at the Richfield BCI&I offices. After initial greetings, Special Agent Stranahan advised Officer Laska of his Miranda rights which he indicated he understood and was willing to provide a statement regarding this investigation. The following information was provided by Officer Laska during the interview.

Officer Laska indicated he has been a Cleveland Police Officer for approximately four (4) years. Officer Laska stated that prior to being hired by the Cleveland Police Department he worked as a Special Duty for the Medina County Sheriff's Office to hold his Peace Officer Commission upon graduation from the police academy. Officer Laska stated he is currently assigned to the Downtown Services Unit within the Cleveland Police Department Third District. Officer Laska stated his current work hours are 2000 hours – 0400 hours and that this is considered by the Cleveland Police Department as "fourth shift." Officer Laska stated his supervisor on November

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Case Agent: Mark Kollar	Authoring Agent: Stranahan, S. #98 <i>AS</i>
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Investigative Activity: Interview of Darian Laska	Supervisor Approval: Dennis Sweet <i>[Signature]</i> JAN 10 2013

29, 2012 was Sergeant Peters and he does not recall working any part-time jobs prior to the start of his shift.

The next topic discussed with Officer Laska was the type of training he has received. Officer Laska indicated he holds a current Peace Officer Certification through the Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy and he has never served in United States Military. Officer Laska indicated he last attended in-service training with the Cleveland Police Department in April of 2012. According to Officer Laska, the in-service training included a firearms requalification and training in the use of force. Officer Laska indicated in his career as a Cleveland Police Officer he has never been involved in an officer involved shooting incident and he has never received any disciplinary action.

Special Agent Stranahan then asked Officer Laska several questions related to his health and substance abuse. Officer Laska advised he is in good health: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Officer Laska stated he does not wear glasses and has no problems with drug or alcohol abuse.

Special Agent Stranahan next asked Officer Laska questions regarding the type of uniform he was wearing and type of equipment he was carrying on November 29, 2012. According to Officer Laska, he was wearing his Cleveland Police Department issued class B uniform during his shift on November 29, 2012. Officer Laska described this uniform as consisting of navy blue pants, a navy blue shirt with Cleveland Police Department markings and a bullet resistant vest which is in an external navy blue carrier. Officer Laska advised he was also wearing his issued duty belt which consisted of the following police issued equipment: (2) pairs of handcuffs, Glock 17 pistol, (2) extra magazines, pepper spray and a Taser with three cartridges. Officer Laska stated all of his magazines were at full capacity and he was not carrying a back-up weapon. Officer Laska also indicated he does not employ the use of any personal audio/video recording devices on his person or in his assigned patrol vehicle while on duty.

Special Agent Stranahan then asked Officer Laska questions concerning his assigned vehicle and zone assignment on November 29, 2012. Officer Laska and his partner Officer Steve Beckner were assigned patrol unit number 9609 and their call sign was 96-24. Officer Laska stated he was driving unit 9609 and Officer Beckner was riding in the front passenger seat of the vehicle. Officer Laska stated that unit 9609 is equipped with working emergency lights, siren, spotlight, mobile radio and mobile data terminal (onboard computer system). Officer Laska stated he and Officer Beckner normally monitor radio channel 3 on both their car radio as well as their portable radios; however, they switched their portable radios to channel 2 during the pursuit. Officer Laska indicated he monitored both channels to ensure he had the most accurate information regarding the pursuit.

Special Agent Stranahan next spoke with Officer Laska regarding how he first became involved in the pursuit on November 29, 2012. According to Officer Laska, he and Officer Beckner were on patrol when they overheard a radio broadcast on channel 3 stating that Cleveland Police Department Second District Officers had been shot at. Officer Laska then switched his portable

radio to channel 2 to monitor radio traffic pertaining to the pursuit of the suspect vehicle. Officer Laska indicated that he and Officer Beckner remained in the downtown Cleveland area and monitored the pursuit via radio. Officer Laska stated he attempted to remain a short distance ahead of the pursuit so that he and Officer Beckner would be able to assist should the suspects stop their vehicle and engage officers in a foot pursuit.

While monitoring the pursuit via the radio, Officer Laska heard a radio broadcast which stated the suspects were pointing an object out the window of the suspect vehicle. A short time later Officer Laska recalled hearing an additional radio broadcast in which he heard gunshots being fired in the background. The next radio traffic Officer Laska recalled hearing was an unidentified officer warning other officers involved to “watch their cross-fire.”

Officer Laska stated he and Officer Beckner continued to the area of the Heritage Middle School which is located at 14410 Terrace Road, East Cleveland, Cuyahoga County, Ohio. Officer Laska indicated he parked his patrol unit along the south curb of Terrace Road and both he and Officer Beckner exited the vehicle. Upon exiting their patrol vehicle, Officer Laska observed additional Cleveland Police vehicles and officers which were also parked along Terrace Road. Officer Laska stated he did not hear any additional gun fire while upon his arrival in the area. Officer Laska and Officer Beckner followed other Cleveland Police Officers from Terrace Road, into the parking lot of Heritage Middle School.

Upon arrival in the school parking lot, Officer Laska observed numerous Cleveland Police Officers. Officer Laska also observed the suspect vehicle and two Cleveland Police vehicles at the east end of the parking lot and that all three vehicles appeared to have been struck by bullets as the result of gun fire. Officer Laska stated there were additional Cleveland Police vehicles in the school parking lot; however, he did not know how many as his attention was drawn to the area of the suspect’s vehicle. Officer Laska stated that he and Officer Beckner remained in the area of the playground at the east end of the school parking lot and were approximately twenty (20) feet away from the suspect vehicle. At this time Officer Laska and Officer Beckner met with Lieutenant Wilson and were directed to leave the scene and return to their district. Officer Laska indicated that the incident appeared to be over by the time he arrived in the school parking lot and at no time did he or Officer Beckner discharge their weapons. While on scene, Officer Laska stated he did not take any photographs with his cellular telephone and that he did not receive any photographs of the scene from other officers via his cellular telephone.

Officer Laska advised that the information he provided was truthful and he is unable to provide any additional details regarding this investigation. At this time the interview with Officer Laska was concluded and Officer Laska, his attorney and Union representative departed the area. The interview with Officer Laska was audio/video recorded and a copy of the interview was downloaded to a DVD which was added to this case file as Exhibit #36.

Subject Information

Name: Darian A. Laska

Address: [REDACTED] Middleburg Heights, Cuyahoga County, Ohio 44130

Telephone: [REDACTED] (personal cellular telephone)

Employment: Officer - Cleveland Police Department

DOB: 4/7/1980

SSN: [REDACTED]

Sex: Male

Race: White

Height: 5'9"

Weight: 200 lbs.

Hair: Brown

Eyes: Brown

S/V/W: W

CCH: No
