



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



2023-2008
Officer Involved Critical Incident – Terminal Road By Dayton
Airport, OH (L)

Investigative Activity: Body Camera Review
Involves: Rodney D. Helman (S), Elaine M. Helman (S)
Date of Activity: 08/02/2023
Activity Location: – Terminal Road by Dayton Airport, OH
Author: SA Richard Ward, #55

Narrative:

In the early morning hours of Wednesday, August 2, 2023, London Police Sergeant Michael Orahood conducted a traffic on Rodney and Elaine Helman in the Village of London for various traffic violations. During the interaction between Orahood and the Helmans, false information was provided reference their identity and they ultimately fled from the stop in their vehicle. The Helmans fled to a nearby Travel America where both fled on foot; during which Rodney Helman pointed a handgun at Orahood. Both Rodney and Elaine Helman entered a stationary semi-truck occupied by [REDACTED] who used a hammer to fend off the Helmans, but was shot in the hand by Rodney Helman. The Helmans gained control of the semi-truck and fled the area. After a prolonged pursuit and standoff, which culminated near the Dayton International Airport, both Rodney and Elaine Helman were shot and killed by Ohio State Highway Patrol Troopers.

Below is a review of some of the body worn-cameras, in-car cruiser videos and other videos collected during this investigation. This report detailed was/is reflected on the video/audios and summarized. These details are only portions for the purpose of this report and it is recommended the videos be viewed in their entirety.

London Police Officer Mike Orahood's body-worn camera video captured the following:

- 0057 hours – Orahood conducted a traffic stop on a Dodge Caravan and made contact with the occupants from the passenger side of the vehicle. The occupants, Rodney (driver) and Elaine Helman (passenger) provided false information about their identity.
- 0102 hours – As Orahood stepped back toward his patrol vehicle, Rodney Helman revved the engine and fled from the traffic stop.
- 0106 hours – The vehicle entered the Travel America truck stop on US 42 followed by Orahood, both Rodney and Elaine both exit the Caravan and run from into the parking lot. A foot pursuit ensued through the parking lot and Orahood is heard as he yelled

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- "gun".
- 0123 hours – Orahoad assisted other officers with the deployment of stop sticks to the rear of the stationary semi-truck.

Note: The Travel America (TA) video captured Sergeant Orahoad and Helmans arriving into the parking lot of the TA. When running from Orahoad, Rodney Helman fell onto the payment and was assisted to his feet by Elaine Helman. Both Rodney and Elaine fled towards stationary semi-trucks in the side portion of the TA. At 0128 hours, the semi-truck driven by Rodney Helman left the area and struck a London Police vehicle while exiting the parking lot onto US 42.

OSHP (non SRT) Trooper Brian Garloch's in-car camera captured the following:

- 0158 hours – The semi-truck traveled on I-70 west in the east bound lane.
- 0212 hours – The semi-truck traveled east on I-70.
- 0214 hours – While Garloch attempted to block the on ramp to SR 72, the semi-truck struck Garloch's patrol vehicle, which disabled the vehicle.

OSHP (SRT) Lieutenant Bryan Mangin's body-worn camera captured the following:

- 0256 hours – Mangin arrived as the pursuit concluded on the Dayton International Airport access road (Montgomery County).
- 0257 hours – Commands by officers to exit the semi-truck are heard.
- 0312 hours – Mangin relocated the BEAR to a position parallel to the driver's side (west) of the semi-truck. Mangin utilized the PA system for Rodney Helman to exit the semi-truck. Previously, Mangin was provided Rodney Helman's information from the London Police along with intel that a hostage and additional persons were inside the semi-truck.
- 0314 hours – Rodney Helman displays a hand written note for officers to view, which indicated a hostage inside the semi-truck. Additionally, a hand written request for Mountain Dew and cigarettes.
- 0324 hours – Mangin established contact and began negotiations with Rodney Helman via cellular telephone.
- 0420 hours – Montgomery County Detective and hostage negotiator Melanie Phelps-Powers arrived in the BEAR to assume negotiations.
- 0529 hours – Mangin informed OSHP Lt. Seth Douthitt (SRT), who had arrived on scene, Rodney Helman displayed a handgun.
- 0537 hours – Mangin ordered the air lines cut to the semi-truck to restrict its mobility.
- 0727 hours – Mangin verbalized via the radio he had control followed by, "assault...assault...assault".
- 0727 hours – Mangin, Trooper Burgos and Sergeant Erik Lofland approached the passenger side of the semi-truck. Mangin possessed/maintained the ballistic shield while Burgos stepped up into the passenger window supported by Lofland. Burgos yelled repeatedly show your hands then indicated a he's got a gun and jumped down from the semi's window.
- 0727 hours – Mangin verbalized if they did not have anything we can back up. Trooper [REDACTED] fires a pistol in the direction of the semi-trucks passenger window.
- 0728 hours – Burgos informed SRT members, "the gun came out". Mangin deployed a gas canister into the passenger window of the semi-truck.

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- 0728 hours – The hostage exited from the passenger side of the semi-truck.
- 0729 hours – Mangin verbalized if there are no more hostages, "this is a barricade". An impact of a fired round is heard followed by Mangin asking, "who's shooting". SRT personnel withdraw to positions of cover to the rear of the semi-truck.
- 0734 hours – Mangin continued with PA announcements to show their hands.
- 0747 hours – Mangin entered the driver's side of the semi-truck and assisted with extracting Elaine Helman from the semi.

OSHP (SRT) Lt. Seth Douthitt body-worn camera captured the following:

- 0536 hours – Douthitt arrived on scene and was briefed by Lt. Mangin.
- 0727 hours – Douthitt deployed two distraction devices (Flashbangs) to the front of the semi-truck. Gunfire erupted and Trooper ██████ discharged his rifle into the front of the semi. Rifle impact holes are observed on the front semi windshield.
- 0727 hours – A cease fire is heard.
- 0728 hours – Mangin deployed gas into the passenger side of the semi. Troopers shouted commands to exit the semi.
- 0728 hours – The hostage exited the semi's passenger side and was directed to the rear.
- 0729 hours – A round impacted the BEAR.
- 0750 hours – Rodney and Elaine Helman are on the pavement receiving life saving efforts.

OSHP (SRT) Trooper ██████'s body-worn camera captured the following:

- 0727 hours – ██████ approached with Trooper Robinson (ballistic shield) and broke out the driver's window of the semi.
- 0727 hours – ██████ moved to the passenger side while Trooper Burgos was elevated the level of the passenger window.
- 0727 hours – Burgos shouted gun and stated he pointed the gun at me. From inside the cab of the semi, Rodney Helman pointed and discharged a handgun in the direction of troopers. ██████ discharged his service weapon while he moved clockwise around (west) passenger side of the semi then backward (south).
- 0729 hours – Round impacted the BEAR Lt. Mangin asked, "Who's shooting?"
- 0741 hours – ██████ retrieved a ladder to access a passenger side window (broken out by Lt. Douthitt) to view the interior of the sleeper cab.
- 0740 hours – While observing from the elevated passenger side window, ██████ repeatedly ordered Elaine Helman to show her hands.
- 0747 hours – Elaine Helman is extracted from the passenger side of the semi and placed on the pavement. ██████ assist with life saving efforts on Elaine.

OSHP (SRT) Trooper ██████'s body-worn camera captured the following:

- 0727 hours – ██████ armed with a rifle approached the driver's side of the semi with Troopers ██████ and Matt Robinson. ██████ broke the the driver's side window while Robinson held the ballistic shield.
- 0727 hours – Trooper Burgos repeatedly yelled "hands...show your hands". ██████'s

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heard fired his handgun into the passenger area of the semi. From the northeast front corner of the semi, ██████ discharged his rifle multiple times in two separate volleys while he moved east to west into the front driver's side windshield of the semi.

- 0728 hours – The hostage exited the passenger side of the semi.
- 0729 hours – Captain Tracy informed ██████ and other troopers that Rodney Helman fired the handgun out from the window.
- 0730 hours – ██████ relocated to the passenger side interior of the BEAR.
- 0733 hours – From the passenger side interior of the BEAR, Lt. Douthitt deployed a gas canister into the driver's side window of the semi.
- 0745 hours – Douthitt removed Rodney Helman from the passenger side of the semi assisted by ██████ Helman was placed on his stomach and handcuffed.

OSHP (SRT) Trooper Hector Burgos's body-worn camera captured the following:

- 0726 hours – The passenger side window of the semi is broken out by Trooper Erik Lofland and Lt. Mangin removed a curtain that had been placed to conceal the interior of the semi. Burgos stepped up into the cab and shouted commands to show their hands with his service weapon pointed into the opening of the cab.
- 0726 hours – Burgos verbalized, "He's got a gun...gun...gun, he just pointed it at me" as he stepped down.
- 0727 hours – Round(s) from from the interior of the semi followed by Trooper ██████ discharging his service weapon multiple times into the passenger area of the semi.

OSHP (SRT) Trooper ██████'s body-worn camera captured the following:

- At 0348 hours – Trooper ██████ and Sergeant Colbert (non SRT) maintain a position on an embankment east of the semi truck.
- 0727 hours – ██████ discharged his rifle.
- 0729 hours – ██████ after he changed positions, discharged his rifle a second time.
- 0729 hours – ██████ verbalized, "he's [Rodney Helman] pointing to gun out the door again, I could see the gun come out".

Note: The Warner truck video, which has no audio or interior video captured the semi-truck leaving the Travel America when it struck a London Police vehicle. The video captured the entire route taken by the semi-truck operated by Rodney Helman. During the critical incident, the video captured two distraction devices deployed by Lt. Douthitt and shots fired by ██████ into the front windshield in the separate volleys.

Additionally, the OSHP aviation video was examined by Special Agent Steve Seitzman from which sub-clips have be processed. The sub-clips provide still images of certain events with greater clarity and are made part of the permeant case file.

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