



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



2022-1472

Officer Involved Critical Incident – 2793 Waterpark Drive, Mason,  
OH (L)

**Investigative Activity:** Interview with Officer  
**Involves:** Josh Emmel (W)  
**Date of Activity:** 07/13/2022  
**Activity Location:** Warren County Sheriff's Office – Business – 822 Memorial Drive ,  
Lebanon, OH 45036, Warren County  
**Author:** SA Douglas Eveslage, #66

**Narrative:**

On July 13, 2022, Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) Special Agent (SA) Doug Eveslage interviewed Warren County Tactical Response Team member Josh Emmel (Emmel) regarding his involvement with an Officer-Involved Critical Incident (OICI) under BCI investigation. Emmel, a fulltime City of Springboro police officer, was alerted to the SWAT callout during the afternoon of July 11, 2022.

In the early morning of July 12, 2022, the OICI occurred at the Baymont Inn at 2793 Water Park Road, Mason, Ohio. The Tactical Response Team was contacted by the Mason Police Department when an escaped inmate from an area detention facility took a female hostage in room #310. A Tactical Response Team member shot and killed the involved individual, Thomas Cromwell, after they breached the hotel door. The details below summarized the pertinent portions of the recorded interview with Emmel and were not taken verbatim unless noted by quotations.

The interview began at 1340 hours. Attorney Joe Hegedus represented Emmel for the interview. Emmel stated that he picked up a SWAT vehicle and then went to the Baymont Inn and made contact with Commander Trout of the Tactical Response Team and his position was to "stage near the door" of room #310, in case they had to make an emergency entry. Emmel and the Warren County Tactical Response Team were relieved by the Hamilton County Police Association SWAT Team for several hours.

Warren County's Tactical Response Team went back to the incident location and proceeded to finalize their operational plan to make entry into room #310 and rescue the female hostage. Emmel stated that his team learned that there was a Facebook video of Cromwell holding a knife threatening the life of the female hostage, so the decision was made to attempt her rescue.

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During the hostage rescue operation, Emmel was the second person in the "stack" assigned to make entry into room #310 after Officer Chris Keene (Keene), who was the first person assigned to enter. Emmel explained that as Keene entered room #310, Emmel cleared the bathroom inside room #310 and then continued to clear the hotel room with Keene. At that point Emmel stated he saw "the male suspect, his eyes were open wide, he was yelling something but I don't remember exactly what he was saying." Emmel stated, "I saw the male subject or suspect, he had a knife in his hand and it was to the female's throat. I can't recall what hand it was, but I could tell it was his hand. Um, the way I perceived it was that he is extremely agitated, his muscles were tensed up, like he was extremely agitated and serious and his muscles were tensed up." After viewing this, Emmel said "I brought my gun up, placed my optic on his forehead, as I did that, I heard a shot from Officer Keene and I saw the subject go down, and the hostage go down with him." Emmel said that Keene and he ordered the female hostage to "run out of the room and someone took custody of her." Emmel explained that Keene and he cleared the rest of the room as another team member rendered first aid to Thomas Cromwell.

SA Eveslage asked Emmel to describe the positions of the hostage taker and hostage when he saw them, and Emmel stated "they were sitting on the bed...as we were looking at it, the hostage's head was to the right and the hostage taker's head was to the left." SA Eveslage asked to describe their positions further, and Emmel described the "hostage taker" having his other arm, without the knife, "wrapped around her (the hostage), secured, so she couldn't get away." SA Eveslage asked Emmel about when he lowered his rifle and placed the optic on Cromwell, was his intention to stop the threat, and Emmel answered, "yes." SA Eveslage asked if there were any other options besides using deadly force, and Emmel answered "there was no other option." SA Eveslage asked if Emmel felt that the female hostage's life was in danger, and Emmel answered "absolutely."

SA Eveslage asked Emmel if there is anything else he wanted to explain about OICI, and Emmel added that Cromwell seemed very angry, "it was a life or death situation, it was necessary to eliminate the threat for her sake, her life."

This interview was concluded at approximately 1350 hours. This interview was audio recorded. See attachment #01 for further details.

#### **Attachments:**

Attachment # 01: 2022-07-13 / Ofc. Josh Emmel Interview

# **Exhibit 1**

**Included as a separate file.**