



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:** Interview with Officer, Interview with Witness  
**Involves:** Chris N Adkins (W)  
**Date of Activity:** 12/20/2022  
**Activity Location:** Adkins, Chris N – Business – 233 West Center Street, Marion, OH 43302, Marion County  
**Author:** SA Christopher Hamberg, #69

**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 LaRue, in Marion County, OH. The OICI occurred when the Marion County SWAT Team (MCST) [which encompasses deputies from the Marion County Sheriff's Office, along with police officers from the Marion Ohio Police Department] came in contact with Travis Hellinger (Hellinger) as the MCST was attempting to execute a search warrant at the Hellinger residence. Hellinger succumbed to his injuries.

On December 20, 2022, BCI Special Agents (SA) Chris Hamberg (Hamberg) and Josh Rammel (Rammel) interviewed Major Chris Adkins (Adkins) of the Marion Police Department. The interview took place in an interview room at the Marion Police Department. The interview was digitally recorded. The audio file is attached to the case file.

The purpose of the interview was to ascertain what Major Adkins may have witnessed at the scene of the of the OICI.

SA Hamberg asked Major Adkins to describe how the events unfolded and what he witnessed in regard to the OICI. Major Adkins stated he's in charge of both their drug task force unit and the criminal investigations section of the police department. Major Adkins stated he was approached by Lieutenant Ralston last week in requesting the assistance of the MCST in conducting a search warrant on the Hellinger residence. Major Adkins added he was familiar with Hellinger and had dealt with him in the past.

Agents were told that since the MCST has officers from both the Marion Police Department and the Marion County Sheriff's Office, the MCST is overseen by the Drug Task Force (Marion Metro Drug Enforcement Unit "MARMET") "board" (included the following: Marion County Sheriff, Marion Police Chief and the Marion County Prosecutor). Major Adkins added that in

This document is the property of the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation and is confidential in nature. Neither the document nor its contents are to be disseminated outside your agency except as provided by law – a statute, an administrative rule, or any rule of procedure.

order for the MCST to be utilized, one of the board members listed above, or one of their designees, would have to authorize permission for the MCST to be utilized. Major Adkins advised that approval was granted by the MCST board.

Major Adkins advised that Lieutenant Mike Wheeler is in charge of the MCST and advised Major Adkins that the search warrant had been approved by Marion County Prosecutor Ray Grogan on December 19 and was signed by the Judge. Major Adkins stated that a briefing had taken place around 0415 hours, on December 20, 2022. Agents were told that that MCST requested the assistance of the Delaware Tactical Unit (DTU), as there were two locations on the Hellinger property that needed to be searched; and the past threats that Hellinger made toward law enforcement (that came from a confidential Informant (CI)), which made the search warrant a more "high risk" operation.

Major Akins stated he and Captain Ken Rittenour from the sheriff's office were positioned in his vehicle and they were a few blocks away from the scene, when they overheard radio traffic that Hellinger may have located the drone that MCST was utilizing. Major Adkins added that Hellinger was walking on the railroad tracks with a flashlight. Major Adkins stated he pulled his vehicle off the side of the road of Section Street, which would have been to the north of the railroad tracks; when he faced the front of his vehicle with his headlights in the direction of the railroad tracks. Major Akins stated that he observed the silhouette of Hellinger walking backwards on the railroad tracks, as he (Hellinger) was holding a flashlight and pointing it around him. Major Adkins added that there were numerous members of the MCST that were approaching Hellinger on the railroad tracks.

Major Adkins stated that MCST was giving verbal commands to Hellinger, telling him that he (Hellinger) was under arrest and needed to stop; when some of Hellinger's responses were [leave me alone; why are you here; and something about taxes]. Major Adkins added that when Hellinger got to the east side of Section Street on the railroad tracks, Hellinger was shining his flashlight toward him, as they were to the north of the railroad tracks. Major Adkins stated, at this time there were discussion of the officers deploying the K-9 on Hellinger and warning Hellinger they were going to deploy the K-9; when Hellinger continued walking backwards in the westbound direction.

Major Adkins stated that after Hellinger crossed over Section Street, the K-9 was deployed and it appeared the K-9 may have gotten Hellinger, when Hellinger fired a couple of shots toward the K-9 and officers; at which time, the K-9 retreated and the MCST discharged their firearms toward Hellinger.

SA Hamberg asked Major Adkins if he had an approximate location Hellinger was at when Hellinger began firing his gun. Major Akins stated approximately 70 to 80 feet west of the crossing gate on the railroad tracks. Major Adkins advised, right after the shooting incident took place, he ran up to the scene and observed the officers giving verbal commands to Hellinger, while medical aid was being rendered to Hellinger by the officers. Major Adkins added that they checked out the K-9 by removing his vest to ascertain if the K-9 was struck by a bullet; and after they verified the K-9 was not injured, he was placed in Major Adkins' unmarked vehicle.

Major Adkins stated that Lieutenant [REDACTED] [REDACTED] stated he discharged his weapon two

This document is the property of the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation and is confidential in nature. Neither the document nor its contents are to be disseminated outside your agency except as provided by law – a statute, an administrative rule, or any rule of procedure.

times, when Major Adkins turned off [REDACTED]'s body worn camera (BWC) and secured [REDACTED]'s weapon (rifle) and placed it in his vehicle. Major Adkins stated he did not ask the officers any questions but secured the following officers weapons that had been discharged in the incident: [REDACTED] (AR-15), no BWC; [REDACTED] (handgun), no BWC; [REDACTED] (AR-15); [REDACTED] (shotgun, used "Bean Bag") [It should be noted that cartridge never ejected from the shotgun], and BWC; [REDACTED] (AR-15); [REDACTED] (AR-15) and BWC. Major Adkins added that he only took the BWC from the city officers, as the deputies utilized a different camera system and the cameras were affixed to their helmets.

Agents were told that most of the officers provided their own AR-15 rifles, as long as they qualified and the weapon was approved by the department, but there could be a few departmental issued weapons on the MCST.

Major Adkins had no additional information to share on the incident.

This report only summarizes the information deemed by the author to be of the most relevance to the investigation and does not purport to contain all questions and answers from the audio recording. Further, this report was placed in a chronology to aid the reader's overall understanding of the information elicited during the interview and may not be reflective of the actual sequencing of questions or responses. It is suggested that the reader refer to the audio recording in its entirety.

**Attachments:**

Attachment # 01: Interview with Chris Adkins

This document is the property of the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation and is confidential in nature. Neither the document nor its contents are to be disseminated outside your agency except as provided by law – a statute, an administrative rule, or any rule of procedure.