



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



2022-0826

Officer-Involved Critical Incident - W. 46th Street, between Collins Blvd. and Valley View Blvd.

Investigative Activity: APD Lt. [REDACTED] Body Camera Review
Activity Date: 5/26/2022
Activity Location: Area of 46th Street, Ashtabula, Ohio
Authoring Agent: SA Jon Lieber #50

Narrative:

On Wednesday, April 27, 2022, Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) Special Agent (SA) Jon Lieber (Lieber) received video footage from the Ashtabula Police Department (APD). SA Lieber was informed that the video contained footage from the body camera worn by Lieutenant (Lt.) [REDACTED] ([REDACTED]), badge [REDACTED]

SA Lieber reviewed the video recordings and noted the following:

The video is 1 hour 12 minutes and 20 seconds in duration. The date stamp at the beginning of the video is 04/13/2022, at 00:16:15 hours.

The video begins showing [REDACTED] exiting his patrol vehicle. [REDACTED] appears to have a shotgun slung over his chest. [REDACTED] begins to walk toward the 46th Street bridge (Also known as the Spring Street bridge). Note that no audio can be heard until 00:16:46. At 00:18:15, radio traffic can be heard stating that the subject is on the bridge and if he sees the police, he will shoot. At 00:19:41, [REDACTED] radios dispatch and asks the name of the subject. Dispatch responds that the name of the subject is David Ward (Ward). At 00:19:49, [REDACTED] yells, "David it's the police department, can I talk to you?" It should be noted that nothing can be seen on the body-camera video. The image appears black and it is possible that something is obstructing the camera lens.

At 00:20:57, [REDACTED] yells, "David it's the police department. I just want to talk to you." At 00:22:03, [REDACTED] tells Officer Brandon Zukoski (Zukoski) that he is going to grab his 308 (.308 caliber scoped rifle) so that he can see what Ward is doing. [REDACTED] then walks back to his patrol vehicle and drives it to the bridge. [REDACTED] retrieves his rifle from the trunk of his patrol vehicle and walks toward the sidewalk area of the bridge.



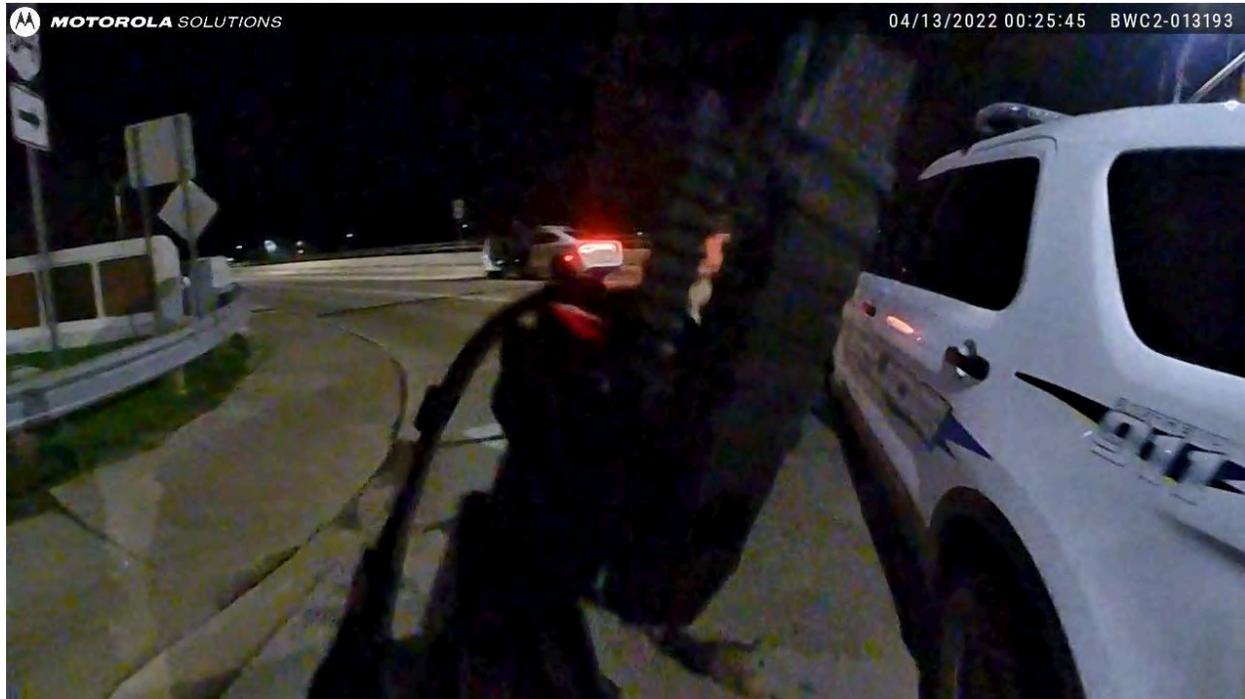
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See screenshot below taken at 00:25:45, showing [REDACTED] walking toward the sidewalk with his rifle.



[REDACTED] then takes a prone position on the sidewalk. At 00:27:07, [REDACTED] says that it is too dark for him to see. At 00:27:27, [REDACTED] says, "I don't see a 40 on him." Note that a code 40 is the code used for "gun." [REDACTED] says that it looks like he has a cell phone. At 00:27:57, [REDACTED] asks dispatch to call Ward back. Dispatch advises that they are on the phone with Ward now. At 00:28:22, [REDACTED] says, "Yeah I see, I see it now." Zukoski asks, "A gun?" [REDACTED] says, "Yeah."

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See screenshot below showing the camera view, while [REDACTED] is in a prone position behind his rifle. Note that the camera is pointing toward the ground.



At 00:28:52, [REDACTED] advises dispatch to inform Ward that they just want to talk to him. Dispatch replies, "I already advised. He said negative. He's refusing to put the 40 down." At 00:29:26, Officer Sheri Allen (Allen), badge P8, radios to dispatch asking if they can forward the call with Ward to her cell phone. Dispatch advises that they can do that. At 00:29:57, [REDACTED] tells Zukoski to keep an eye on Ward and that he'll be right back. While [REDACTED] is retrieving something from his truck, he contacts Lt. William Parkomaki (Parkomaki), via cell phone. [REDACTED] advises Parkomaki that they have a suicidal male with a shotgun on the Spring Street bridge and that he says he is going to shoot the first cop he sees. He also said that he scoped the subject and he could see the gun and that they have the bridge blocked off at both ends.

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The screenshot below was taken as [REDACTED] walks back to his rifle. Note the location of the rifle in the lower left portion of the image.



At 00:32:03, Zukoski asks, “What did you range that at 100 yards?” [REDACTED] says that he doesn’t know.



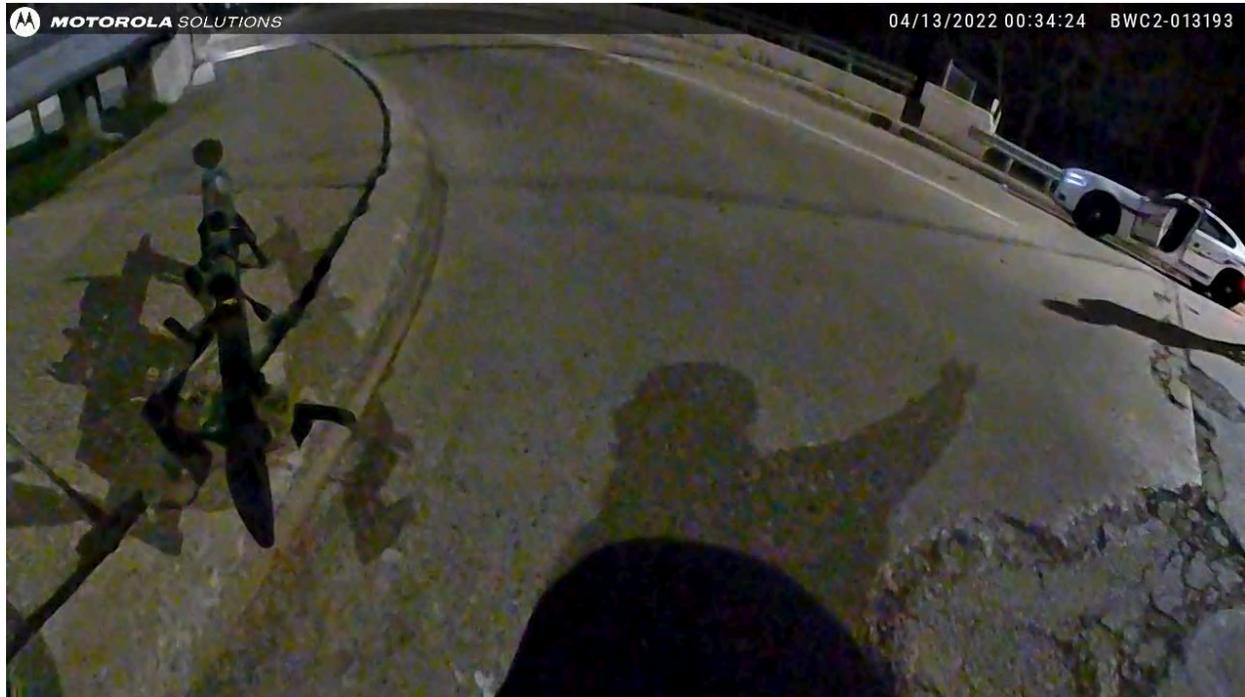
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See screenshot below showing the new location of Zukoski's patrol vehicle after he backed up to provide a better barrier to block off the bridge from vehicular traffic.



At 00:34:41, ██████ advises Parkomaki that Ward is leaning against the bridge smoking a cigarette. He advises that he tried to get ahold of Allen but she is not answering her phone. At 00:36:00, ██████ radios Officer Cody Caruso (Caruso), badge P25, and asks if Allen is on the phone with Ward. Caruso responds, "I believe so." At 00:40:00, someone radios to dispatch to have the fire department stage on Collins Boulevard by the light. At 00:41:12, Zukoski tells ██████ that Allen is on the phone with Ward and Allen doesn't want Ward to hear the radio. At 00:42:36, ██████ appears to be trying to use a rangefinder.



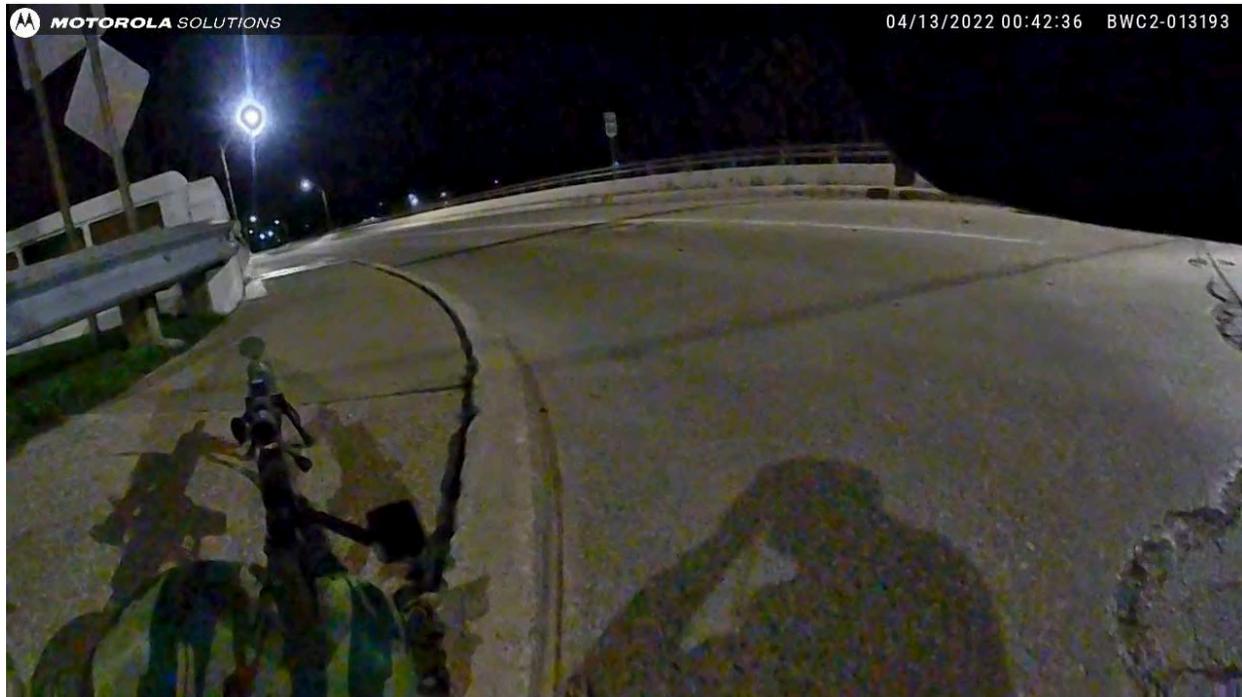
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The screenshot below shows a view across the bridge, as [REDACTED] is on his knees using the rangefinder.



At 00:44:33, Zukoski tells [REDACTED] "Sheri says he's drunk." Note that Sheri is Officer Sheri Allen. At 00:48:01, dispatch advises [REDACTED] that the Highway Patrol has one trooper en route. At 00:48:42, [REDACTED] tells someone that Ward is shaking back and forth and he still has the gun in his left hand. At 00:52:31, [REDACTED] says, "Alright, he's walking toward us." At 00:52:35, Zukoski says, "What do you got boss?" [REDACTED] replies, "He's walking toward us." At 00:52:47, [REDACTED] says, "He stopped." At 00:52:48, Zukoski tells [REDACTED] "Sheri says that he wants, he is wanting suicide by cop."

At 00:56:59, [REDACTED] asks dispatch to check to see if they have any relatives or family members of Ward that they can contact. At 00:57:50, Zukoski says that Ward will calm down and then start flipping out again. At 01:03:09, [REDACTED] tells someone on the phone (likely Parkomaki) that Allen is still talking with Ward. [REDACTED] states that Ward is highly intoxicated, wants suicide by cop, that Ward will be calm and talk with Allen and then he'll get excited and start rambling. [REDACTED] also says that Ward has walked toward them with the shotgun in one hand and a cell phone in the other hand. The caller asks [REDACTED] if he can tell if it is a real shotgun.

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██████████ said that he has the best eyes on it and from what he can see, it is a real shotgun. ██████████ states that using the closest pole, he lasered the distance at 186 yards.

At 01:05:52, Allen radios that Ward hung up. At 01:06:56, ██████████ radios dispatch and advises that Ward is yelling something at them but he can't tell what is being said. At 01:08:07, dispatch radios and informs Allen that they are continuing to try to call Ward but he is not answering his phone. Allen replies and tells dispatch to keep trying to call him. At 01:08:51, dispatch advises Allen that they have Ward on the phone and they are going to send the call to her. At 01:12:21, Zukoski states, "She said he is talking about walking to you guys and forcing you to shoot him."

At 01:14:00, ██████████ says, "Alright he's walking." Zukoski responds, "I got it boss." At 01:14:59, ██████████ says, "Put the gun down" (Indicating that Ward put the gun down). Zukoski replies, "Yep got it." ██████████ continues, "Smoking one hand and talking with the other." Zukoski asks, "Does he got the phone in the right hand?" ██████████ replies, "Yeah." At 01:16:07, ██████████ says, "That's Will (Lt. William Parkomaki) coming up on us." At 01:18:45, Zukoski's K-9 begins barking. At 01:19:21, ██████████ says, "Will he's set the gun down for right now. It's still at his right side, um I don't know if he's, I don't think Sheri is talking to him anymore but he was on the phone with her and he set it down so he could have a cigarette." Zukoski says, "He says he sees us and the trooper." Parkomaki tells ██████████ to get his bean bag gun out in case Ward comes toward them. ██████████ goes to his vehicle and retrieves a shotgun with an orange color stock and forend from the trunk. Parkomaki tells ██████████ that he is going to go to the west side of the bridge. Gillepsie tells Parkomaki that his Fitbit was telling him that his heartrate was over 120. ██████████ then returns to a prone position behind his rifle.

At 01:21:45, Zukoski says, "He's looking at us." ██████████ responds, "Yeah, he's been doing that off and on." At 01:22:32, dispatch advises ██████████ that they have Ward's father on the phone. At 01:22:47, ██████████ says, "Shit. He's moving toward us. (Unintelligible) he's walking back toward us." At 01:23:13, Zukoski says, "He's still leaning up against the..." ██████████ radios, "Ok, he set the gun down for now but he stopped." At 01:23:39, ██████████ says, "Picked it back up he's walking toward us some more." Zukoski responds, "Yep, got ya covered."

At 01:23:57, ██████████ yells, "Drop the gun, drop the gun, drop the gun, drop it, drop the gun, drop it." At 01:24:25, Zukoski yells, "Police stop." At 01:24:30, ██████████ yells, "Put your hands up." At 01:24:39, ██████████ yells, "We just want to talk to you. Put your hands up and walk away from the gun." At 01:24:55, ██████████ yells, "We don't have to do anything, you just drop the gun walk away." At 01:25:11, ██████████ yells, "We can talk this through I just need you to walk away from on the gun." At 01:25:22, ██████████ yells, "Drop the gun." At 01:25:27, a gunshot can be heard and movement, consistent with ██████████ firing his rifle, can be seen on the body camera.

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The screenshot below shows what the camera recorded at the time the shot is fired.



At 01:25:32, [REDACTED] says, "Fuckin damn you." [REDACTED] then radios dispatch and advises that shots have been fired and that the subject is down. Radio traffic from other officers can be heard. At 01:26:30, [REDACTED] stands up. [REDACTED] and Zukoski remain at the east end of the bridge, while officers approach Ward from the west side.

The video ends at 01:28:35.

The DVD containing the video footage was submitted to the physical BCI case file as item A.