



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



2022-1115
Officer Involved Critical Incident – SR 339 near mile marker 3,
Belpre (L)

Investigative Activity: Interview with Officer
Involves: Officer Jeremy Emerick (W)
Date of Activity: 06/21/2022
Activity Location: Athens Police Department – 11 N College Street , Athens, OH
45701, Athens County
Author: SA Shane R. Hanshaw, #102

Narrative:

On Tuesday, June 21, 2022, at 1107 hours, Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) Special Agent (SA) Shane Hanshaw (Hanshaw) and SA James Poole (Poole) interviewed Athens Police Department (APD) Officer Jeremy Emerick (Emerick) relative to the Officer-Involved Critical Incident (OICI) that occurred on Thursday, May 19, 2022. The interview took place at the Athens Police Department located at 11 North College Street in Athens, Ohio. The purpose of the interview was to obtain all relevant information regarding the activities that occurred on State Route 339 in Washington County. Prior to conducting the interview, SA Hanshaw advised Officer Emerick that the investigation was a criminal investigation. The interview was audio recorded.

Officer Emerick was identified as being a police officer who witnessed and/or had some level of involvement in the May 19, 2022, officer-involved shooting which occurred in the area of State Route 339 in Washington County, Ohio. Reportedly, Officer Emerick did not discharge a firearm during the course of 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 interview. Further, this report was placed in a chronology to aid the reader's overall understanding of the information obtained during the interview and may not be reflective of the actual sequencing of questions. It is suggested that the full recording be reviewed to clarify any content or contextual questions regarding the information from the interview.

It is important to know that Devon Taylor, the driver of the vehicle being pursued by

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Deputy ██████ struck another vehicle prior to exiting the right side of State Route 339. At the time of the incident, Officer Emerick did not personally know Deputy ██████

Officer Emerick works as an Investigator for the Athens Police Department. Officer Emerick lives on State Route 339 in Washington County and was off duty on May 19, 2022, when the OICI occurred. During the incident, Officer Emerick was not dressed in traditional police attire because he was sleeping at his residence at the time of the incident. Officer Emerick did not operate a police vehicle at the time of the incident because he was in close proximity to the incident and traveled to the incident location on foot.

At the onset of the interview, Officer Emerick stated he was awakened at approximately 0430 hours by what he thought was a scream. Officer Emerick said he and his wife checked on their children and his mother-in-law, and all appeared to be fine. Officer Emerick said he opened his front door and saw a car on the roadway with its headlights pointed toward his house. It was later learned that this particular vehicle was struck by the vehicle being operated by Devon Taylor. Officer Emerick said he looked to his left and saw blue lights from a police cruiser further down the roadway. Officer Emerick said it was not unusual to see a crash on the roadway, but it was unusual to see a police vehicle there that soon.

Officer Emerick said he opened his screen door and stepped out on the porch. At that point he began to hear gunfire. Officer Emerick stated he was unsure how many shots were fired. Officer Emerick said he returned to his residence and told his wife to take the kids to the basement. Officer Emerick said at that point he thought the police officer was being fired at.

Officer Emerick said he put on an Athens City Police tee shirt, shoes, and retrieved his duty weapon. As he was leaving his residence, he saw a female standing on the roadway near the crashed vehicle. Officer Emerick stated he assumed the female was on the phone with 911 as he heard female say the person involved in the crash was okay.

After hearing that the driver of the vehicle was okay, Officer Emerick ran down State Route 339 to Deputy ██████ location. As he approached Deputy ██████ location, Officer Emerick said a vehicle stopped and he could hear Deputy ██████ tell the driver of the vehicle to continue on because there had been a shooting. Deputy ██████ also told the driver that the guy has a gun. Officer Emerick said he thought he also heard Deputy ██████ say he had been shot at.

Officer Emerick said as he approached the officer he identified himself as a police officer and said he was there to help. Officer Emerick said he was being blinded by the blue lights and as he got closer he was able to determine that it was a deputy sheriff. Officer Emerick said he did not know Deputy ██████

After identifying himself to Deputy ██████ Officer Emerick said he would help in any way he could, but he was not wearing a vest. While maintaining cover behind Deputy ██████'s vehicle, Officer Emerick said Deputy ██████ opened the trunk of his vehicle and told Officer Emerick to put his tactical vest on.

Officer Emerick said he and Deputy ██████ waited behind his vehicle while observing the "suspect" vehicle. Officer Emerick said the side airbags were deployed on the observed vehicle. Officer Emerick said Deputy ██████ told him that the driver of the vehicle had a gun. During this time, Deputy ██████ was on his radio advising responding units that they needed to get traffic shut down.

Officer Emerick said the first responding agency to arrive at the scene was Belpre Police Department. Upon arrival, Officer Emerick said Belpre Police Department shut down road traffic that was traveling north bound. Officer Emerick said the Belpre Officer parked his vehicle on State Route 339 and approached the scene on foot, armed with a shotgun.

Shortly after the Belpre officer arrived, Officer Emerick said Deputy McConnell arrived at the scene. Officer Emerick was unaware of Deputy McConnell's rank. Officer Emerick said Deputy McConnell pulled to a location behind Deputy ██████'s vehicle. Officer Emerick said Deputy ██████ and Deputy McConnell discussed the situation in regard to Special Response Team (SRT) responding to the scene and what equipment would be needed.

Officer Emerick said while he was on scene, he never saw the "suspect" or vehicle move. Officer Emerick said the only way to see inside of the vehicle was through the windshield because the side airbags were down and the rear window was fogged up.

Officer Emerick said during this period of time, verbal commands were being given to the driver; however, the driver did not respond. Officer Emerick said eventually a three-man SRT arrived at the scene and approached the vehicle using a shield as cover. As the SRT approached the vehicle, they broke the driver side door glass and raised the airbag with an ASP baton. Officer Emerick said at no point did he approach the vehicle. Officer Emerick said eventually the SRT went to the passenger side of the vehicle and made entry. Officer Emerick said based on the reaction of the SRT officers, he could tell that the "suspect" was deceased.

At that point, Officer Emerick said he returned the tactical vest to Deputy ██████ gave his information to the chief deputy and left the scene. Officer Emerick said as he was leaving, he was introduced to the Deputy ██████ Officer Emerick said at that point, Deputy ██████ was crying because he had been notified that the driver of the vehicle was deceased.

When asked, Officer Emerick said he never had contact with the driver of the vehicle.

Officer Emerick said he was never closer to the vehicle, than the rear of Deputy [REDACTED]'s police vehicle. Officer Emerick said he did not and at no time, discharge his firearm while on scene.

At approximately 1122 hours, SA Hanshaw and SA Poole concluded the interview with Officer Emerick.

The interview was audio recorded. The audio recording was attached to this report. Please see the attachments for further details.

Attachments:

Attachment # 01: Recorded Interview with Officer Emerick