



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



2025-0151

Officer Involved Critical Incident - 350 South Arch Avenue,
Alliance, Ohio 44601, Stark County

Investigative Activity: Interview of Witness Officer Conducted
Involves: Officer Paul Vesco
Activity Date: 02/03/2025
Activity Location: Alliance Police Department, 470 E. Market Street,
Alliance, OH 44601
Authoring Agent: SA Nicholas Valente

Narrative:

On Monday, February 3, 2025, at 1233 hours, Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) Special Agent (SA) Nick Valente (SA Valente) and SA Cory Momchilov (SA Momchilov) interviewed Alliance Police Department (APD) Officer Paul Vesco (Vesco), who was accompanied by his attorney, Daniel Chaffin, from the Ohio Patrolmen's Benevolent Association (OPBA). The interview took place at APD, 470 E. Market Street, Alliance, Ohio. The interview was audio and video recorded.

Officer Vesco read, stated he understood, and signed the BCI Criminal Investigation Notification form prior to being questioned.

Officer Vesco was identified as being a police officer who witnessed and/or had some level of involvement in the January 16, 2025, officer-involved shooting which occurred on the fifth-floor common hallway of the apartment building located at 350 South Arch Avenue, Alliance, Ohio. Reportedly, Officer Vesco did not discharge a firearm during the incident. The purpose of the interview was to obtain all relevant information of the incident known or observed by this officer.

Officer Vesco stated his radio call sign on January 16, 2025, was badge 272 or car 49. He has been employed by the APD for about 23 years. He has been a police officer for a total of approximately 27 years. During the incident, Officer Vesco wore his standard police uniform with a metal police badge affixed to it. He also wore an external ballistic vest and duty belt. He drove APD unit #49, a marked police cruiser with APD emblems and emergency lights. He considered himself to be well-represented as a police officer during the incident. Officer Vesco stated he was not under the influence of any substance that would impair his memory or judgment during the incident or during the interview with BCI.

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Officer Vesco believed he watched news stories that included a small portion of a body-worn camera (BWC) recording of the incident approximately four or five times.

When asked what information he received from dispatch or what led to his response to the location of the officer-involved shooting, Officer Vesco said (12:59 mark of recording) "I can tell you that the initial, how I was made aware of the situation was I had come off [REDACTED]. Now we're going into dayshift just before 7:30, I was sitting at my desk, um, getting ready to do some paperwork. Uh, [REDACTED] was to my left, and I hear him answer his cell phone and he's talking to his, um, [REDACTED]. And I catch something over, something about shooting. Well, he says [REDACTED] was in the, the, the rookies load up the cruisers. And um, as you log on, we have Real Time 911 inside our MDTs. So, [REDACTED] was loading up the cruiser, heard that come across to the 911 dispatchers of whether shots fired. I don't know exactly if it was shots fired, somebody's been shot. All I heard was the word shots fired. [REDACTED]s like, so [REDACTED] gets up, I get up, I don't remember where Patrolman Brown was at the time." Officer Vesco then located his BWC and responded to the scene. Officer Vesco arrived at the apartment building around the same time as Officer Brown (Officer Brown), [REDACTED] and [REDACTED].

The four officers rode in the apartment elevator together to the fifth floor. Officer Brown was first to exit, followed either by [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]. Officer Vesco himself was the last to exit the elevator. As the other officers exited the elevator, Officer Vesco's attention was focused on an elderly gentleman who was standing at the elevator doors. This elderly man told the officers that the subject was at the end of the hallway and had just shot the victim.

Officer Vesco continued, (8:11 mark of recording) "And as I'm getting, the last one off the elevator, I hear Brown say, 'Oh shit, he's got a gun.' And then Brown's giving orders to drop it, get on the ground. So, as I'm coming up online, um, Brown's to my left, um, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. And then I'm kind of like, it's not long enough, the hallway, to get all four of us across. So, I'm kind of like in the, in the back of it. And that's when, um, yelling commands for him to get down, drop it. Um, I could see like the, like a football field was the way I looked at it. I could see like a quarterback. I could see everything that was going on. Um, as I'm getting off the elevator, I could, as we're yelling this, you know, drop the gun, get off, he shoots the victim, the suspect shoots the victim at point blank. Um, and then that's when we're like, tell him to get down, drop it. Um, and

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that's when he failed to comply. And the, um, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], um, took shots at the suspect."

When asked to describe the positioning of the subject and victim when he looked down the hallway, Officer Vesco stated, (10:03 mark of recording) "So where the, um, so you go down the hallway and it's at the end of the hallway where the emergency fire doors are, the steel door. And then you have, at the end, you have an apartment to the left and you have the apartment to the right. If we're facing, if I'm facing down to where the suspect is, there's an apartment to the left, apartment to the right. But all the way down the corridor, you have apartments leading to that. But this was at the dead, I call it the dead end of the hallway. That's where the fire doors are. The emergency doors are the suspect would be to the right. And the victim was laying on the ground. Um, I could tell she was on her back at that point. I was more focused on the suspect, but I knew that there was a, uh, the victim was laying on the ground."

When asked, Officer Brown stated he was confident he observed the subject shoot the victim and recalled seeing the muzzle flash of the subject's gun after the subject shot the victim.

When asked if he observed the subject point the gun or fire at anyone else beside the victim, Officer Brown stated (11:55 mark of recording) "No, he still had it in his hand pointing at the victim." Officer Brown added he believed the subject was still pointing his pistol at the victim lying on the hallway floor when the officers began to shoot at the subject.

Officer Vesco stated the officer's gunfire towards the subject was very quick and lasted "less than a few seconds" (12:18 mark of recording). Once the officers stopped firing, Officer Vesco's view down the hallway was obstructed by the smoke created from the gunfire. Once the shooting stopped Officer Brown began to walk down the hallway towards the subject and victim. Officer Vesco followed behind Officer Brown as he approached the subject and victim.

Officer Vesco reported upon reaching the end of the hallway, (13:35 mark of recording) "I see the, um, female victim. Now I can tell she's on her back. Um, the, the male suspect was now on his back and now he had pretty much fallen over top of her. He was just in front of her now she was kind of behind him. Now he was in front of her, um, at which time I could see the pistol with the, the slide open laying on the ground. So, I wanted to make sure that the pistol was somewhat secure, that now we know the slide locked back. It's not, you know. Um, so I reached in my, um, cargo pockets, pulled out rubber gloves, checked for a pulse on the suspect, um, at which time Brown,

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uh, was trying to see if there was a pulse on the female victim. I immediately got on the radio and called for an ambulance, I believe once or twice. Um, I said, uh, we need a 46, or I might have even said ambulance. We said we need a 46 or an ambulance here asap. And I know I said it more than once, um, to get him there. Um, so then we just kind of locked down this crime scene to see. I could see that the male suspect was, um, deceased at that time."

When asked we he did not fire his weapon, Officer Vesco said (15:37 mark of recording) "Uh, due to my, uh, the hallway, like I said, we couldn't get everybody online and through my training and experience, number one, I'm not gonna shoot behind an officer just for the safety reasons, you know? We've all been through my training. I was on SRT and all this stuff. You just drilled in your head, you gotta get online to fire. I mean, and I would never shoot behind an officer's head or something like that, taking the chance of shooting them in the back of the head. And at the same time when the smoke was going off from the powder from the, uh, cartridges, I'm not gonna shoot blindly into a cloud of, that's the way I felt. It was more of a safety issue. And there was nowhere for me to get up online with those guys."

When asked what he thought was going to happen after the subject shot the victim, Officer Vesco said, (17: mark of recording) "I can tell you what I thought. What could happen next? Um, A, we have to protect her from getting shot again. B, he's gonna turn around and shoot us, at us, or C, an innocent person comes out of the apartments that has no idea what's going on and now he's in this whatever state of mind he's in and he decides to shoot a, um, an innocent civilian. So those were the three things that kind of played out in my mind very quickly."

When asked if he feared for his safety, the safety of the other officers, or the victim during the incident, Officer Vesco stated, (17:44 mark of recording) "Well, for the woman's safety, um, we don't know what condition she was in. I don't know if she was alive. I had to treat her like she's alive. I would never, you know, not protect somebody that's being a victim of, of being shot and basically executed in front of us. I mean, we're going to protect her first. Um, and I don't know what, like I stated, I don't know what his intentions were or is he gonna turn the gun on us next? Desperate people do desperate things. So, I don't, you know, we have to treat everything as the situation until we can make sure that the threat is no longer."

When asked if he observed any actions of the other involved officers he felt was inappropriate or potentially criminal in nature, Officer Vesco said (18:36 mark of recording) "No, sir."

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The interview concluded at approximately 1318 hours.

The audio recording of the interview was attached to this report. The signed BCI Criminal Investigation Notification form was also attached to this report. The video recording of the interview was saved to the evidence.com case file as part of Reference Item D.

References:

D - Video recorded officer interviews

Attachments:

1. Audio Interview of Officer Paul Vesco
2. Officer Paul Vesco Criminal Investigation Notification Form

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DAVE YOST
OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL



Bureau of Criminal Investigation
Office (330) 659-4600
Fax (330) 659-0681

Criminal Investigation Notification

1. This investigation is being conducted in order to determine whether any criminal laws have been violated on the part of those involved in this incident. Specifically, to collect facts and information to be provided to the prosecutor and/or grand jury in order for them to determine whether the conduct involved is authorized or prohibited by criminal statutes.
2. Your participation in this interview is voluntary and you may decline to answer or cease the interview at any time. You are entitled to have an attorney present if you wish.
3. The criminal investigation is separate from any internal, administrative investigation which your employer may or may not be independently conducting. You are not being compelled to give any statement or answer any questions. This is not a "Garrity" interview (where you could be required to answer).

Paul J. Verso

Printed Name of Interviewee

2/3/25 1350 hrs
Date / Time

Paul J. Verso

Signature of Interviewee

S/A Nick Valente #139

BCI Agent (Printed)

ph

BCI Agent (Signature)