



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



2022-1564
Officer Involved Critical Incident – 1132 Ashwood Drive, South
Charleston, OH (L)

Investigative Activity: Interview with Officer
Involves: Sgt. James Byron (W)
Date of Activity: 08/10/2022
Activity Location: Byron, Sgt. James – Business – 130 N Fountain Ave, Springfield, OH
45502, Clark County
Author: SA Kenneth J. Smith, #53

Narrative:

On July 24, 2022, the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) was requested to investigate an Officer-Involved Critical Incident (OICI) that took place at 1132 Ashwood Drive, South Charleston, Clark County. During the OICI, Deputy Matthew Yates was shot and killed by the involved subject, Cole White. This occurred after White had killed his mother, Jodie Arbuckle. Multiple agencies and SWAT teams responded and attempted multiple rescue efforts of Deputy Yates. During the standoff the mobile home caught fire and White was killed in the fire.

On August 10, 2022 at 1110 hours, BCI Special Agents Richard Ward (SA Ward) and Kenneth Smith (SA Smith) interviewed Springfield Police Sergeant James Byron (Sgt. Byron) regarding his involvement in the OICI. The interview was conducted at an off-site Springfield Police SWAT facility. The interview was recorded on a handheld digital recording device.

The details below summarize the pertinent portions of the recorded interview and are not a verbatim account. 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. It is suggested that the full audio recording be reviewed to clarify the content of the interview.

Sgt. Byron has been with the Springfield Police Department for 25 years. He is currently the Detective Sergeant in the Crimes Against Persons Section. He has been on the SWAT Team for about two and a half years. His role on the team is Team Leader.

On July 24, 2022, he was off duty at home and was called by Captain Michael Kranz and advised there was a deputy down. Sgt. Byron began making phone calls while the alert was put out and responded to the Springfield SWAT facility. He began making calls trying to get people, armor, and resources to the scene as efficiently as possible. Once a minimum number of operators

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.

were on site at the training facility, they loaded up the equipment trucks and responded the the scene. As he pulled up, he was trying to coordinate the arrival of the second MRAP at the scene and find a way to get Clark County's deputies pulled back from the trailer.

Sgt. Byron took a team in the MRAP to the rear of the trailer. He then ordered the driver to ram the trailer as a distraction for the team about to make entry on the front side of the trailer to extract Deputy Yates. They believed that the subject began shooting at the MRAP, but were unsure which window he was shooting from. The subject then began firing on the entry team, who pulled out. There were several members throwing flashbangs (Cody McFall and Kyle Sullivan) and gas as well as OSP SRT members to cover the entry team for the final attempt to extract Dep. Yates. During the extraction of Yates, Sgt. Byron put out over the radio that there was a fire inside the trailer. Once the trailer was on fire, several SWAT Members rotated through putting a hose on the fire to providing cover for those fighting the fire.

Sgt. Byron did not discharge his weapon or any less lethal munitions.

The interview was concluded at 1124 hours.

Attachments:

Attachment # 01: 2022-08-10 / Sgt. James Byron audio interview

Exhibit 1

Included as a separate file.