



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



2023-2210

Officer Involved Critical Incident - [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] Howland Township, OH 44484 Trumbull County

Investigative Activity: Interview with Officer [REDACTED]  
Activity Date: December 12, 2023  
Authoring Agent: Special Agent Cory Momchilov #64

On Tuesday, December 12, 2023, at 1159 hours, Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) Special Agent (SA) Cory Momchilov (Momchilov) and SA Joseph Goudy (Goudy) interviewed Boardman Police Officer [REDACTED] (Officer [REDACTED]), who was accompanied by his attorney, Dan Leffler, from the Ohio Patrolmen's Benevolent Association (OPBA). The interview took place at Boardman Police Department. The interview was audio recorded.

Officer [REDACTED] was identified as being a police officer who witnessed and/or had some level of involvement in the August 23, 2023 officer-involved shooting which occurred in the area of [REDACTED] Howland Township, OH 44484. Reportedly, Officer [REDACTED] did not discharge a firearm during the course of the incident. The purpose of the interview was to obtain all relevant information of the incident known or observed by this officer.

Officer [REDACTED] stated his radio call sign on August 23, 2023, was [REDACTED]. He has been employed by the Boardman Police Department for about 10 years. During the incident, Officer [REDACTED] wore his standard SWAT uniform. He also wore an external ballistic vest. He considered himself to be well-represented as a police officer during the incident. He 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. He does wear corrective lenses and was wearing them at the time of the incident.

SA Momchilov asked Officer [REDACTED] how he became involved in the incident and what actions he took.

Officer [REDACTED] stated, "So we got the call-out for a possible hostage situation on the night of August 22, I responded to the call-out in Howland, initially the only thing we were told was that there was an armed suspect inside, that we had 3 possible hostages. Throughout the night, it was mostly just us maintaining a perimeter while the crisis negotiation unit attempted to talk to the subject inside. I'm not privy to their conversations nor anything they said or discussed. I knew at some point that the negotiations weren't working in a sense that we started to come up with a, a hostage rescue plan."

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Officer [REDACTED] advised that the decision was made that the team was going to make entry into the residence and that two members of the Ohio State Highway Patrol Tactical Team were going to breach the residence using explosives.

Officer [REDACTED] stated at about 0635 hours, the team initiated the breach. Officer [REDACTED] continued, "With the hostage rescue, we had it established into two teams, so we had shields, rifles and then breachers. So, one shield, one rifle, one breacher. My team was [REDACTED] on shield, I was rifle, and Jacob Dailey was behind me as my breacher. Once the explosive breach was initiated, we moved up to the breach point which was back on the 3 side, that was up, I wanna call it like a deck, as we move up to it, [REDACTED] who was the other rifle guy, called out 'gun' as we were approaching. So, he started giving him commands, which is kind of not standard practice with hostage rescue. Once we have eyes on a suspect with a weapon, if we have to do an explosive breach, it's essentially, we're not negotiating anymore. [REDACTED] began giving him loud verbal commands to 'drop the gun, drop the gun' I started coordinating with the team to try push us up to the breach point, there was a large wooden screen door that the breaching charge had essentially twisted. The main door was blown in, but the screen door had twisted and got hung up in the frame. [REDACTED] and I attempted to clear that while [REDACTED] kept trying to call out this guy, find out where he was, he'd given him multiple commands to drop the gun. My weapon light, at some point, was disconnected, I don't know if it was, if it got caught up on some gear or if it had hit the shield that [REDACTED] was carrying. I popped behind the shield to fix my light and when I popped back out to address the threat that was, that was the only time that I saw Mr. Fife. I remember seeing the muzzle blast and that was when he first engaged us. From that point, I heard [REDACTED] say he was hit, I recognized that I was hit, I believed at that time I'd just taken shrapnel because I could still stand up and I had all my digits and I started telling the team that we needed to get inside because at this point now that he's fired on officers, I had assumed that he was going to start firing on the hostages. We started pushing in, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] had pushed the left side of the small kitchen, I was up on the right. I remember hearing [REDACTED] begin to give commands. I can't tell you for certain if I heard a second shot or not. I just became suddenly aware that my left leg hurt a lot. I started taking debris through the wall, I don't know if it was the rounds that have been fired through from our officers or the rounds that were coming back at us. We pushed into the living room where Mr. Fife was, and I was direct by [REDACTED] to start checking the right because they had the bad guy. Our priority, my team's priority was now the hostages. I looked, I saw Mr. Fife on the ground as [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] [REDACTED] moved up to secure him and myself and Jacob Dailey moved to the hallway where we believed the hostages were to secure them. We had a momentary pause, I called out

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that shots were fired, one was down, and it was around that time I realized I was struck. Even though I called out at the door which I didn't know until after I had reviewed the body cam that I said, 'Yes I was hit,' when we stopped, I recognized that I was hit, my leg was doing the funky chicken, I couldn't really keep any weight on it. I attempted to roll out, made it a couple of steps and then I essentially got dead legged by what I believe was the wadding from one of the rounds and at that point I self-extracted out of the house."

At this point in the interview, SA Momchilov began asking Officer [REDACTED] follow-up questions.

SA Momchilov asked Officer [REDACTED] "During the, I'll call it a standoff or the duration of this incident, what were you doing during that time?"

Officer [REDACTED] replied, "Maintaining perimeter, initially we were going to do a, a ladder rescue. So, we were going to go put a ladder onto the back if applicable, so that we could go in and extract one of the hostages we believed to have been on the 3 side of the second floor. That ended up not coming to fruition. The rest of the time was essentially maintaining a perimeter. At one point, I went from the front of the house to the left side, the 2 side."

SA Momchilov asked Officer [REDACTED] if he observed the individual inside the house as he was maintaining perimeter. Officer [REDACTED] stated that he did not. However, Officer [REDACTED] explained that at one point he did observe some movement on the "2 side" which ended up being "his brother."

SA Momchilov asked Officer [REDACTED] if he knew which officers were firing. Officer [REDACTED] responded, "I could tell it was [REDACTED] [REDACTED] on the [REDACTED] left side of the doorframe."

SA Momchilov asked Officer [REDACTED] how many times he viewed his body-worn camera footage. Officer [REDACTED] responded, "I wrote a simple, casually wrote, it was a casually and a assist agency report essentially just for documentation on behalf of my department. Maybe 4 times."

SA Momchilov asked Officer [REDACTED] if he was basing his statement off of his memory or what he saw on the body-worn camera footage. Officer [REDACTED] replied, "The only thing that I based off the body camera footage was saying that I was hit at the door, which I didn't remember, or [REDACTED] saying he was hit at the door."

SA Momchilov asked Officer [REDACTED] if he could describe the injuries he sustained from the incident. Officer [REDACTED] stated that he had birdshot in his left arm,

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abrasions to his eyes, and a contusion on his left leg. Officer [REDACTED] also stated that the report that he completed also contained his discharge paper from the hospital.

SA Momchilov asked Officer [REDACTED] if he could get a copy of the report that he completed. Officer [REDACTED] did provide agents with a copy of the report that he completed along with his discharge paper.

At the end of the interview, SA Momchilov asked Officer [REDACTED] if he would sign a release allowing agents to obtain his medical records. SA Momchilov explained that the purpose of obtaining the records is to document the injuries he received from the shooting. Attorney Leffler stated he would discuss it with Officer [REDACTED] and let SA Momchilov know.

SA Momchilov sent Attorney Leffler a follow-up email on January 5, 2023. On Monday, January 8, SA Momchilov received a return email from Attorney Leffler stating, "Sorry, I'll work on it. I'll let you know by Friday." SA Momchilov failed to receive any further emails from Attorney Leffler.

The interview with Officer [REDACTED] was recorded via audio. That audio recording is attached to this investigative report.

The report completed by Officer [REDACTED] is also attached to this investigative report.

**Attachments**

- Audio interview of Officer [REDACTED]
- Typed Report completed by Officer [REDACTED]

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# Boardman Police Department

Incident #: [REDACTED]

Reporting Officer: Patrol Officer Nick Newland

Report Time: 08/24/2023 15:39:21

## Incident

Incident Nature  
Information Report

Address  
[REDACTED]  
Warren, Ohio 44481

Occurred From  
08/22/2023 21:06:00

Occurred To  
08/23/2023 06:45:00

Received By  
Dispatcher Cara Croyle

How Received  
Telephone

Disposition  
Pending

Disposition Date  
08/28/2023

Cleared  
I

Submitted  
Yes

Cleared Date

Clearance  
Report

Cargo Theft Related

Responding Officer(s)  
Patrol Officer [REDACTED]

## Offenses

### Local or Municipal Code

Completed?

Method Of Entry

Gambling Motivated?

Premises Entered?

Location Type

Cargo Theft Related?

Statute  
BDMN 7

Description  
BDMN Investigation-Casualty

Category

## Persons

**PTL  
Involved Person**

Address 8299 MARKET ST Boardman Ohio 44512	Phone (330)726-4144	DOB
Race White	Sex Male	Ethnicity Non-Hispanic
Height	Weight 0	

**PTL  
Complainant**

Address 8299 MARKET ST Boardman Ohio 44512	Phone (330)726-4144	DOB
Race White	Sex Male	Ethnicity Non-Hispanic
Height	Weight 0	

**Narratives**

**Original Narrative**

**08/28/2023 16:27:32**

Ptl. [REDACTED] reports that he sustained injuries in the line of duty while detailed to the Mahoning Valley Crisis Response Team on 08-23-2023.

**Supplemental  
Narrative**

**08/28/2023 16:27:29 Patrol Officer [REDACTED]**

On 08-22-2023 at 2106 hours I, Ptl. [REDACTED] responded to [REDACTED] in Howland for a SWAT activation with the Mahoning Valley Crisis Response Team (MVCRT). On 08-23-2023 at approximately 0630 hours, the decision to make entry into the residence was made by team leadership and I was advised that I would be one of the Officers on the entry team. Once the team commander Sgt. John Elberty had given the command to make entry into the residence, members of the Ohio State Highway Patrol's tactical team initiated an explosive breach. The entry team then immediately began our approach to the rear of the residence to begin hostage rescue. As Officers were attempting to clear the breach point of an obstruction, the suspect fired on Officers with a shotgun. During the exchange I was struck in the left arm, left leg and suffered apparent minor injuries to both of my eyes. I was transported to St. Joseph's Warren Hospital Emergency Room where I was treated and later released. A copy of my discharge paperwork was provided and later attached to this report by this Officer.

