



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



2024-1513

Officer Involved Critical Incident - 6382 Georges Creek
Drive, Columbus, OH 43110 (L)

To: Gary Tyack, Franklin County Prosecutor
From: Chad Holcomb, Special Agent, Ohio Bureau of Criminal
Investigation
Date: September 10, 2024
Involves: CPD [REDACTED]
BCI Case Numbers: 2024-1513
BCI Laboratory: 24-14538

Investigative Request

On Thursday, May 16, 2024, Sergeant Terry McConnell of the Columbus Division of Police (CPD) requested the assistance of the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation's (BCI) Special Investigations Unit (SIU) and Crime Scene Unit (CSU) in conducting an independent investigation into the facts and circumstances surrounding an officer-involved shooting incident. The incident reportedly occurred on May 16, 2024, in the area of 6382 Georges Creek Drive, Columbus, OH 43110 and resulted in the death of Rafael Warfield (Warfield).

Preface:

This report serves as a synopsis of the investigation into the May 16, 2024 officer-involved shooting in Franklin County, Ohio. This report only summarizes the information that the investigative team determined to be the most useful in achieving an overall understanding of what occurred in this incident. Every fact and detail is not presented in this summary report. Therefore, it is recommended that each individual report from which this document is derived be read in order to obtain a complete understanding of this investigation. Further, audio and/or video recordings exist for the majority of the interviews conducted, revealing further details of statements given regarding the incident.

This investigation was conducted with the purpose of determining, to the extent possible, the facts and circumstances surrounding this incident. As unbiased collectors of fact, the investigative team has not and will not render any opinion of the legality of officers' actions. Instead, it is anticipated that this investigation will provide the basis of information for decisions to be rendered by the appropriate authorities.

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Investigative Team

Lead BCI Special Agent:

- SA Chad Holcomb

Assisting Investigative BCI Special Agents:

- SA Kyle Douglass
- SA Matt Collins
- SA Brady Curry

BCI Crime Scene Special Agents:

- SA Sarah Taylor (lead)
- Crime Scene Technician Amy Gill
- Crime Scene Technician Holly Ryczek

BCI Investigative Supervisor:

- Acting Special Agent Supervisor James Mulford

Summary of Process

The following is a partial list of investigative activities or methods which were employed during the course of this investigation, by the investigative team, in an effort to thoroughly and accurately locate and document all pertinent facts and circumstances regarding this incident:

- Recorded interview(s) of the one officer who discharged his weapon
- Recorded interviews of three officers who were involved in the incident, at the scene, or otherwise deemed to potentially have relevant information
- Neighborhood canvass of the area surrounding the scene
- Interviews of two civilian witnesses to the incident
- Interviews of family members or associates of the decedent
- Special agent attendance to post-mortem examination (autopsy) of the deceased
- Obtained and reviewed post-mortem examination (autopsy) and toxicology reports
- Obtained and reviewed police reports of prior law enforcement contacts with the subject
- Obtained and reviewed open and closed-source biographical information on the involved subjects, to include criminal history reports, OHLEG, driving records, etc.

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- FBI National Crime Information Center (NCIC) checks on any non-law enforcement weapons involved in the incident (to determine if reported stolen)
- Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) trace on any non-law enforcement weapons involved in the incident (to determine ownership history)
- Review of all available dash cameras involved in the incident
- Review of all available body cameras involved in the incident
- Review of all available surveillance video which captured any portion of the incident
- Processing of the scene for potential evidence (photographing, searching, measuring, documenting, and collecting)
- 3D scans / model of incident area
- Reviewed audio communications on the radio frequencies utilized during the incident
- Review of 911/phone communications related to the incident
- Review of dispatch/CAD records pertaining to the incident
- Review of the department's reports, photographs, and investigative materials pertaining to the incident, excluding any Garrity statements or information derived from any compelled statement
- Conducted forensic laboratory examinations to include:
 1. Firearm identification testing of involved firearms, casings, and bullets
 2. Firearm operability testing
- Collected and reviewed the departmental personnel files of the officers involved in the shooting, to include training and disciplinary records (if any)
- Reviewed firearm qualification and training records for involved officers
- Verified the Ohio Peace Officer Training Commission (OPOTC) certification status of the officer(s) who discharged their weapons
- Obtained the department's policies and procedures regarding use of force for prosecutorial review
- Reviewed EMS records pertaining to their response and the treatment administered

Incident Summary/Overview

On May 16, 2024 at approximately 0403 hours, CPD officers were made aware of a male, threatening himself and others inside a residence, 6382 Georges Creek Drive, Columbus, Ohio, with a firearm. Upon officers arriving, they located Warfield around back. Officers made numerous commands for Warfield to show his hands and to come out.

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Shortly after the commands started, Warfield came out from behind a wooden privacy fence and reportedly discharged a firearm towards officers. CPD [REDACTED] then discharged his patrol rifle, hitting Warfield numerous times. Warfield was later pronounced deceased at the scene by the Columbus Division of Fire.

Post-Mortem Examination / Autopsy Report

The autopsy report for the decedent (Warfield) was obtained from the Franklin County Coroner's Office. A review of those documents revealed the following information:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Physical Evidence and Laboratory Reports

Various items of potential evidence were submitted to the BCI Laboratory for analysis. The actual reports should be consulted as the following synopsis does not include many of the details from the full reports.

The BCI Firearms Section performed an analysis of the officer's firearm, as well as the firearm-related evidence collected from the scene, vehicles, and autopsies (casings and bullets). By comparing evidentiary cartridge casings/projectiles to known standards from each weapon, identifications were able to be made as to which casings/projectiles were fired from each firearm. Of the casings/projectiles recovered, the following identifications were made:

The laboratory report confirmed that all submitted firearms were operable. Furthermore, two (2) fired .40 caliber casings recovered were source identified to the non-law enforcement Taurus, TH40 with serial number ACL505405. The Taurus firearm and casings were recovered on the ground near Warfield.

Investigative Interviews

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The following information comprises extremely abbreviated versions of the statements made by the witness and/or participants of this incident deemed by the author to be of most relevance to the overall understanding of the incident. More detailed accounts can be found by reading the separate reports written by the interviewers and by reviewing the recordings of each interview, including those not synopsized below.

CPD [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] wrote in his statement, *"I saw the suspect walk from the backdoor to out past the end of the divider. Suddenly, the suspect raised his right arm towards me, and I simultaneously saw a muzzle flash and heard a gunshot. I fired my rifle and briefly ducked behind the SUV as the suspect's muzzle flash had momentarily impaired my ability to see him. I peered up from the rear corner of the SUV and saw the suspect was still standing just north of the privacy divider with the gun pointed towards me. I fired my rifle and the suspect retreated behind the privacy divider. I stopped firing when I could no longer see the suspect."*

[REDACTED] continued to state, *"At the time I fired my weapon, I was in fear for my life as well as the lives of the other officers in the area. Immediately prior to discharging my rifle, the suspect had fired at me, and I believed he was trying to seriously injure or kill me. I do not know how many rounds the suspect fired but I know that he fired at least one round at me and that he still had his gun pointed at me when I re-engaged. I do not believe I had any other reasonable alternative to protect my life and the lives of the other officers at the time I fired my weapon"*.

Erykah King Interview:

King said that Warfield had a lot of alcohol shots because it was his birthday and that when they got home, Warfield and Camara Gates (Gates) got into a petty argument. She believes that they were arguing for a long time and heard a 'ruckus', a table breaking and Gates calling for help. King then went downstairs and saw "Rafael tripping out" and "pushing her." King said that Warfield is aggressive at times, and that she had to push him off of Gates and tell him to "chill out". She then took Gates upstairs. That is when she looked down the steps and saw Warfield with the knife. He then started throwing his clothing outside and King called 911.

When Warfield went out the back door, King went back upstairs and called the police. She told the police that, "... he's tripping uh, he's uh, threatening to kill himself or something like that." While on the phone with 911, King heard four gunshots.

Camara Gates Interview:

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Gates explained she and Warfield's argument was physical, and they were "tussling" with each other. Gates said she and Warfield were in the living room, and recalled she and Warfield shoving each other, but stated Warfield did not hit her. Gates yelled for Erykah (King) to help her deescalate the situation. Gates said she and King then went upstairs and left Warfield in the living room. Gates estimated her altercation with Warfield lasted three to five minutes.

Gates recalled Warfield making threats to kill himself with a knife. Gates described a knife with a green handle that had been in Warfield's possession that night, but denied Warfield tried to stab her with it. Gates said King had told her Warfield was holding the knife up to his own neck. Gates could hear Warfield making suicidal threats such as, "I'll do it," and "I'll really do it this time."

Summary

All persons known to have relevant information regarding this investigation have been interviewed (or attempted), and all known pertinent records and evidence have been obtained and reviewed. BCI will continue to offer investigative assistance into any newly identified witnesses or information relative to this criminal investigation. BCI's investigation into this officer-involved critical incident is concluded unless such new information/witnesses is/are identified through grand jury or other means.

Agents remain available for consultation and/or to perform any additional investigation, analysis, processing and/or other assistance/involvement you might deem to be necessary.

Contact Information

The preceding information comprises only a portion of facts and circumstances collected during the investigation of the officer-involved shooting incident. For further review of specific information or documentation collected during the investigation, please refer to the individual reports and documents from which this summary was derived. Any questions regarding the content or context of the information contained in this document can be directed to the attention of Special Agent Chad Holcomb. SA Holcomb can be reached via email at Chadwick.Holcomb@OhioAGO.gov or by telephone, at (614) 813-8496.

References: None

Attachments: None

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