



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



2022-1472
Officer Involved Critical Incident – 2793 Waterpark Drive, Mason,
OH (L)

Investigative Activity: Interview with Officer
Involves: Thomas Henry Cromwell (S)
Date of Activity: 07/13/2022
Activity Location: Warren County Sheriff's Office – Business – 822 Memorial Drive ,
Lebanon, OH 45036, Warren County
Author: SA Steven Seitzman

Narrative:

On July 12, 2022, the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) was requested to investigate an Officer-Involved Critical Incident (OICI) that took place at the Baymont Hotel, located at 2793 Waterpark Drive in the city of Mason. During the OICI, an operator with the Warren County Regional S.W.A.T. team mortally wounded a suspect and recent River City Correctional Center escapee, Thomas Cromwell (Cromwell), during a hostage rescue situation.

On July 13, 2022, at 1406 hours, BCI Special Agents Richard Ward (SA Ward) and Steven Seitzman (SA Seitzman) interviewed Warren County Regional S.W.A.T. team negotiator Sergeant Brad Walker (Sgt. Walker) regarding his involvement in the OICI. The interview was conducted at the Warren County Sheriff's Office. Fraternal Order of Police attorney Stephen Lazarus was present for Sgt. Walker. 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. Walker stated that he has 22 years of law enforcement experience with the city of Mason Police Department. He serves as a negotiator on the Warren County Regional S.W.A.T. team and has held that position since 2012. He is currently the team leader

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for the negotiation unit.

Regarding the OICI, Sgt. Walker advised BCI agents of the following information:

Sgt. Walker was called out at approximately 1600 hours. The information he had was that the situation involved a barricaded subject with a hostage. He arrived between 1630 and 1640 hours. He spoke with the Mason Police supervisors at the scene. Sgt. Walker was informed that Mason PD Officer Frasher (Officer Frasher) attempted to establish contact with Cromwell; however, he was uncertain about the extent of Officer Frasher's contact with Cromwell.

Sgt. Walker learned from commanding officers at the scene that Cromwell was a recently escaped inmate from Cincinnati. Hamilton County Sheriff's Office detectives responded to Mason to investigate the situation. The door was initially open, but it was slammed shut. Cromwell commented that he would hurt or kill the female room occupant, Kelly Rose (Rose).

Sgt. Walker advised that negotiation equipment arrived at the scene. He said the equipment used was an 836 Technologies system, which is a computer-based communications system. He said the system is programmed to record negotiations. The negotiations took place within the mobile command post. He assigned Officer Frasher to collect as much information on Cromwell as possible, such as identifying family members, criminal history, and medical history. He assigned Officer Frasher as the primary negotiator. He assigned Warren County Sheriff's Office Deputy Adam Sturgill (Deputy Sturgill) as a coach. Lastly, he assigned Springboro Police Officer Chris Evans (Officer Evans) as an intelligence officer.

Sgt. Walker advised he was inside the command post throughout much of the negotiations, but he did not listen in on the calls. He relayed information to S.W.A.T. commander Nate Trout. He described the early negotiations as difficult, as the phone calls only lasted a matter of seconds. He said the calls were made to Rose's phone, which was the only known working phone in the room.

Sgt. Walker learned from Officer Frasher that Cromwell made a demand that he wanted to "see his people" in the parking lot across the street from the Baymont hotel. He further said that he would harm Rose if law enforcement made attempts to enter the room.

Sgt. Walker said that Officer Frasher spoke with Rose early in the negotiations. She confirmed she was being held against her will and was not free to leave. As the day progressed, negotiators realized contact had not been made with Rose for a long period of time. Officer Frasher made efforts to establish proof of life for Rose. After several hours, Rose was heard on the phone.

Sgt. Walker learned through the negotiator that Cromwell made comments about

wanting to "shoot it out with the police," and that he wanted to "die a glorious death." Cromwell also told negotiators that he knew police would not attempt to enter the room since Rose was inside.

Sgt. Walker advised Officer Frasher inadvertently referred to Rose as "Heather" twice while on the phone with Cromwell. This caused Cromwell to become irate, as he was with Heather earlier in the day on July 11, 2022, and he likely assumed Heather told law enforcement where he was located. Sgt. Walker made the decision to switch negotiators, so Officer Frasher was replaced by Deputy Sturgill. Officer Frasher was assigned as a coach.

Sgt. Walker said that Cromwell became more threatening as time passed. He made vague threats of harming Rose. As a result, at approximately 2230 hours, command staff made the decision to disable the air conditioning, cable, and WIFI within the hotel. Officer Frasher contacted Verizon and routed all outbound calls from Rose's phone to the negotiator. This caused Cromwell and Rose to become frustrated, as Rose wanted to call her mother.

Sgt. Walker advised Hamilton County S.W.A.T. relieved the Warren County Regional S.W.A.T. team for a period of time. During that time, Hamilton County operators attempted to speak with Cromwell through the door, which upset him as he felt that he was being asked questions he had already answered to the Warren County negotiators. Sgt. Walker instructed Officer Frasher and Officer Evans to try to speak with Cromwell through the door. They were able to interact with Cromwell, and Cromwell began to throw items at the door. Cromwell yelled out that Rose was only coming out if he was killed. He instructed Officer Frasher and Officer Evans to return to the command post.

Shortly after Officer Frasher and Officer Evans spoke with Cromwell through the door, Cromwell posted a Facebook Live video. Sgt. Walker said it was obvious Cromwell was "extremely ramped up." Sgt. Walker felt that entry needed to be made due to Cromwell's level of agitation and the Facebook Live video. The last conversation negotiators had with Cromwell was a request for cheeseburgers and cigarettes, and in return, he would release a dog that was in the room. Sgt. Walker advised the plan was to use the food and cigarettes as a ruse to assist the entry team with breaching.

Sgt. Walker said the entry team got into place and Deputy Sturgill placed the call to Cromwell. Once communication was established, the entry team proceeded with the breach and entry. Sgt. Walker stated that the negotiators had no further involvement after that point.

The interview was concluded at 1433 hours. The audio recording is attached below.

Attachments:

Attachment # 01: 2022-07-13/ Sgt. Brad Walker Interview

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Exhibit 1

Included as a separate file.