



**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 Alex Wharry  
Activity Date: December 12, 2023  
Authoring Agent: Special Agent Cory Momchilov #64

**Narrative:**

On Tuesday, December 12, 2023, at 0902 hours, Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) Special Agent (SA) Cory Momchilov (Momchilov) interviewed Youngstown Police Officer Alex Wharry (Officer Wharry), who was accompanied by his attorney, Dan Leffler, from the Ohio Patrolmen's Benevolent Association (OPBA). The interview took place at Youngstown Police Department. The interview was audio recorded.

Officer Wharry 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, Ohio. Reportedly, Officer Wharry 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 Wharry is an operator for the Mahoning Valley Crisis Response Team and has been with the team for over 2 years.

Officer Wharry stated his radio call sign on August 23, 2023, was Delta-4 or "Wharry". He has been employed by the Youngstown Police Department for about 4 years. He has been a police officer for a total of 5 years. During the incident, Officer Wharry 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 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 Wharry how he became involved in the incident and what actions he took.

Officer Wharry advised that on the night of the incident, he received a text alert that "there was a call out in Howland." Officer Wharry further advised that the text alert provided him with the address and where to meet. Officer Wharry then left his house and drove to Howland Township. Upon his arrival he met with other team members and a perimeter was established.

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SA Momchilov asked Officer Wharry if he recalled what information he received about the incident in the page. Officer Wharry stated that he could not remember exactly what information was contained in the page, but it was something along the lines of a barricaded subject with possible hostages.

Once on scene, Officer Wharry was provided with further details. Officer Wharry was informed that there was a male inside the house, who was suffering from some sort of mental issue. Officer Wharry was also advised that other family members were also in the house, who were "too scared to leave because he was pacing, walking around with a gun." The gun the subject had was described as a long gun, which Officer Wharry concluded was either a rifle or shotgun.

Officer Wharry stated, "They (Howland Police) got sent there for some type of altercation, some sort of fight, they showed up, he kind of got erratic, they saw him with a gun, the officers did, backed up, set a perimeter and then they called us."

SA Momchilov asked Officer Wharry what actions the SWAT Team took. Officer Wharry stated, "First action was setting a perimeter, getting the uniform officer out and getting our operators in." Officer Wharry advised that initially he was stationed at the front of the house and was then moved to an "Impromptu arrest/entry team, if that needed to happen."

SA Momchilov asked Officer Wharry if there were negotiators on scene. Officer Wharry advised that there were and stated, "The only time I really interacted with a negotiator is we, once we got our bear, which is our armored vehicle, we kind of staged it out front, it gives us protection, gives the houses across the street protection, stuff like that, things we can work out of, it's got all of our gear in there. We brought a, and this is later in the evening, brought a negotiator up, put them in the bear for them to start giving announcement over a P.A. system, to have the gentleman walk outside with your hands up, open and empty is typically how we like to give commands. That was the only time I was really ever directly was around a negotiator is when they were in our bear, giving them P.A. announcements."

SA Momchilov stated that it was his understanding that this incident, "Went on for a while." Officer Wharry responded, "14 hours I think." SA Momchilov then asked, "Was there any signs of cooperation from the individual?"

Officer Wharry replied, "The only information I got about that was that he was not cooperating. They'd call him, he would answer and not say anything, hangup."

SA Momchilov asked Officer Wharry if he observed the individual at any point. Officer Wharry replied, "You could see him pacing inside the house, just cause he was backlit

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and you could see him walk in front of a window. You couldn't really make out too many details about him, just that he was a male, and he was walking."

SA Momchilov asked Officer Wharry if he observed anyone else in the house. Officer Wharry replied, "No, not until later."

SA Momchilov stated, "It's my understanding that at some point the decision was made to breach the house."

Officer Wharry replied, "Yes." SA Momchilov asked Officer Wharry if he could explain that process.

Officer Wharry explained that "after so many hours" the SWAT Team commander brought in two Ohio State Highway Patrol explosive breachers. At that point, Officer Wharry stated he moved from the front of the house to the 3 side (rear) of the house to give other team members a break.

Officer Wharry stated, "I can only speak for what I was relayed and, so, I was relayed that the new plan was to set a explosive charge on the rear door and if we needed to make entry that was going to be our, our entry point. I was directly behind the door, there is like a little shed, so if you're looking at the 3 side and the rear door it would be the door, a little porch, big tree and like a little chicken coop almost." Officer Wharry advised that he "linked up" with one of the state troopers and his job was to relay information to command because the state troopers and the SWAT Team were not on the same radio frequency.

SA Momchilov stated, "So, you guys decided, or someone decided to put a charge on the house in case entry was needed. At some point, you guys decided to make entry. So once that decision is made, how did that play out."

Officer Wharry explained that once the charge was placed, he radioed to command to let him know when they wanted the charge blown, so he could relay that information to the state trooper. A few seconds later, Command gave Officer Wharry a countdown, at which point he relayed that to the state trooper. Officer Wharry advised once the count hit one, the state trooper detonated the explosive.

Officer Wharry stated that after the explosion, "the screen door kind of stayed in place" and the actual front door blew in. Officer Wharry advised that there was a lot of smoke, and the entry team came around the corner and approached the rear door. Officer Wharry stated, "I could see a figure, the male, walking toward the explosion, couldn't see what he had in his hand, couldn't really tell. I just knew it was a male and he was walking towards the rear door."

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Officer Wharry advised that “the two shields, kind of got in front of the door” and team members were working on “getting the screen door down.” As team members were working on removing the screen door, Officer Wharry advised that he heard [REDACTED] say, “Shotgun.” Commands were then given for the individual to “Drop the gun, drop the gun.”

Officer Wharry stated, “I heard one gunshot then a small amount of gunfire. Then they did get the screen door down, you could see the one shield guy, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] [REDACTED] move into the house and another small little gun, a little bigger gunfight and then we started getting radio traffic that [REDACTED] [REDACTED] was, [REDACTED] got shot, didn't really know where. [REDACTED] got shot, after that I moved up and entered the house with the rest of the guys.”

Once inside the residence, as other team members “held security on the gentleman on the ground” Officer Wharry went upstairs and “searched for the girlfriend” who was “lying under a bed.”

SA Momchilov stated, “If we could back up, you said the door gets breached, the two shields move up and you hear a gunshot. Could you tell who was firing?”

Officer Wharry replied, “I couldn't tell.”

SA Momchilov asked, “Could you see any officers returning fire or firing?”

Officer Wharry replied, “I could see [REDACTED] on the left-hand side, um, once he was in. Not the first little, little skirmish but the second, I could see the muzzle flashes coming from the left side of the house where he, because you could see, from where I was you could see him kind of like directly in front of them, so you could see, he moved in and kind of, kind of veered left a little bit so you could see where the muzzle flashes were coming on from the left hand side. But after the first kind of little, little gunfight that's when I started moving forward because [REDACTED] ended up getting clipped in the leg, at that point.”

SA Momchilov asked Officer Wharry if the female, who was hiding under a bed made any statements to him. Officer Wharry replied, “Yeah, she, visibly, she was really shaken up, actually shaking, um, she couldn't get under, she couldn't get out from underneath the bed, she was kind of like stuck there. So, she said, ‘I can't get out,’ So I picked the bedframe up and [REDACTED] [REDACTED] grabbed her by an arm and kind of like, drug her across the bedroom floor to get her up. Once she was up, just a small conversation, ‘hey you're going to be okay, everything's going to be alright, we'll get you out of here’ and there was a little bit of a holdup because we got upstairs quicker than they got the mom and brother out of the first floor, so we kind of didn't want

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them crossing. We kind of sat with her upstairs for a second, let her sit on the couch, 'take a deep breath, you're going to be fine' and once they were outside, we brought her down the steps and the backdoor."

Officer Wharry advised that he was not wearing a body-worn camera at the time of the incident and that he has not viewed any body-worn camera footage from the incident.

SA Momchilov asked Officer Wharry if he talked to any other officers who were involved in this incident. Officer Wharry advised that there was a small debrief that occurred, which Officer Wharry described as a "small overview of the incident."

The interview with Officer Wharry was recorded via audio. The audio recording is attached to this investigative report.

**Attachments**

- Audio interview of Officer Alex Wharry

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