



Inter Office Memo

Richard Pierce
Sheriff

Date: November 10, 2010
To: Sheriff Margaret Mims
From: Det. Joe Smith
Subject: Officer Involved Shooting I.A. #09-30

After completing the review of all reports submitted on this matter, the following facts were learned by the Internal Affairs investigator:

On June 7th 2009, at about 0843 hours, deputies were dispatched to [REDACTED] (County of Fresno) regarding an attempt suicide. The reporting party advised dispatch that her husband (Bill Ansel) was suicidal and had a history of mental problems. While deputies responded to the scene, the RP's son heard at least one gun shot. Sgt. Patrick Hanson was the initial supervisor on scene. Sgt. Brad Christian was working a uniformed supervisor assignment in metro Fresno (2L03) and responded to assist. At about 0946 hours, Sgt. Christian arrived on scene and took a position on the south end of the property, near the backyard. At about 1125 hours, Sgt. Christian fired a single round of 12 gauge buckshot from a department issued shotgun.

Initially, the responding deputies continued to receive updated information from the RP. It was reported that Ansel's family was hiding in the residence while Ansel was in the backyard with his handgun—the residence is on a large agricultural lot with a large backyard. The family had locked all the doors and windows with the hope that Ansel would not make entry and harm them. At one point, Ansel pounded on the rear door of the residence and then broke a window. Ansel then fired off another shot. Deputy Snyder and Deputy Juarez arrived on scene at about 0855 hours and attempted to locate Ansel. Other arriving deputies began to lock down a perimeter around the residence and property. At about 0909 hours, Sgt. Hanson and other deputies were able to locate and contain Ansel to the backyard of the residence. The family was escorted out of the residence (front door) and several deputies took up positions at the rear of the residence and covered carport area.

Sgt. Hanson was able to see Ansel walking around in the backyard and clearly saw him holding a handgun. Hanson made verbal contact with Ansel and asked him to put the gun down. Ansel refused. Within minutes, Sgt. Bray arrived on scene and took over negotiations with Ansel. During this time, Clovis PD Officer Shurtliff arrived on scene and advised everyone he had a .40mm less lethal multi-launcher gun.



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Sgt. Christian arrived on scene and met with Deputy Diaz (carrying a less lethal shotgun) and Hanson. Christian was briefed by Hanson and told that Ansiel was refusing to put the gun down. Ansiel was still in the backyard and pacing around. Christian moved up to a position taken by Bray and Snyder—one vineyard row south of backyard property. Christian had brought a pepperball gun with him initially but then exchanged it for Hanson's shotgun.

Sgt. Bray was still in communication with Ansiel. There was a chain link fence separating them from immediate access to the backyard. Christian listened as Ansiel told them that he had "nothing to live for." Christian said Ansiel was very careful in which way he pointed his weapon and didn't threaten to harm any of them. Christian observed Ansiel move the weapon back and forth between his right hand and left hand. Over an hour passed with no progress on Ansiel's demeanor.

Sgt. Christian witnessed Ansiel point the weapon at his head on three separate occasions and cock the gun. Ansiel would then be talked down each time by Bray. At one point, Ansiel looked over and saw deputies in his garage/carport pointing guns at him. This agitated Ansiel and he began yelling. Ansiel then retreated into a shed located near the rear of the backyard. Christian said this complicated their situation as they were no longer able to communicate with him. Christian then called the WC and suggested that they (FSO) should just leave—Ansiel hadn't committed any crimes at this point and the family had been taken away from the house. Christian was told to stay. So, Christian and Hanson formulated a plan. The plan was to have Hanson and some deputies stage at the carport. Then, Christian and Bray would distract Ansiel when they saw him again, and depending on whether or not Ansiel put the gun down, Hanson's team could rush at Ansiel with less lethal.

Ansiel eventually exited the shed and returned to his original location; a tree stump. It was unknown if Ansiel had armed himself any further and no one could tell since he was wearing loose clothing. Ansiel then continued his diatribe about not wanting to live and problems with his medication. Ansiel then told Bray he was a liar and accused Bray of not being in control. Ansiel then began speaking to Christian and challenging him and his authority. Christian deflected the questions back to Bray. Meanwhile, Ansiel continued to carry the handgun. When Ansiel walked away, Christian quickly told Bray that his (Christian) plan was to use a shotgun and disable Ansiel's weapon by shooting it out of his hand.

Sgt. Christian knew that he could hit Ansiel's hand and not vital organs due to the limited spread of the buckshot at close range. Christian was very confident with the shot he was going to take due to his knowledge of shotguns (former instructor) and limited spread of the buckshot (ten inches at 30 feet). Hanson and his team were in position. When Ansiel turned back toward Bray, Christian stood up and fired one round of .00 buckshot with his 12-gauge shotgun at Ansiel's left hand (holding the gun). The distance between them was about 30 feet. Christian watched as the gun flew out of Ansiel's hand. Christian yelled, "Move now!" to Hanson's team.



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Right as they began to move in, Ansiel turned toward his handgun on the ground and picked it up. At this moment, Shurtliff fired about four or five rounds of .40mm less lethal projection at Ansiel, striking him three times. Deputy Diaz also fired one round of less lethal bean bag from his shotgun (unknown if it struck Ansiel). Due to the strikes from the less lethal rounds, Ansiel threw his handgun away from him and fell down to the ground in a prone position. Shurtliff, Hanson and other deputies approached Ansiel with caution and demanded he show his hands. Ansiel refused to bring his hands out from underneath him. Hanson then ordered deployment of the taser. Shurtliff then applied a 5 second application of the taser to Ansiel. This caused Ansiel to cooperate and show his hands. He was then handcuffed. EMS was already staged down the road and they were requested to come in. Only about two minutes passed from the time Ansiel was shot in the hand to the arrival of EMS paramedics. Ansiel was later transported to CRMC.

Before leaving the scene, Ansiel specifically called out to Sgt. Bray and apologized for his behavior. After Ansiel was transported to CRMC for treatment of his injuries, he was later released to the VA hospital and not charged with a crime.

Statements from other deputies on scene were consistent with those made by Sgt. Christian.

The overall conditions during this incident were bright (daytime), clear and seasonably hot.

A check of Hanson's duty shotgun (used by Christian) revealed that one .00 buckshot had been fired. The shotgun (a Remington 870 serial [REDACTED]) contained four live .00 buckshot rounds. The fifth round had been removed by Christian while he was still on scene. This is consistent with Christian's statement about firing the shotgun once, along with the other statements of FSO personnel on scene.

The less lethal expended rounds and taser expended cartridge were also collected at the scene. The evidence matched the statements given (by those that used less lethal) to homicide detectives.

Bill Ansiel was struck in the left hand and abdomen by the round fired by Sgt. Christian. The buckshot pellets did penetrate both his left hand and abdomen. Surgery repaired these wounds. Ansiel also received external injuries due to being hit with less lethal rounds. These wounds were not serious but did cause discomfort for Ansiel. Ansiel did not suffer permanent



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injuries from any of shots. [REDACTED]

A blood sample collected from Bill Ansel revealed that he was not under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs at the time of this incident. However, the tests did show that Ansel did have prescribed drugs in his system that were at high levels.

The handgun held by Ansel was described as a .22 caliber Ruger New Model Single-six revolver, serial [REDACTED]. The handgun was recovered by IB Tech Guerrero, and found to be in the cocked position. The following shows the condition of the .22 caliber cartridges and casings extracted:

- Cylinder marked #1 – expended casing
- Cylinder marked #2 – live cartridge
- Cylinder marked #3 – live cartridge
- Cylinder marked #4 – live cartridge
- Cylinder marked #5 – expended casing
- Cylinder marked #6 – live cartridge

Per Det. Grajeda, the criminal aspect of this case was submitted to the District Attorney's Office for review in October of 2009. However, the review has yet to be completed. The DA's office has informed me that they are several years behind in these reviews. As such, **there has been no written determination by the District Attorney's office** whether the use of deadly force in this case by Sgt. Christian was justified based on his reasonable fear of imminent death or great bodily injury to himself, Ansel and/or other law enforcement personnel on scene.

The Policy in effect regarding the discharge of firearms by members of this Department states, in part:

304.11 POLICY

It is the policy of this Department to resort to the use of a firearm under law, when it reasonably appears to be necessary, and generally:

- (a) ~~An officer may use deadly force to protect him or herself or others from what they reasonably believe would be an immediate threat of death or serious bodily injury.~~
- (b) An officer may use deadly force to affect the arrest or prevent the escape of a suspected felon where the officer has probable cause to believe that the suspect has committed or intends to commit a felony involving the inflicting of serious bodily injury or death. Under



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such circumstances, a verbal warning should precede the use of deadly force, where feasible.

- (c) To stop a dangerous animal.
- (d) May kill an animal that is so badly injured that human compassion requires its removal from further suffering and where other dispositions are impractical.
- (e) For target practice at an approved range.
- (f) To signal or sound for alarm (i.e. Search and Rescue in areas where no radio contact is available)

In light of the foregoing, the actions taken by Sgt. Christian during this incident appear to be justified and in accordance with Department Policy, Procedure, and Law.

Reviewed by:

Lieutenant Steve Wilkins