



RICHLAND COUNTY PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE

**GARY D. BISHOP
PROSECUTING ATTORNEY**

Press Release

Prosecuting Attorney Gary Bishop and Sheriff Steve Sheldon have issued the following statement concerning the officer-involved shooting that occurred on December 3rd, 2020 at 1116 Lexwood Road resulting in one deputy being wounded and the death of Craig Wright of that address.

On the evening of December 3rd, 2020, the Richland County Sheriff's Department was contacted by an out-of-town family member who requested a welfare check be done for Craig Wright (60), after several family members received calls and texts from Mr. Wright indicating he was contemplating suicide.

Upon arrival at the Lexwood address, Deputies were granted access to the home by Mr. Wright's wife who indicated that he had been drinking and was in an upstairs bedroom. As two deputies approached Mr. Wright, he became very agitated. Despite the deputies' efforts to reassure him they were only there to talk to him and to de-escalate the situation; Mr. Wright became combative. A struggle ensued during which Mr. Wright retrieved a handgun from the bed he had gone to and shot Sheriff's Deputy Pawlikowski in the right arm.

Deputy Ady wrestled the firearm away from Mr. Wright and struck Wright with the firearm in an effort to subdue him. Given that Deputy Pawlikowski had been wounded and Deputy Ady was securing the deadly weapon; the Deputies were not able to secure Mr. Wright at that point.

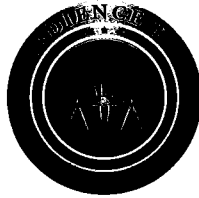
Deputy Ady drew his service weapon and began repeatedly directing Mr. Wright to stop moving and to stay calm, etc. Mr. Wright repeatedly told Deputy Ady to kill him, that he wanted to die, etc. Wright also made obscene gestures and refused repeated commands to cooperate.

This situation continued for several minutes with Mr. Wright continually refusing to obey the officer's commands and repeatedly requesting the Deputy's to kill him. As this went on, Mr. Wright got up from the bed, stood up, and made several efforts to move closer to the Deputy. Deputy Ady radioed for assistance several times throughout the encounter.

Mr. Wright continued to disobey the Deputies commands and ultimately advanced directly at Deputy Ady while stating that he wasn't going to jail.

Deputy Ady fired 5 rounds from his service weapon, striking Mr. Wright in the hand and wrist, upper thigh and right shoulder area. Back-up officers and paramedics arrived almost immediately afterwards.

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This encounter was captured on videotape from Deputy Ady's body-worn camera.

The Bureau of Criminal Identification and Investigation (B.C.I. & I) was called in to process the scene and to conduct an independent investigation and review of the incident. Both Deputies were placed on administrative leave per departmental policy. All weapons and evidence from the incident were collected and later tested at the B.C.I. & I Crime Laboratory. Special Agents from B.C.I. & I conducted numerous interviews with involved parties and thoroughly documented their investigation.

At the conclusion of their investigation, B.C.I. & I presented its findings to the Richland County Grand Jury. Following a presentation, that lasted over two hours; the body of citizens comprising the Grand Jury determined that the incident on December 3rd, 2020 constituted a justifiable use of force by the Sheriff's Deputies and that no criminal charges were warranted arising from the encounter.