

Fatal Officer Involved Shooting of Melkon Michaelidis
Los Angeles Police Department

Officer Bryan Morales, #42701

J.S.I.D. File #21-0464



GEORGE GASCÓN

District Attorney

Justice System Integrity Division

January 24, 2024

MEMORANDUM

TO: CAPTAIN OMAR BAZULTO
Los Angeles Police Department
Force Investigation Division
100 West First Street, Suite 431
Los Angeles, California 90012

FROM: JUSTICE SYSTEM INTEGRITY DIVISION
Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office

SUBJECT: Fatal Officer Involved Shooting of Melkon Michaelidis
J.S.I.D. File #21-0464
L.A.P.D. File #F060-21

DATE: January 24, 2024

The Justice System Integrity Division of the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office completed its review of the October 31, 2021, fatal shooting of Melkon Michaelidis by Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) Officer Bryan Morales. We conclude that Officer Morales acted in lawful self-defense of another at the time he fired his service weapon, reasonably believing, based on the totality of the circumstances, that deadly force was necessary to defend another against an imminent deadly threat.

The District Attorney's Command Center was notified of the shooting on October 31, 2021, at 6:46 p.m. The District Attorney's Response Team responded and was given a briefing and walk-through of the scene by LAPD Lieutenant David Smith.

The following analysis is based on the 9-1-1 recording, body worn camera video (BWV), security video footage, investigative reports, audio recordings and transcripts of witness interviews, crime scene diagrams and photographs, and autopsy and toxicology reports submitted to this office by LAPD Force Investigation Division Detective D. Kort on February 8, 2023.

Officer Morales' compelled statement was not considered as part of this analysis.

FACTUAL ANALYSIS

On October 31, 2021, at approximately 3:25 p.m., a Los Angeles Police Department dispatch operator received a 9-1-1 call from a rental property owner who told the operator that his tenant had locked himself in the home and was breaking windows and shower doors.

At approximately 3:30 p.m., Officers Bryan Morales ("Morales") and Edgar Benavides ("Benavides") responded to the radio call of vandalism occurring at [REDACTED] Matilija Avenue. The comments of the dispatch call stated, "Poss[ibly] suffers from mental illness" tenant 'Malkom' [sic] . . . locked himself in his house, Poss[ibly] under the influence of narco[tics], breaking windows,

shower door, turned on gas . . . [Person reporting] turned off gas from outside. . . fears [tenant] will hurt himself.”

Officers met with [REDACTED], the owner of the property, who told them that Melkon Michaelidis (“Michaelidis”) rented a detached residence on [REDACTED] property. [REDACTED] believed that Michaelidis was suffering from mental illness and was possibly under the influence of illegal drugs. [REDACTED] told the officers that Michaelidis was bleeding from self-inflicted injuries and without intervention, Michaelidis would continue harming himself.

[REDACTED] told the officers that Michaelidis wanted to return to Greece, and on the day of the incident Michaelidis was scheduled to vacate the property. However, at approximately 2:35 p.m., Michaelidis refused to leave and threatened to blow up the residence using his gas stove.

Sergeant Jay Balgemino (“Balgemino”) and additional officers responded to the location. Balgemino formulated a plan to take Michaelidis into custody. The plan called for Officers Dragos Burecu (“Burecu”) and Daniel McComas (“McComas”) to speak with Michaelidis and build rapport, while Morales would provide less than lethal coverage with a 40mm Less Lethal Launcher (“40mm”). Benavides would provide lethal coverage with his service weapon, and LAFD paramedics were on standby to assist if necessary.



Figure 1: Officer Burecu stood on a small ladder while attempting to communicate with Michaelidis.

At 3:47 p.m., officers announced their presence and knocked on the front door, waiting for a response from Michaelidis. When Michaelidis refused to answer his residence door, Burecu used a ladder to look through a small broken window into Michaelidis' bathroom (Figure 1).

Burecu observed Michaelidis standing fully clothed inside the shower with the water running. Burecu called out to Michaelidis, "Melko . . . We are not here to harm you . . . We need you to be seen by an ambulance." Michaelidis threw something out the window at the officers, causing Burecu to fall back from the ladder. Michaelidis yelled back, "Fuck you!"

Approximately five minutes later, Michaelidis began yelling, "Happy Birthday! Happy Birthday!" He appeared in the small bathroom window and said, "My name is Melkon Michaelidis, and I am a Greek." Officers observed that Michaelidis had non-life-threatening lacerations to both his wrists before Michaelidis dropped down, out of view (Figure 2).

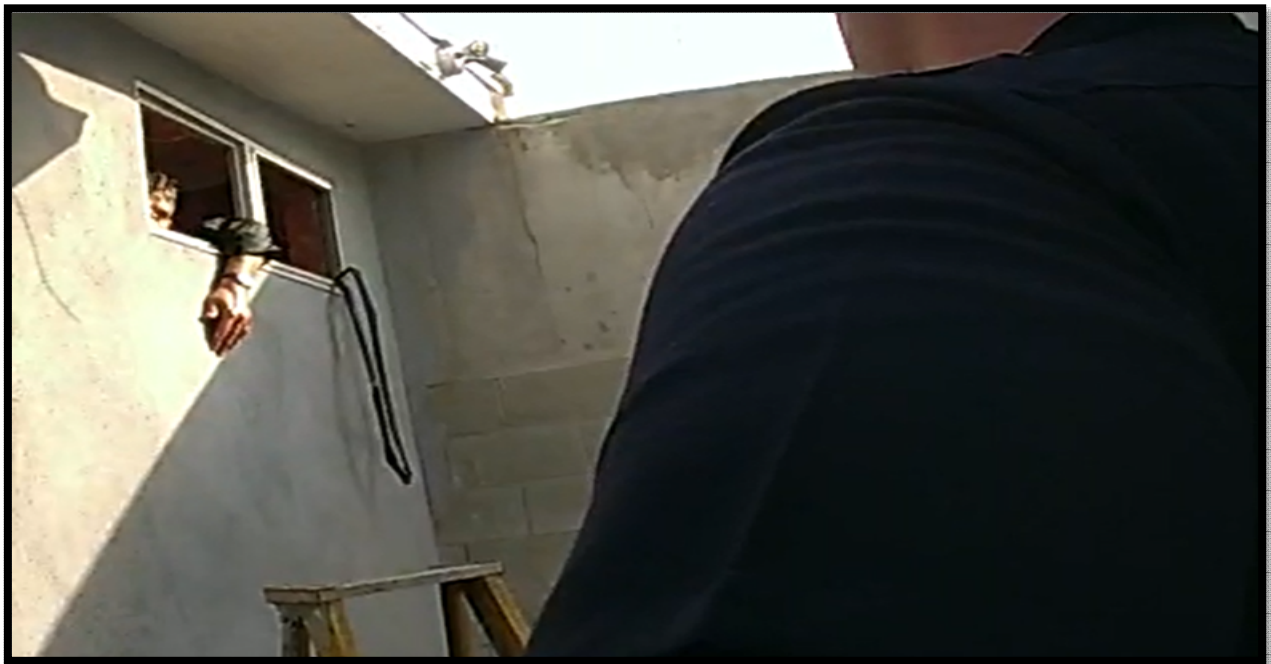


Figure 2: As officers attempted to build rapport, Michaelidis appeared in the bathroom window.

█████ called Michaelidis' family members █████ and █████ to come to the location and speak to Michaelidis. █████ spoke to Michaelidis in Armenian and told Michaelidis that █████ loved him and wanted Michaelidis to get medical help. Officer McComas' BWV captured Michaelidis' statements. Those statements were later transcribed by a translator. Michaelidis told █████, that "[Michaelidis] was 50 percent Satan and 50 percent Christian" and that Michaelidis wanted the officers to shoot and kill him. While family members spoke to Michaelidis, he threw metal objects out the window at them (Figure 3).



Figure 3: Michaelidis throwing objects out the window at his family and the officers.

Michaelidis remained locked inside his home for 40 minutes while officers attempted to speak to him. Sergeant Balgemino and Division Watch Commander Alan Sergeant Kreitzman agreed that a tactical disengagement was the best approach to handling the situation since Michaelidis was not wanted for a crime and was not critically injured. Officers contacted the Mental Evaluation Unit (“MEU”) at approximately 4:30 p.m., and the officers tactically disengaged from the residence.

At 5:07 p.m., [REDACTED] called 9-1-1 again when he observed Michaelidis walk down Matilija Avenue armed with two knives. A residential surveillance camera on Matilija Avenue caught Michaelidis standing in the middle of the street while holding two knives (Figure 4).



Figure 4: Michaelidis stopped in the street holding two large knives.



Figure 5: Michaelidis held one knife to his throat and the other knife to his abdomen.

He pointed one knife to his throat and the other to his abdomen for approximately 23 seconds before turning and walking directly into the path of an oncoming car (Figure 5).

As he approached the car, he held the knives outstretched in a threatening manner. Michaelidis yelled, “C’mon! Fuck you!” and chased the car as the driver reversed and turned around. He ran back over to a parked Mazda sedan, where he stabbed the front tire multiple times (Figure 6).



Figure 6: Michaelidis used the knife he was holding to puncture the tires of a parked car.

Michaelidis crossed the street to a white Kia Soul and stabbed the rear tire of that car. He ran back to the Mazda. He stabbed the rear tire, the body of the car, broke off the gas cap, and a windshield wiper. Another car approached, and Michaelidis ran in front of the oncoming car. He yelled and stabbed the hood of the car with the knife. The passenger of the car exited and attempted to confront Michaelidis. However, [REDACTED] was in his car following Michaelidis and warned the passenger by honking his horn and telling the driver, “Go! Go!” (Figure 7).

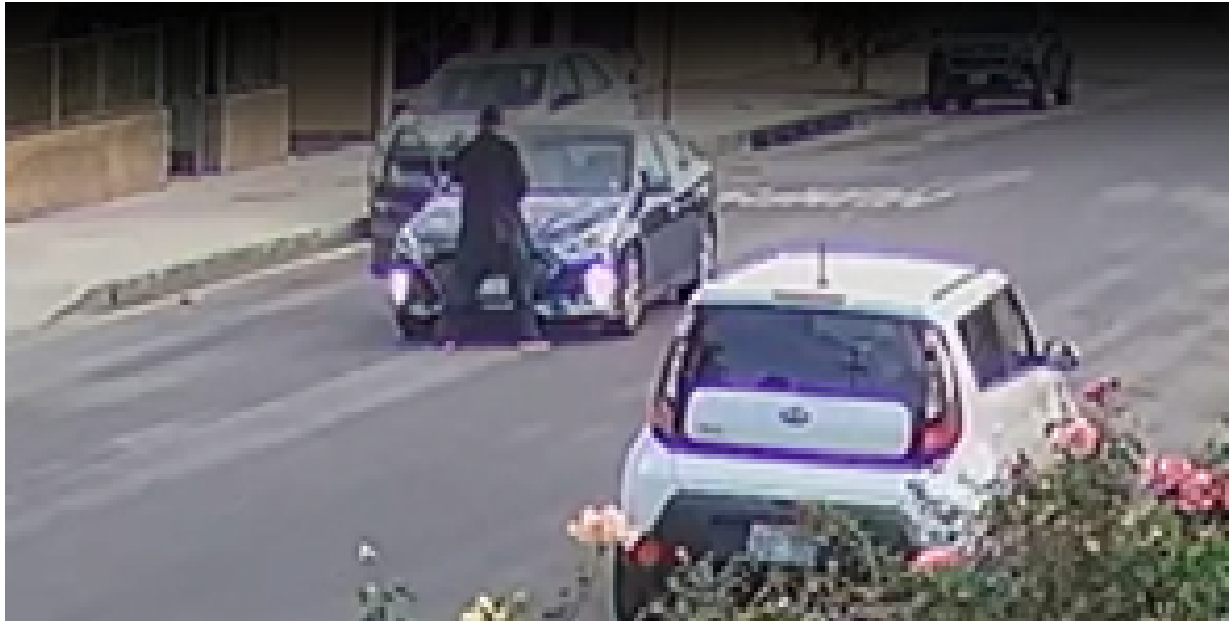


Figure 7: Michaelidis ran to the middle of the street and stood in the way of an oncoming car. When the car stopped in front of him, he stabbed the hood of the car multiple times with the knife.

Officers Francesca Mattamira and Laura Alvarez responded to the 9-1-1 call. Officer Mattamira observed Michaelidis standing in the middle of the road, holding both knives. The officers exited the patrol car and stood behind their doors with their service weapons unholstered. Michaelidis was approximately 50 feet away, holding a knife in each hand as he walked in the officers' direction. As he moved closer to the officers, they repeatedly ordered him to stop and drop the knives.

Officers Edgar Benavides, Bryan Morales, Ashley Castillo, and Gabriel Garcia responded to the radio call. They arrived approximately five seconds after Officers Mattamira and Alvarez. Michaelidis came within 15 feet of Officer Alvarez and Mattamira's patrol car. As other officers arrived, Michaelidis walked back 15 feet (away from the officers). He held both knives between the palms of his hands, blades pointed down, and began reciting the Lord's Prayer in Armenian.

Michaelidis dropped one of the knives and made additional statements in Armenian. Officer Castillo's BWV recorded the statements. Michaelidis told the officers in Armenian, "Shoot me! Shoot me! That's what I want!"

Michaelidis dropped to his knees and held the second knife to his chest with both of his hands. While the officers mentally prepared themselves for Michaelidis stabbing himself in front of them, they weighed the consequences of using less lethal weapons which might provoke Michaelidis into escalating his behavior.

Michaelidis remained on his knees and repeated "Amen" in Armenian while the officers tried to de-escalate the situation by telling Michaelidis, "We want to help you. We are here to help you . . ." Michaelidis yelled back, accusing the officers of being "devils."

Michaelidis stood up while holding the knife in his right hand. Using his right hand, Michaelidis pointed to each one of the officers, counting aloud in English before making the "sign of the cross."

From approximately 30 feet away, Michaelidis began walking toward the officers. The officers gave Michaelidis orders to “Stop! Put the knife down! Back up!”

Michaelidis stood approximately 19 feet away from officers Alvarez, Garcia, and Castillo when Officer Mattamira discharged her 40mm (Less Lethal Launcher) at Michaelidis’ lower abdomen, 0.072 second after Officer Mattamira discharged her weapon Officer Castillo discharged her beanbag shotgun at Michaelidis’ torso, and 0.345 and 0.670 seconds later Officer Morales yelled, “Hey! Stop right there! Don’t do it!” before firing two rounds from his service weapon at Michaelidis. Officer McComas discharged one round from his 40mm at 0.670 seconds. Both rounds from Officer Morales’ service weapon hit Michaelidis in the chest, killing him. It is unclear whether Michaelidis was still moving forward towards the officers when he was hit by the rounds from Officer Morales’ service weapon.

WITNESS STATEMENTS

██████████.

On October 31, 2021, at approximately 2:35 p.m., ██████████ received a call from his mother. She told ██████████ that the tenant who resided at ██████████ Matilija Avenue was being difficult and uncooperative. According to ██████████, his mother believed that Michaelidis was on “some type of drugs or narcotic.”

██████████ arrived at the residence within three minutes of his mother’s call. He saw water flooding underneath the front door from open faucets and heard the “pilot” from the gas stove. When Michaelidis would not respond to ██████████ questions, ██████████ immediately shut off the gas and water to the home and called Michaelidis’ family members.

For approximately an hour, ██████████ tried to communicate with Michaelidis and calm him while he was inside the residence. Michaelidis made nonsensical statements to ██████████, including “Let go of the teddy bear. You’re not Jesus.” Michaelidis’ uncle arrived at the scene and attempted to communicate with Michaelidis. When both Michaelidis’ uncle and ██████████ were unsuccessful in communicating with Michaelidis, ██████████ called the LAPD.

Approximately five to 10 minutes after ██████████ called, LAPD officers and the fire department paramedics arrived at the location. Officers were on the scene for about an hour. During that time, Michaelidis’ family members arrived at the location and attempted to calm him.

The efforts to communicate with Michaelidis were unsuccessful. An LAPD supervisor told ██████████ that the LAPD would not forcefully remove Michaelidis from the property. Michaelidis’ family members believed if the officers left the property, they would have a better chance of communicating with Michaelidis.

██████████ stated that since he had arrived at the property, Michaelidis had been inside the residence, breaking the shower door, the toilet, and the bathroom window. ██████████ thought he heard Michaelidis tearing up the tiles in the home. Michaelidis’ family members told ██████████ that Michaelidis uses “crystal meth.”

Michaelidis' family broke down the front door and then the bathroom door. Michaelidis told his uncle, "You are not Jesus. I don't want to talk to you." Michaelidis and his family were screaming at each other when Michaelidis exited the bathroom armed with two knives. Michaelidis held one of the knives to his throat and attacked a cousin with the other knife. [REDACTED] stated that Michaelidis came within two to three feet of his cousin with the blade and was "dead set on trying to stab his own cousin" while the cousin defended himself with a chair and a pipe. Michaelidis turned and ran out the front door and down the street.

[REDACTED] called 9-1-1 again. [REDACTED] followed in his car as Michaelidis walked down the street, vandalizing parked cars. Michaelidis stood in the middle of the street as a car approached. He blocked their path and then stabbed the hood of the car. When the driver got out of the car to confront Michaelidis, [REDACTED] honked his horn and yelled at the driver, warning him not to engage with Michaelidis.

[REDACTED] continued to watch as Michaelidis walked to Victory Boulevard and stood in the center divider of the street. [REDACTED] stated that once the officers left the residence the first time, Michaelidis told his family member to "get them (the officers) back in." [REDACTED] could hear the police sirens on Victory Boulevard and saw Michaelidis turn in the direction of the sirens and run towards Victory Boulevard. [REDACTED] believed that Michaelidis wanted to "encounter the officers."

[REDACTED] saw four or five patrol vehicles approach Michaelidis, standing in the middle of the street. He heard the officers tell Michaelidis to drop the knives. Michaelidis had both knives pointed at his neck as officers gave him orders to drop the knives. [REDACTED] heard two officers yell, "non-lethal!" One of the female officers told Michaelidis, "Hey, you know--don't do it! You know there is more to life than this!"

It appeared to [REDACTED] that Michaelidis wanted to "engage the officers." [REDACTED] told investigators, "[T]he way he was approaching [the officers] with his knife pointed at the officers, it was as if--if you were to have a confrontation or a fight with somebody how you would kind of broaden your shoulders and walk up to somebody, that was what his demeanor was."

[REDACTED] described the scene as Michaelidis dropped down on one knee:

"[Michaelidis] is on his knees and did [the sign of the cross]. [He] waved the knives around . . . in very, very dangerous ways, potentially trying to harm himself. Then he stood up. He pointed his knife at the officers and started counting people as of these [sic] many people are after me. And then that's when he approached the officers. I want to say he took maybe three or four steps. Officers told him to drop the [knives]. They [sic] didn't. Three or four shots later, he's down on the ground."

[REDACTED] told investigators that Michaelidis was a tenant for one and a half to two years and lived in the residence with his wife. However, approximately six months before the incident, Michaelidis' wife told [REDACTED] that she was leaving because Michaelidis was "taking drugs." Michaelidis told [REDACTED] that he wanted to go back to Greece. On the day of the incident, Michaelidis was supposed to vacate the property.

██████████.

██████████ was in his apartment when he heard screaming. He stepped outside his home and saw 30-50 people outside watching the police and [Michaelidis] in the street. ██████████ heard people yelling, “Drop the knife, drop the knife! Drop the knife! You’re going to get shot! You’re going to get shot! Drop it, drop it, drop it!”

He saw [Michaelidis] drop to his knees for three to four minutes, and ██████████ believed [Michaelidis] was praying. Six to seven people ██████████ believed were relatives of [Michaelidis], were screaming in Armenian to [Michaelidis], “Do not get up! Stay down! Stay down! Stay down!” ██████████ speaks both English and Armenian and heard people yelling, “Drop the knife!” in both languages.

██████████ saw [Michaelidis] with the knife in his hand get up and take two steps toward the officers. He heard the officers warn [Michaelidis] again, “Drop the knife!” He saw [Michaelidis] take two more steps toward the officers when ██████████ heard two shots and saw [Michaelidis] get hit by the “beanbag.” ██████████ saw [Michaelidis] pointing the knife at the officers, and he heard another two shots after the first two shots and saw [Michaelidis] fall to the ground.

Officer Dragos Burecu

Officer Dragos Burecu (“Burecu”) and his partner, Officer Daniel McComas (“McComas”), responded to a radio call of vandalism at a residence on Matilija Street. When they arrived, ██████████ told them that the individual who lived in the home had changed the locks and barricaded himself inside. Burecu observed water pouring out from inside the house and heard Michaelidis screaming and yelling while vandalizing the inside.

Burecu climbed a small ladder and looked inside the residence through a broken window. He saw Michaelidis standing fully clothed in the shower. Michaelidis was bleeding on his arms from multiple cuts, but they did not appear to Burecu to be life-threatening. Burecu told investigators that at one point, Michaelidis appeared in the bathroom window and looked at the officers while pointing his finger at his head (simulating holding a gun).

Michaelidis repeatedly told officers, “Pistol.” Burecu also heard the words, “Cristos, Jesus, Jesus.” The Mental Evaluation Unit was notified, and since Michaelidis did not pose a threat to himself or others while locked in his home, the officers tactically disengaged from the residence.

While on patrol, Burecu heard the call for assistance on Matilija Street and Victory Boulevard, and he and his partner responded. He saw Michaelidis, who was bloody, standing in the middle of the street in what appeared to Burecu to be a “standoff position” (Figure 8). Burecu was concerned about the cross traffic and the crowd of pedestrians trying to capture the incident on their cell phones.



Figure 8: Michaelidis pointed the knives at the officers before walking in their direction.

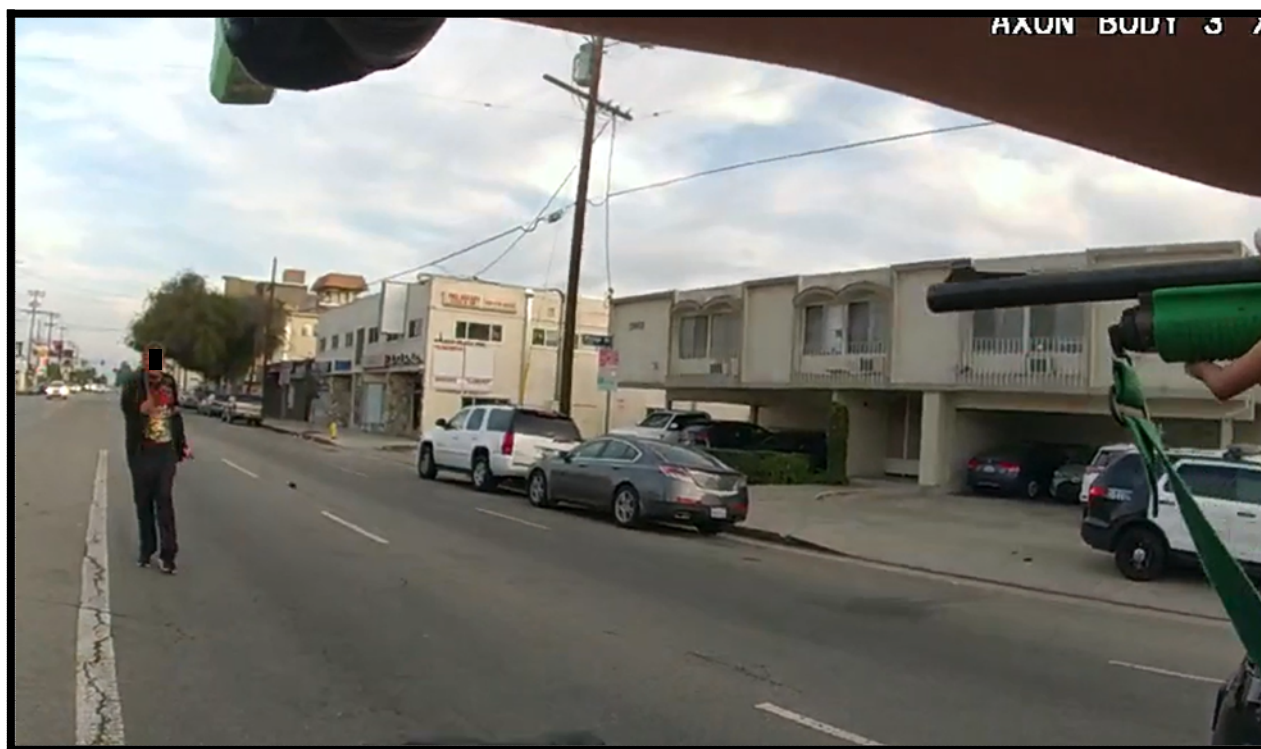


Figure 9: Garcia pointed a TASER at Michaelidis while Castillo held a beanbag shotgun.

He saw three other officers with less lethal weapons and told his partner to grab a “less lethal platform.” His partner, McComas armed himself with a 40mm Less Lethal Launcher (“40mm”).

Once outside their patrol car, Burecu saw “three other (green colored) less than lethal platforms (weapons)” being held by other officers (Figures 9 and 10).

Burecu saw Michaelidis approach the officers while holding one knife to his neck and the other to his abdomen. Michaelidis knelt to the ground and pointed one of the blades “against his carotid (artery)” at his neck and then rose to his feet. Burecu checked the officers to make sure that some of them had lethal and others had less than lethal weapons available. He yelled, “Stop!” and heard other officers tell Michaelidis to drop the knife as Michaelidis walked towards them with knives in both hands. The officers fired their weapons, and Burecu heard a combination of sounds from a gunshot, the beanbag, and the 40mm.

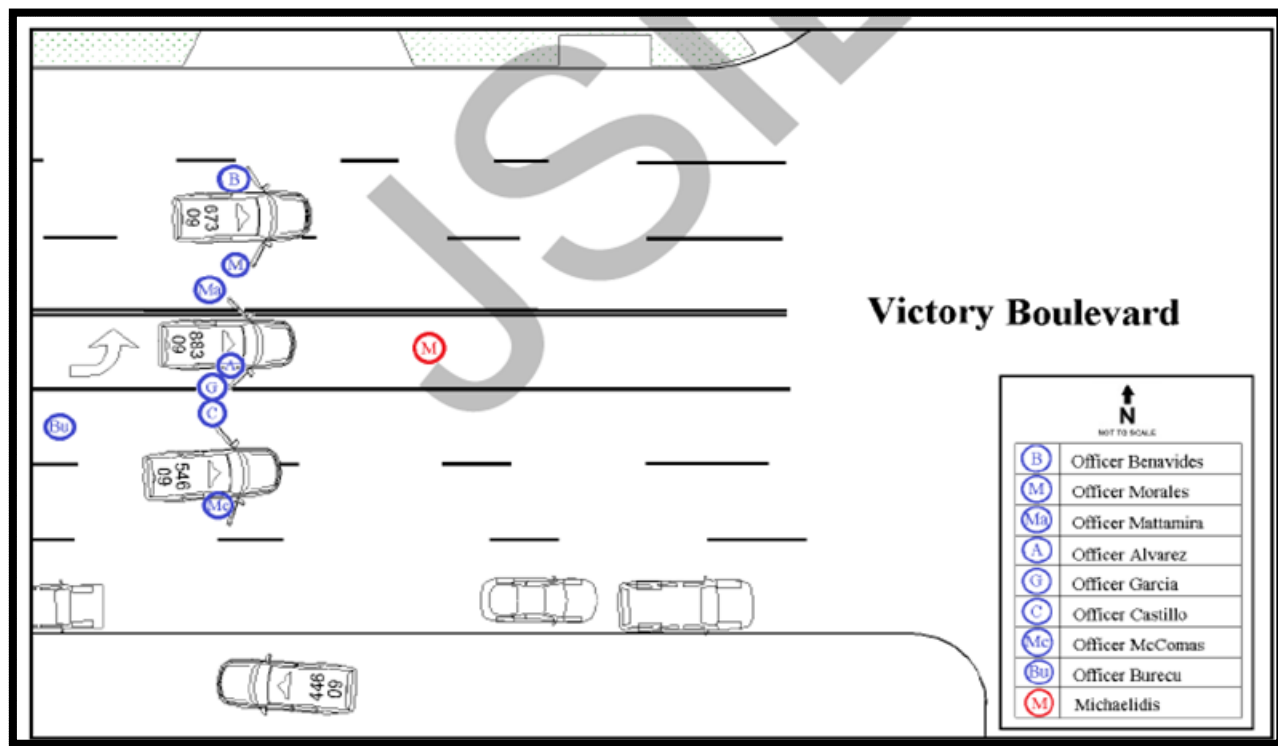


Figure 10: Officers' positions on Victory Boulevard.

As the officers rendered first aid to Michaelidis, Burecu observed the two knives on the ground next to Michaelidis. One of the knives was a blade without a handle, and the other was approximately eight to ten inches long. Burecu took chalk from his supply bag and circled the knives on the ground to increase their visibility for later evidence documentation and collection.

Burecu called for a supervisor to respond to the location because there was an officer-involved shooting. Sergeant Kreitzman arrived and assumed the duty of incident commander.

Officer Daniel McComas

While Michaelidis was in the bathroom of his residence, family member [REDACTED] pleaded with Michaelidis to calm down and talk to him. That conversation was recorded on McComas' BWV and translated by an interpreter.

Michaelidis asked McComas if he was a Christian. McComas responded, “Yes.” Michaelidis recited the Lord’s Prayer in Armenian. [REDACTED] asked Michaelidis if he could help him. [REDACTED] told Michaelidis, “I take your pain away.” Michaelidis asked him, “Did you want a sacrifice? You promised? For whom?” Michaelidis said, “I will die. You too. Then you say be my brother. If you are the Satan, go to Satan.” Michaelidis began reciting the Lord’s Prayer again. Michaelidis threw objects out the window and told [REDACTED], “Take the gun and ‘bang’ me! Take the gun and shoot me. If you do not, I will do it.”

Officer Ashley Castillo

Officer Castillo’s BWV captured Michaelidis’ statements moments before the shooting while he was standing in the middle of the street. The statements made in Armenian were translated and transcribed by a Los Angeles Superior Court Certified Court Interpreter.

In Castillo’s BWV, a female officer yells, “Hey, drop the knife, hey!” Michaelidis responded, “Do it now!” A second female officer yelled, “Drop the knife, drop it. I’m gonna shoot him, I am gonna hit him.” Michaelidis yelled in Armenian, “Shoot me! Shoot me! That’s what I want!” Michaelidis made a few more additional statements, including “All of you are devils” and “Christian is the devil . . .” before he was shot.

The Knives



Figure 11: 13-inch Faberware knife used by Michaelidis

Criminalists collected and booked the knives that Michaelidis held during the incident. One of the knives was a 13-inch Faberware kitchen knife (Figure 11). The blade was approximately eight inches long. A portion of the handle was missing and recovered near the area where Michaelidis was vandalizing the cars.

The second knife, held by Michaelidis, was a straight-edged Delmonico’s Chef’s knife (Figure 12). The total length of the blade was approximately 9.5 inches, and the straight edge of the blade was eight inches long. The knife’s odd appearance led several of the officers to believe that Michaelidis was holding a broken piece of glass.



Figure 12: 9.5-inch knife used by Michaelidis as he approached the officers.

FIREARMS EVIDENCE

Mattamira was the first to discharge her weapon, a single 40mm round intended for Michaelidis' navel area, when he was approximately 26 feet away. Castillo fired a single beanbag round from 22 feet, and McComas discharged a single round from his 40mm from approximately 36 feet. Michaelidis was approximately 19 feet away from Alvarez, Garcia, and Castillo when Morales fired his weapon two times (Figure 13).

Round	Relative Time	Action
1	0.000 Seconds	Officer Mattamira discharged one 40mm round
2	0.072 Seconds	Officer Castillo discharged one beanbag round
3	0.345 Seconds	Officer Morales fired one round from his handgun
4	0.670 Seconds	Officer Morales fired a second round from his handgun
5	0.744 Seconds	Officer McComas discharged one 40mm round

Figure 13: Timing of the weapons used by the officers.

AUTOPSY

On November 3, 2021, Los Angeles County Medical Examiner Dr. Jacquelyn Morhaime performed an autopsy of Michaelidis. Michaelidis suffered two gunshot wounds to his torso. One of the gunshot wounds perforated the right and left ventricles of Michaelidis' heart and the upper lobe of his left lung and exited his lateral torso.

The second penetrating gunshot wound entered his posterolateral torso, fracturing his seventh and eighth right ribs. The projectile's path perforated the right lung, the vertebral column, the aorta, and the left lung. The projectile was lodged in the soft tissue of his body and recovered by Dr. Morhaime. Dr. Morhaime attributed Michaelidis' death to "gunshot wounds of the torso."

While Dr. Morhaime did not attribute any of Michaelidis' injuries to less lethal force, she identified an ecchymosis (i.e., bruising) to Michaelidis' lower right quadrant [of his abdomen].

The characteristics of the injury are consistent with the impact of a 40mm round hitting Michaelidis' body. Dr. Morhaime also identified an ecchymosis on Michaelidis' right chest at the pectoral muscle. The characteristics of the injury are consistent with the impact of a beanbag round fired by Officer Castillo.

Dr. Morhaime documented numerous superficial sharp injuries (incised wounds) on the skin of the body as well as multiple superficial sharp injuries on the head and upper extremities, where witnesses observed bleeding on Michaelidis (before he was contacted by officers).

TOXICOLOGY

On February 13, 2022, Los Angeles County Department of Medical Examiner-Coroner Supervising Criminalist Sarah Buxton de Quintana conducted a toxicology exam on Michaelidis' blood. The analysis confirmed the presence of amphetamine and methamphetamine in Michaelidis' system at the time of his death.

LEGAL ANALYSIS

The Law

A peace officer is justified in using deadly force when the officer reasonably believes, based on the totality of the circumstances, that such force is necessary for either of the following reasons: (1) to defend against an imminent threat of death or serious bodily injury to the officer or another person; or (2) to apprehend a fleeing person for any felony that threatened or resulted in death or serious bodily injury if the officer reasonably believes that the person will cause death or serious bodily injury to another unless immediately apprehended. Penal Code section 835a(c)(1)(A) &(B).

Deadly force shall be used "only when necessary in defense of human life," and officers "shall use other available resources and techniques if reasonably safe and feasible to an objectively reasonable officer." Penal Code section 835a(a)(2).

"A threat of death or serious bodily injury is 'imminent' when, based on the totality of the circumstances, a reasonable officer in the same situation would believe that a person has the present ability, opportunity, and apparent intent to immediately cause death or serious bodily to the peace officer or another person. An imminent harm is not merely a fear of future harm, no matter how great the fear and no matter how great the likelihood of the harm, but is one that, from appearances, must be instantly confronted and addressed." Penal Code section 835a(e)(2).

When considering the totality of the circumstances, all facts known to or perceived by the peace officer at the time, including the conduct of the officer and the subject leading up to the use of deadly force, are taken into consideration. Penal Code section 835a(a)(4) and (e)(3). The peace officer's decision to use force is not evaluated with the benefit of hindsight and shall account for occasions when officers may be forced to make quick judgments about using force. Penal Code section 835a(a)(4).

Analysis

There is sufficient evidence to show Morales reasonably believed, based on the totality of the circumstances, that deadly force was necessary to defend himself and others against an imminent threat of death or serious bodily injury.

Morales was one of the first officers called to the scene while Michaelidis barricaded himself in his residence. Morales was told that Michaelidis was possibly on “crystal meth,” cutting himself and threatening to harm others by blowing up his residence. Morales could see Michaelidis was bloody from self-inflicted wounds. When officers looked through the window, Michaelidis simulated shooting a gun at his head and said, “Pistol.”

Statements made by Michaelidis while the officers were at his home were translated from the BWV. He told his family that he wanted the officers to shoot and kill him. He stated, “Take the gun and ‘bang’ me! Take the gun and shoot me. If you do not, I will do it.”

After the officers left the location, Michaelidis’ family broke into his residence. He tried to stab his cousin with one of the knives. The cousin had to use a chair and a metal pipe to keep Michaelidis from stabbing him.

Michaelidis left the residence with the knives, looking to engage others. He was armed with two knives, one of which he used to stab the hood of a car. ██████ believed that Michaelidis had left his residence and specifically wanted to “engage” the officers.

While in the middle of the street, Michaelidis knelt on the ground and said the Lord’s Prayer. When he rose to his feet, he refused all commands to drop the knife and pleas from his family who were present. Right before Michaelidis stepped forward toward the officers, he yelled at them in Armenian, “Shoot me! Shoot me! That’s what I want!”

Based on Michaelidis’ violent and erratic behavior towards himself and other people-including family, it was reasonable for Morales to believe that Michaelidis intended to immediately cause serious bodily injury to him and others when he approached the officers. As a result, based on the totality of the circumstances, Morales’ use of deadly force was necessary to defend against an imminent deadly threat.

CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, we find that based on the totality of the circumstances known or perceived by Officer Bryan Morales at the time, he reasonably believed it was necessary to use deadly force to defend against an imminent threat of death or serious bodily injury.