

**Officer Involved Shooting of Trenton Lovell
Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department**

Deputy Zachary Anderson, #600527

J.S.I.D. File #17-0374



JACKIE LACEY

District Attorney

Justice System Integrity Division

April 2, 2018

MEMORANDUM

TO: CAPTAIN CHRISTOPHER BERGNER
Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department
Homicide Bureau
1 Cupania Circle
Monterey Park, California 91755

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

SUBJECT: Officer Involved Shooting of Trenton Lovell
J.S.I.D. File #17-0374
L.A.S.D. File #016-17669-1127-011

DATE: April 2, 2018

The Justice System Integrity Division (JSID) of the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office has completed its review of the October 5, 2016, non-fatal shooting of Trenton Lovell by Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD) Deputy Zachary Anderson. We have determined that Deputy Anderson acted in lawful self-defense when he fired his duty weapon, and he used lawful force in attempting to arrest Lovell, who had committed an atrocious felony.

LASD is a signatory to the protocol that mandates the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office participate in the investigation of all incidents within Los Angeles County where a peace officer, on or off duty, shoots and injures any person. LASD failed to notify the District Attorney's Command Center of this shooting. As a result, the District Attorney Response Team did not respond to the location of the shooting, and did not receive a briefing, nor a walk-through of the scene.

The following analysis is based on reports, recorded interviews, emergency calls, radio transmissions, and photographs submitted to this office by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Homicide Bureau. No compelled statements were considered in this analysis.

FACTUAL ANALYSIS

On October 5, 2016, Trenton Lovell was living with his sister at 3230 West Avenue J-6. At approximately 12:00 p.m., Lovell broke and shattered the rear sliding glass door of a two-story, single-family residence located at [REDACTED] West Avenue J-7.¹ Lovell entered the residence, armed with a five-shot revolver. Mariah A., who was present with her infant in an upstairs bedroom, and Elijah A., who was in another upstairs bedroom, discovered the burglary soon thereafter

¹ The backyard of the residence neighbors the apartment complex where Lovell lived, separated by a cinder block wall.

when they observed the shattered glass. Mariah called the police to report the burglary, and Elijah checked downstairs and determined that the intruder had already left.

Sergeant Steven Owen was the primary unit responding to the burglary call. He was in uniform and driving a marked black and white police vehicle. At 12:27 p.m., Owen broadcasted over the radio that he had the suspect at gunpoint. Then, Lovell fired a single round from his .38 special revolver² at Owen, striking him in the head. Lovell approached Owen, who was laying on his back, and fired four more rounds at Owen, killing him.

Statement of Trenton Lovell

Lovell stated that Owen chased him and told him to “freeze” as Lovell approached the front door of his residence. Lovell stated he fired one round at Owen, striking him in the face. Lovell then “walked up and [he] finished the job.” Lovell said that he “emptied the whole five shots” from his revolver.³

Statement of Deputy Zachary Anderson

On the evening of the shooting, LASD investigators interviewed Anderson. Anderson stated that he was a secondary unit responding “Code 3” to an “emergent call for a 459 now” at [REDACTED] West Avenue J-7. Anderson was in full uniform, driving his marked patrol car northbound on 32nd Street West when he saw another patrol car, driven by Owen, travelling southbound on 32nd Street West with its lights on. Anderson observed Owen turn westbound on West Avenue J-6, and then heard Owen broadcast over the radio that the suspect was running westbound.

Anderson turned west on West Avenue J-6 in the same direction he saw Owen’s patrol car travel. Anderson next heard Owen’s radio broadcast that the suspect jumped the fence into the apartment complex. Just prior to turning into the apartment complex parking lot, Anderson heard Owen broadcast over the radio, “Detaining at gunpoint.” As Anderson drove southbound into the parking lot, he heard three to four gunshots. Initially, Anderson believed that Owen had shot the suspect.

Anderson drove eastbound and turned the corner southbound inside the complex. He saw Owen laying on his back to the rear of the driver’s side of his patrol car, which was pointed in a southwest direction. He saw Lovell walking over Owen’s body, and entering the driver’s seat of Owen’s patrol car. Anderson realized that Lovell had shot and killed Owen. Anderson put his car into park and exited. He ordered Lovell to get on the ground. Lovell entered and exited Owen’s car and pointed his revolver at Anderson. Anderson believed Lovell was going to shoot and kill him, and he immediately fired several rounds at Lovell as Lovell again entered the driver’s seat of Owen’s car.

Anderson fired additional rounds at Lovell, as Lovell drove Owen’s car in reverse such that it came to rest with the front of the car pointed in Anderson’s direction to the north. Anderson could not see Lovell, who had crouched down in the driver’s seat. When Anderson stopped

² The revolver was identified as stolen from a residential burglary in Thousand Oaks that occurred in March 2016.

³ Lovell’s statement was recorded and made to LASD investigators following his arrest.

shooting, he saw Lovell sit up quickly and believed that Lovell was going to shoot him, so Anderson fired more rounds at Lovell.

Lovell then drove Owen's patrol car directly at Anderson, who was standing next to the driver side of his patrol car. Lovell accelerated and slightly turned into Anderson's patrol car, crashing into the front right side of Anderson's patrol car. After the crash, Anderson realized his magazine was empty and reloaded as he moved south for better cover. Simultaneously, Lovell exited Owen's patrol car and fled westbound through the parking lot and northbound out of the exit to the apartment complex. Anderson did not fire additional rounds at Lovell as he ran away. Anderson broadcasted Lovell's direction of travel over the radio, including his observations of Lovell jumping the fences of houses north of the apartment complex. Anderson waited with Owen for help to arrive. When additional deputies arrived, Anderson and other deputies moved Owen to the back of a LASD sport utility vehicle and rushed him to the hospital, where Owen succumbed to his injuries.

Other evidence

After Lovell fled from the apartment complex property, he jumped several walls and entered a neighboring house on Mariposa Drive via a glass sliding-door in the back of the residence. He took two teenagers, a 17 year-old and a 19 year-old, hostage at knifepoint for approximately one hour. During this time, the teenagers were able to send text messages, which alerted LASD personnel to Lovell's location. LASD personnel set up a containment around the home and took Lovell into custody as he exited the rear of the house and walked into the yard. Lovell complied with commands and was handcuffed without further incident.

After his arrest, Lovell was medically treated for a single through and through gunshot wound to his shoulder, and released for booking the same day. Anderson fired a total of 18 rounds at Lovell, but struck him only one time. Eighteen cartridge casings from Anderson's semiautomatic service weapon were recovered at the scene. Anderson's rounds struck Owen's patrol car several times on the right and front sides, including the windshield, and shattering several windows.



Owen's patrol car depicting several bullet holes, and front end damage resulting from the crash into Anderson's patrol car.

Lovell left his revolver in Owen's patrol car. The handgun was a .38 caliber, five-shot revolver with five fired cartridge cases located in its five chambers.



Lovell's revolver inside Owen's patrol car on the driver's seat.

Investigators conducted a burglary investigation at Maria and Elijah's residence. They observed broken glass on the floor of the dining area where Lovell made entry, and saw a small drop of blood on the wall of the dining room. The DNA profile obtained from the bloodstain matched the profile from Lovell.

Lovell is currently charged in case number MA069699 with several felony counts including the murder of Sergeant Steve Owen, the attempted murder of Deputy Zachary Anderson, the residential burglary of Maria's home, and the false imprisonment and residential robbery of the teenagers he took hostage before he was arrested. The matter is presently set for preliminary hearing on April 16, 2018.

LEGAL ANALYSIS

California law permits the use of deadly force in self-defense or in the defense of another if the person claiming the right of self-defense actually and reasonably believed that he was in imminent danger of great bodily injury or death. People v. Randle (2005) 35 Cal.4th 987, 994; People v. Mercer (1962) 210 Cal.App.2d 153, 161.

In protecting himself or another, a person may use that amount of force which he believes reasonably necessary and which would appear to a reasonable person, in the same or similar circumstances, to be necessary to prevent imminent injury. CALCRIM No. 505.

In California, the evaluation of the reasonableness of a police officer's use of deadly force employs a reasonable person acting as a police officer standard. People v. Mehserle (2012) 206 Cal.App.4th 1125, 1146, holding that California law "follows the objective 'reasonable person' standard—the trier of fact is required to evaluate the conduct of a reasonable person in the

defendant's position. [Citations omitted] [the jury should consider all relevant circumstances surrounding the defendant's conduct]. This enables the jury to evaluate the conduct of a reasonable person functioning as a police officer in a stressful situation—but this is not the same as following a special ‘reasonable police officer’ standard.”

In evaluating whether a police officer’s use of deadly force was reasonable in a specific situation, it is helpful to draw guidance from the objective standard of reasonableness adopted in civil actions alleging Fourth Amendment violations. “The ‘reasonableness’ of a particular use of force must be judged from the perspective of a reasonable officer on the scene, rather than with the 20/20 vision of hindsight... The calculus of reasonableness must embody allowance for the fact that police officers are often forced to make split-second judgments—in circumstances that are tense, uncertain, and rapidly evolving—about the amount of force that is necessary in a particular situation.” Graham v. Connor (1989) 490 U.S. 386, 396-397.

Furthermore, California law permits the use of deadly force by police officers when necessary to effect the arrest of a person who has committed a forcible and atrocious felony. Murder is a forcible and atrocious crime. Penal Code section 197.4; People v. Ceballos (1974) 12 Cal.3d 470.

CONCLUSION

On October 5, 2016, Lovell committed a burglary of an occupied residence. During the commission of the residential burglary, Lovell was personally armed with a loaded revolver. Soon thereafter, the residents discovered the shattered glass of the rear door downstairs and called the police. Sergeant Owen was the first to respond and attempted to detain Lovell. Owen momentarily held Lovell at gunpoint. Lovell fired one shot at Owen, striking him in the head. Lovell then walked to Owen, stood over him and shot him four more times. Lovell murdered Owen, who was engaged in the performance of his lawful duty, and thus committed an atrocious felony.

While responding to assist Owen, Anderson heard gunshots. Upon arriving at the scene, Anderson saw Lovell standing over Owen’s body and accurately believed that Lovell shot and killed Owen. Anderson ordered Lovell to the ground, but Lovell did not comply. He instead pointed his revolver at Anderson. Anderson fired 18 rounds at Lovell, as Lovell got into Owen’s patrol car and drove it directly at Anderson. Anderson struck Lovell with one round in his shoulder before Lovell fled the scene on foot.

We find that Anderson’s use of deadly force was both reasonable to stop the deadly threat posed by Lovell, and to effectuate his arrest for the murder of Sergeant Steven Owen. Accordingly, we find that Deputy Anderson acted both in lawful self-defense, and by lawful means in attempting to apprehend Trenton Lovell when he used deadly force. We are closing our file and will take no further action in this matter.