

**Officer Involved Shooting of Kenney Ahmad Watkins
Los Angeles Police Department**

Officer Evan Urias, #38412

J.S.I.D. File #16-0412



JACKIE LACEY

District Attorney

JUSTICE SYSTEM INTEGRITY DIVISION

September 21, 2017

MEMORANDUM

TO: COMMANDER ROBERT A. LOPEZ
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: Officer Involved Shooting of Kenney Ahmad Watkins
J.S.I.D. File #16-0412
F.I.D. File #F055-16

DATE: September 21, 2017

The Justice System Integrity Division of the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office has completed its review of the August 16, 2016, fatal shooting of Kenney Ahmad Watkins by Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) Officer Evan Urias. It is our conclusion that Officer Urias acted in lawful self-defense and defense of others.

The District Attorney's Command Center was notified of this shooting on August 16, 2016, at approximately 4:15 p.m. The District Attorney Response Team responded and was given a briefing and walk-through of the scene by Lieutenant Steve Lurie.

The following analysis is based on reports prepared by the LAPD Force Investigation Division, submitted to this office by Lieutenant Steve Lurie, and Detectives Anthony Rheault and Tim Brausam. The reports include photographs, interview transcripts of witnesses, medical reports, radio transmissions, and surveillance video. The compelled statement of Officer Urias was considered in this analysis.

FACTUAL ANALYSIS

Introduction

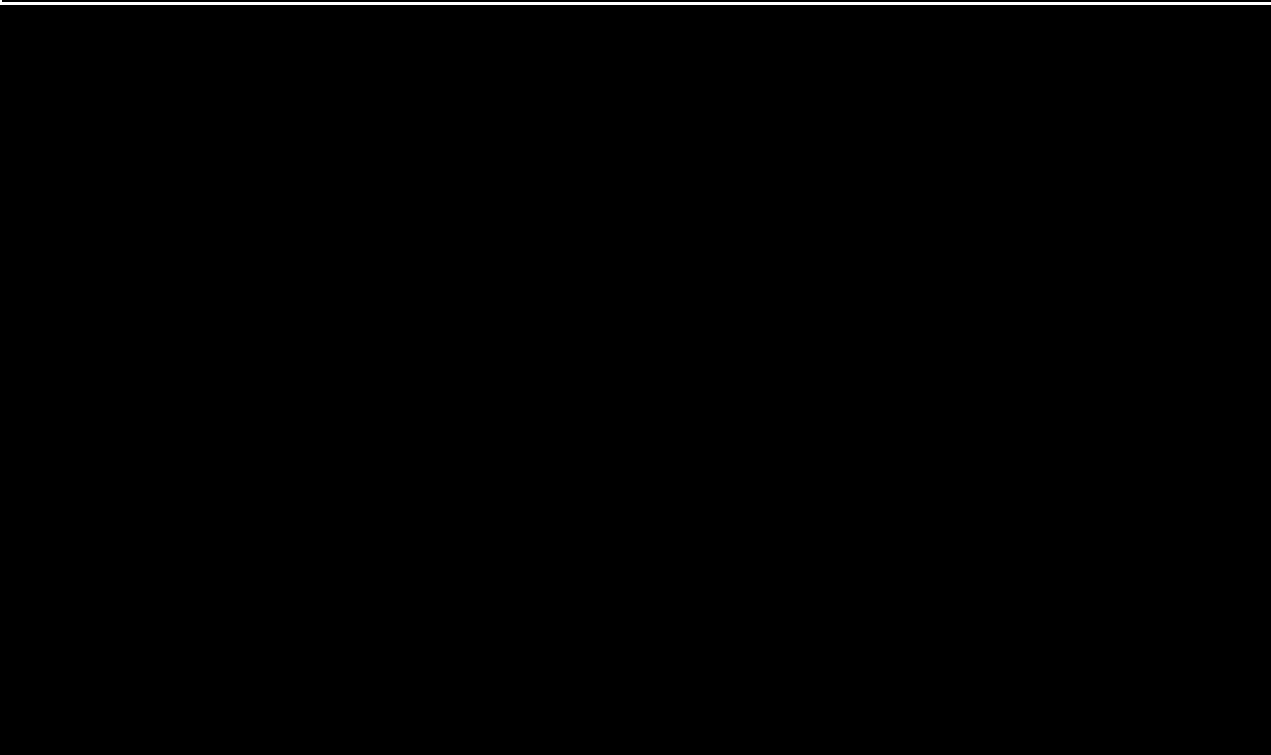
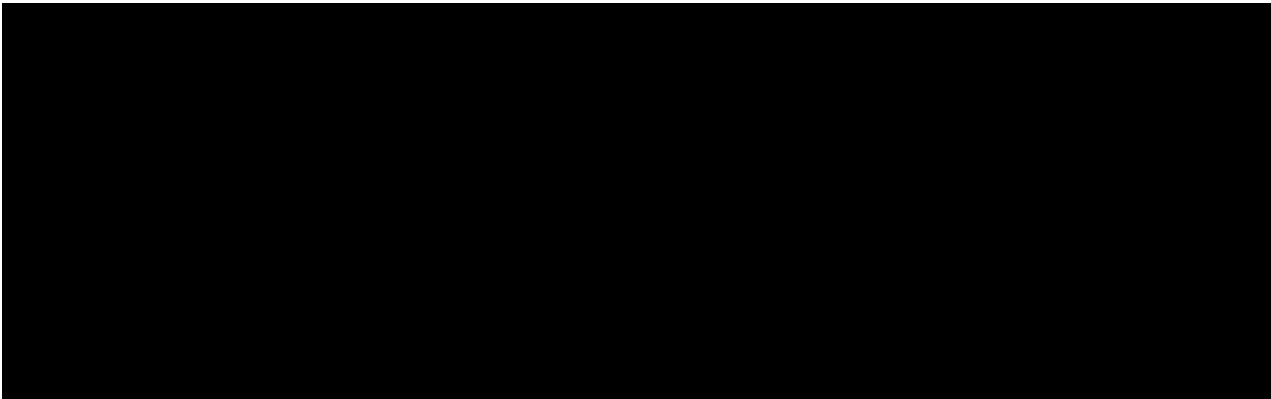
On August 16, 2016, LAPD Officer Evan Urias was conducting patrol on his marked police motorcycle in the area of Figueroa Street and Century Boulevard in the City of Los Angeles. At approximately 3:31 p.m., Urias observed a black Audi driving on Figueroa Street with no front license plate and tinted windows. Urias activated his lights in an attempt to make a traffic stop for the vehicle code violations, however the Audi failed to stop. Urias deactivated his lights and followed the vehicle. Urias saw a man, later identified as Kenney Ahmad Watkins, exit the Audi and run eastbound on Century Boulevard with his hands at his waistband. Urias gave chase to Watkins. He broadcast his pursuit and requested assistance. Urias followed Watkins eastbound on Century Boulevard. Watkins turned into the driveway at [REDACTED] West Century Boulevard. Urias

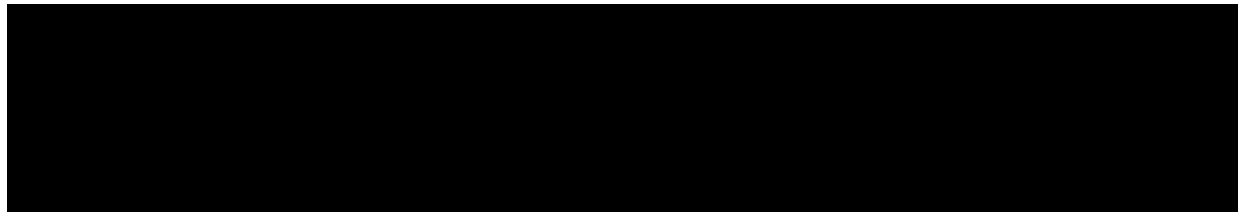
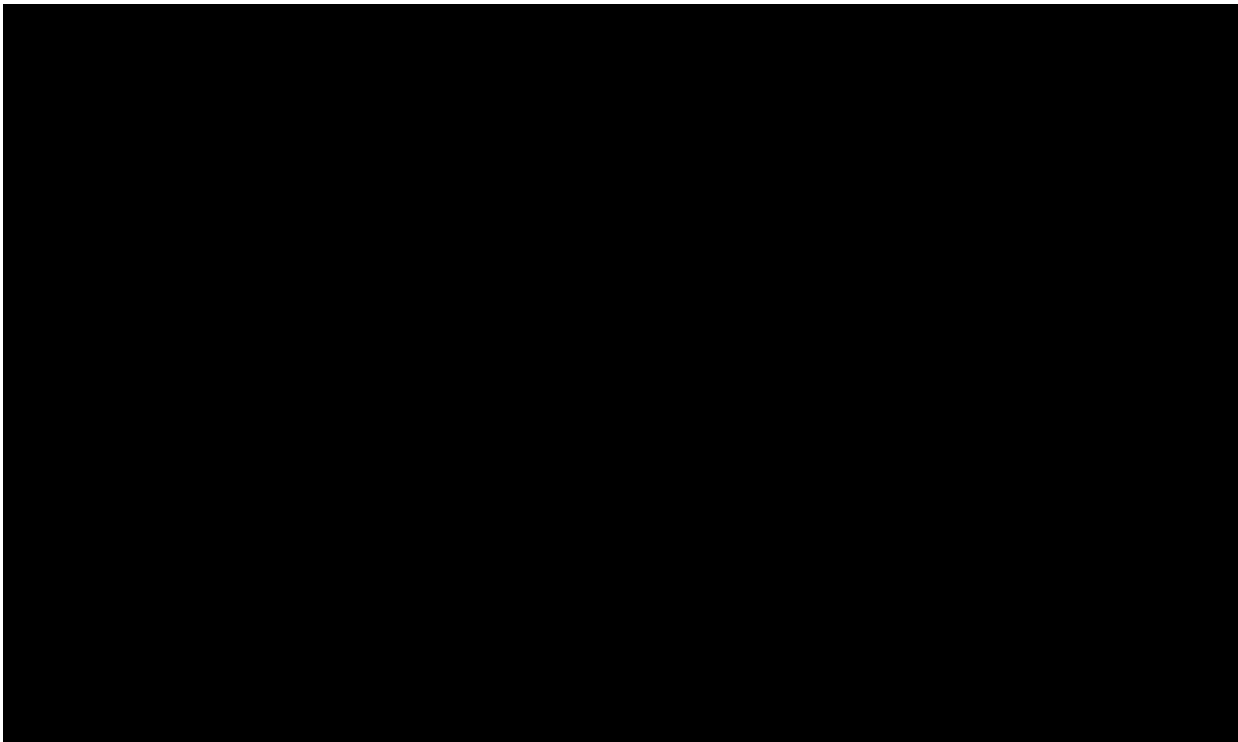
pulled his motorcycle alongside the curb and verbally ordered Watkins to “Get Down!” and “Stop Moving!”

Watkins held a firearm in his left hand, looked over his left shoulder and began to turn left in the direction of Urias. Urias, fearing Watkins would fire his weapon at him, and possibly nearby bystanders on Century Boulevard, remained on his motorcycle, and fired two rounds from his service weapon, striking Watkins.

Urias laid his motorcycle on the ground and approached Watkins. Urias broadcast a shots fired call at approximately 3:32 p.m. and requested backup. Additional LAPD officers arrived to assist and observed Watkins lying on the driveway with two handguns lying approximately three feet to the east of Watkins’ body. The officers handcuffed Watkins and administered medical support for a single gunshot wound. LAFD Paramedics arrived at the location at approximately 3:40 p.m., determined there were no signs of life, and pronounced Watkins’ death at 3:48 p.m.

Statement of Officer Evan Urias





Statement of Calvin G.

Calvin G. was driving eastbound in the number one lane on Century Boulevard when he saw a young man, approximately in his 20s, later identified as Watkins, running past Figueroa Street and the 76 Gas Station on the sidewalk.⁸ Calvin G. noticed Watkins was holding a pistol in each hand and slowed down to get a closer look. Calvin G. believed he was approximately 15 feet from Watkins and described his facial expression as a “blank look” and as if “he was trying to get away from something.” He described the pistols as one bigger than the other with the bigger pistol silver in color and the smaller pistol black in color. He believed both guns were semiautomatic pistols. Calvin G. believed the bigger pistol was held in Watkins’ right hand and the smaller pistol was held in Watkins’ left hand. Calvin G. then saw Urias pull alongside of him, on his right, in the number two lane, while Watkins was still running down the sidewalk. He saw Watkins look over his left shoulder and saw Urias, approximately 12 feet away from Watkins, fire two rounds at Watkins. Watkins fell to the ground and Urias laid his motorcycle down on the street as if he lost control of it.

Following the shooting, Calvin G. pulled into the middle lane and parked. He saw Urias step away to a corner west of where Watkins was lying with his weapon pointed at Watkins. Calvin G. saw the two pistols on the ground approximately three feet east of Watkins. Watkins was lying on his right side and moved a little before going still as additional officers arrived at the scene.⁹

Statement of Jonathan C.

Jonathan C. was sitting in the living room of his home on Century Boulevard, when he heard Urias yell, “Get down,” drawing his attention to outside. As he walked to shut his front door, he heard Urias yell “Stop moving! Stop moving!” Jonathan C. saw Watkins and stated “he was running towards the south fence across the street, and he was looking like he was getting ready to hop the fence.” Jonathan C. described Watkins’ body as being in a “sideways” position, with his right side exposed to Urias. Approximately two seconds later, Jonathan C. heard two shots, looked across the street, and saw Watkins collapse to the ground.¹⁰ Jonathan C. stepped outside onto his front porch and saw Urias take approximately three steps back, away from Watkins to the west. Urias got on his radio with his left hand, while holding his service weapon with his right hand, pointed in Watkins’ direction.

Following the shooting, Jonathan C. took a cell phone video of the scene. The video shows Urias standing at the curb, to the west of the driveway between [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] West Century Boulevard, covering Watkins at gunpoint as Watkins lay in the driveway.

⁸ Watkins was running in the same direction of travel as Calvin G. was traveling.

⁹ Calvin G. made a statement to investigators, “I don’t think that the officer was at fault. You know? I’m not saying he was at fault because a guy running down the street with two real pistols like that, he – he had to be crazy..... for officer safety, you know, the officer, you know? You know, you’re on a motorcycle and the kid’s got the pistols.”

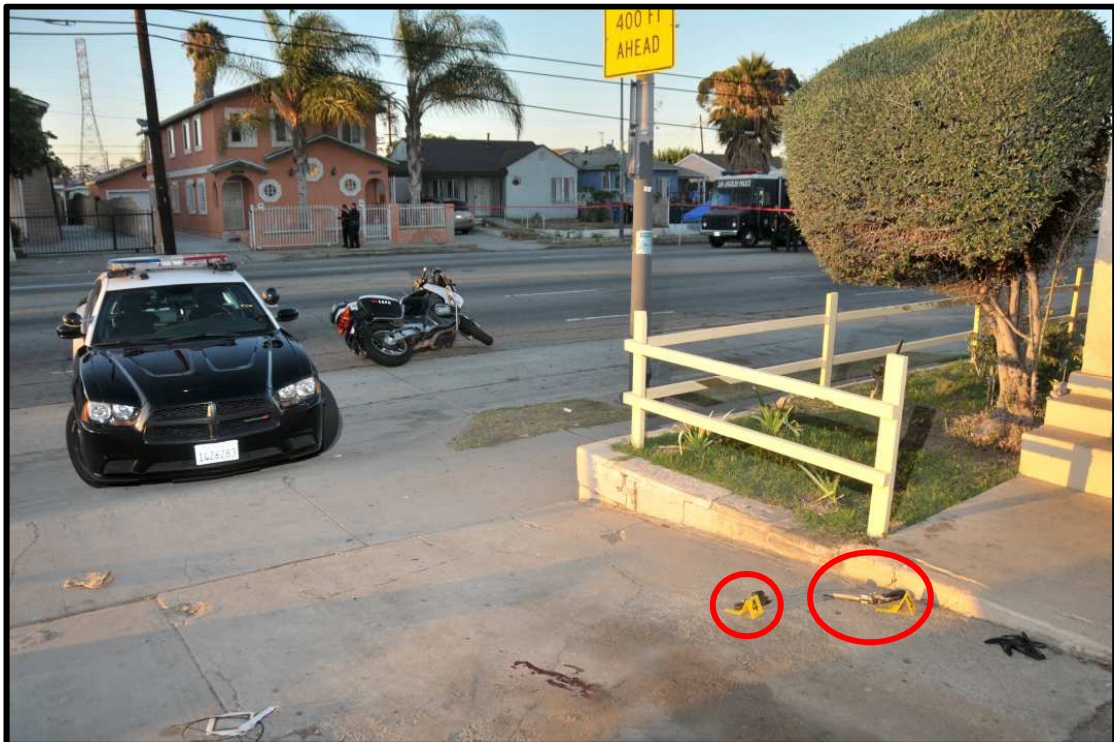
¹⁰ Jonathan C. told investigators that he did not see anything in Watkins’ hands from the angle where he was positioned. He further stated that he could clearly see Watkins’ hands before he was shot and was “a hundred percent sure” he did not see anything in Watkins’ right hand but was not certain about the left hand.

Autopsy

On August 18, 2016, Deputy Medical Examiner David B. Whiteman, M.D., performed a post-mortem examination of Watkins' body. Watkins' death was caused by a single gunshot wound to the chest. The bullet entered the left middle back and went from left to right, back to front, and slightly upward. A projectile was recovered from the upper chest.

Crime Scene Photographs

The below photo shows where Urias' motorcycle was positioned and the positioning of the recovered firearms relative to Watkins' body.



Firearms Evidence

Officer Urias was armed with his department issued Glock .40 caliber, Model 22 semiautomatic pistol. An examination of Urias' firearm determined that the pistol was loaded with one round in the chamber and 13 rounds in the magazine, with the pistol carrying a 16 round capacity. This examination is consistent with Urias firing two rounds from his service weapon.

Two expended cartridge cases were recovered from the location and were determined to have been fired from Urias' pistol. The projectile recovered from Watkins' body during the autopsy was determined to be consistent with the ammunition and firearm used by Urias.

Watkins was armed with a Smith and Wesson .44 Magnum revolver, Model 629-4, and a Bersa .380 caliber semiautomatic pistol. Both weapons were loaded. Investigators determined that the

Smith and Wesson .44 Magnum revolver had been reported stolen following a 2013 home burglary in Orange County.



Surveillance Video Evidence

Surveillance video was obtained from the 76 Gas Station located at the southeast corner of Century Boulevard and Figueroa Street. The video shows Watkins entering the gas station property with his hands at the front of his waistband. Watkins is seen running past the gas station towards Century Boulevard and the barrel of the weapons are briefly shown, as depicted below:



LEGAL ANALYSIS

The Law

California law permits the use of deadly force in self-defense or in the defense of others if it reasonably appears to the person claiming the right of self-defense or the defense of others that he actually and reasonably believed that he or others were in imminent danger of great bodily injury or death. Penal Code § 197; *People v. Randle* (2005) 35 Cal.4th 987, 994 (overruled on another ground in *People v. Chun* (2009) 45 Cal.4th 1172, 1201); *People v. Humphrey* (1996) 13 Cal.4th 1073, 1082; *see also*, CALCRIM No. 505.

In protecting himself or another, a person may use all the 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 the injury which appears to be imminent. CALCRIM No. 3470.

“Where the peril is swift and imminent and the necessity for action immediate, the law does not weigh in too nice scales the conduct of the assailed and say he shall not be justified in killing because he might have resorted to other means to secure his safety.” *People v. Collins* (1961) 189 Cal.App.2d 575, 589.

“The ‘reasonableness’ of a particular use of force must be judged from the perspective of a reasonable officer on the scene, rather than 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.

The evidence examined in this investigation shows that Officer Urias activated his lights in an attempt to make a traffic stop on a black Audi. The vehicle failed to stop leading Urias to believe the occupants were concealing something or had been involved in a crime. Urias saw Watkins exit the vehicle and gave commands for Watkins to stop and get down. Watkins ran away with his hands concealed at his waistband. Urias gave Watkins additional commands to stop and to show his hands, but Watkins failed to comply and continued to run away. Watkins looked over his shoulder, turning in the direction of Urias and Urias saw the barrel of a handgun in Watkins’ left hand. In fear for his life, Urias fired his service weapon at Watkins.

Both witness accounts of Calvin G. and Jonathan C. corroborate Urias’ statement and establish Watkins was fleeing from Urias. Although Jonathan C. did not see anything in Watkins’ hands, Calvin G. described in detail that he saw Watkins armed with a large silver semiautomatic weapon and a small black semiautomatic weapon, one in each of his hands, which is consistent with the weapons that were found near Watkins’ body at the location.

Based on the evidence presented, we determine that Watkins’ flight from Urias with two loaded and operable firearms placed Urias in reasonable fear for his safety. Urias was forced to make a split second decision to end the deadly threat. Accordingly, we find Urias’ decision to use deadly force objectively reasonable.

CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, we conclude that Officer Evan Urias was placed in reasonable fear for his life by Kenney Ahmad Watkins' actions, and acted in lawful self-defense and defense of others when he fired his service weapon. We are therefore closing our file and will take no further action in this matter.