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911 Call Regarding a Man with a Knife Leads to Officer-Involved Shooting Fatality (Town Hall Notes) 21-206(a)

November 25, 2021 | 1:38 AM

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The following information is based on a preliminary and ongoing investigation, which continues to evolve as investigators interview witnesses, review physical and electronic records, and analyze forensic evidence. The Department's understanding of the facts and circumstances may change as additional evidence is collected and analyzed.

On Friday, Nov. 19, 2021, at approximately 8:05 a.m., San Francisco police officers responded to the 900 block of Folsom Street regarding a person with a knife. Officers arrived on scene and made contact with a suspect male inside of a residential building. During this contact, an officer-involved shooting occurred. Officers rendered aid to the male and summoned medics to the scene. Medics transported the male to Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital and Trauma Center with life-threatening injuries. The male, Mr. Ajmal Amani, succumbed to his injuries and was pronounced deceased at the hospital.

The following additional information was provided on Wednesday, Nov. 24, 2021, at a public Town Hall presentation on this officer-involved shooting.

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[Chief of Police William Scott Prepared Remarks](#)

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San Francisco Chief of Police William Scott Talking Points and Briefing Material
Nov. 19, 2020 OIS Town Hall Remarks
Police Headquarters
Conference Room 1025
Date: Nov. 24, 2021 — Time: 1500 hours

Prepared Remarks

Welcome

Good afternoon.

We're here today for a Virtual Town Hall regarding an officer-involved shooting that occurred on Friday, November 19, 2021, at 917 Folsom Street in San Francisco.

Before proceeding, I'd like to announce to our viewing and listening audience that this Town Hall is being translated into Spanish and Cantonese for members of our community who speak those languages.

On Mr. Amani

Today's presentation will include details from an officer-involved shooting incident that ended tragically, claiming the life of Mr. Ajmal Amani. He was 41 years old.

In the San Francisco Police Department, we recognize that our sworn duty as law enforcement officers imposes no more solemn obligation on us than to honor and respect the sanctity of human life. We also know that, as police officers, we are sometimes required to use force — including deadly force, at times — in the performance of our duties.

Without suggesting a premature judgment on the appropriateness of the force used in this particular incident, I can express on behalf of all of us in our department our condolences to Mr. Amani's family, friends and loved ones for the loss they've suffered.

We recognize, too, that officer-involved shootings can have traumatic effects on members of our communities — especially for individuals, their families and loved ones, who have suffered traumas of their own in encounters with the criminal justice system, wherever it may be.

To any of our viewers experiencing trauma from this incident — or from the information or images that we will present during this Town Hall — please know that help is available to you. You may contact the San Francisco Department of Public Health's crisis line at (415) 970-3800 for trauma services.

Outline of Town Hall

Here is what we hope to accomplish today.

First and foremost, we want to continue to earn your trust and legitimacy by being transparent through this presentation. We will be releasing facts known to us at this time about this incident in a manner that is informative and impartial.

Shortly, Commander Paul Yep will discuss the facts of this case but before I turn this over to Commander Yep, I'd like to emphasize that this is an ongoing investigation. As such, there may be some information we cannot release at this time either because the facts are not yet clearly established, or because the release of certain information is either prohibited by law or could compromise the investigation.

Next body-worn camera footage captured this incident.

Also, surveillance video cameras at the location and immediate vicinity of the officer-involved shooting captured this incident. Those videos will be presented during Commander Yep's presentation shortly.

Although we have been committed to transparency with our officer-involved shooting investigations for several years now, this level of transparency is consistent with California's police transparency law that was implemented with passage of Senate Bill 1421.

All the information we will release in this Town Hall — including the video footage and audio recordings — will be posted on the SFPD website at sanfranciscopolice.org, where it will remain available in perpetuity for public inspection.

Next, San Francisco Police Department directives mandate that we release the names of officers from officer-involved shootings within 10 days of the incident — unless safety concerns argue against disclosure. In this matter, no safety concerns have been identified and the name of the involved officers will be released during Commander Paul Yep's presentation of the facts of this incident.

Investigative Processes and Responsibilities

I would like to explain the investigative processes for an officer-involved shooting next.

San Francisco has a multi-agency response to officer-involved shootings, and each agency's investigation is independent.

Whenever an officer-involved shooting occurs in San Francisco involving an on-duty San Francisco police officer, the following agencies are immediately notified:

- The SFPD's Investigative Services Detail is the investigative unit responsible for investigating any underlying criminal activity that led up to the officer-involved shooting. In this case, the underlying criminal activity being investigated by SFPD's Investigative Services Detail is a series of assaults and criminal threats allegedly committed by Mr. Amani, which occurred in the hours before and up to the officer-involved shooting.
- The SFPD's Internal Affairs Division is responsible for conducting an administrative investigation to determine if the officer or officers responsible for the OIS are in compliance with the standards and requirements of SFPD policy.

Although the investigations of both SFPD units run in parallel, each has a distinct investigative purview and focus. Each maintains a strict internal firewall to comply with legal standards and requirements.

- The San Francisco District Attorney's Office's Independent Investigations Bureau, or IIB, is the lead investigative unit responsible for investigating whether the involved officer or officers' use of deadly force, or any associated force, is legal in accordance with the criminal laws of the State of California. The District Attorney's investigation and findings are independent of the San Francisco Police Department's investigation and administrative findings. Based on the findings of the District Attorney's Independent Investigation Bureau's investigation, the District Attorney of the City and County of San Francisco is authorized to determine whether or not the involved officer or officers have violated the criminal laws, and accordingly whether or not to file criminal charges against the officer or officers.
- The San Francisco Department of Police Accountability, also known as "DPA," also conducts an independent administrative investigation. San Francisco voters created DPA — as a successor to the Office of Citizen Complaints — with their passage of Proposition D in the June 2016 election. DPA investigates all SFPD incidents in which any of our officers discharge a weapon within the course and scope of their duties, whenever that discharge results in an individual's injury or death.
- The San Francisco's Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, or OCME, has responsibility for conducting an on-scene investigation, collecting evidence, and taking custody of a deceased person in any officer-

involved shooting that results in a fatality. In tragic cases such as these, OCME is responsible for conducting an autopsy to determine the decedent's cause of death, and to report those findings publicly. In this incident, because Mr. Armani died from his injuries, the OCME will conduct an investigation to determine cause of death.

- Recent changes in state law after that passage of California State Assembly Bill 1506 mandate that the California Department of Justice's (CA DOJ) Division of Law Enforcement - California Police Shooting Team conduct a criminal investigation on officer-involved shootings of persons deemed to be unarmed. The CA DOJ was also notified.

All notified agencies immediately dispatched investigators and appropriate personnel to the scene to begin their respective and independent investigations.

- After preliminary review of the facts and body-worn camera footage, investigators from the CA DOJ Division of Law Enforcement –California Police Shooting Team determined that at this stage of the investigation the incident did not meet the state law criteria for them to take investigative responsibility for the criminal investigation.

Conclusion and Introduction of Commander Yep

I'd like to point out that we take community feedback very seriously. Based on feedback from prior officer-involved shooting Town Halls, we will also take questions and answer them to the extent we're able — understanding that this incident remains an ongoing investigation.

We will allocate one hour for public comments and questions, and conclude this Town Hall at approximately 5:15 p.m.

Thank you very much for joining us today.

And now, Commander Paul Yep.

[Police Commander Paul Yep Prepared Remarks](#)

Full Text

San Francisco Police Commander Paul Yep Talking Points and Briefing Material

Nov. 19, 2021 OIS Town Hall Presentation

Police Headquarters

Conference Room 1025

Date: Nov. 24, 2021 — Time: 1500 hours

Introduction

The officer-involved shooting (OIS) incident discussed in this presentation involves uniformed patrol members of the San Francisco Police Department from the Southern Police District.

The incident occurred on Friday, November 19th, 2021, as officers responded to an A-Priority call for service of a person with a knife at a residential hotel on the 900 block of Folsom Street.

The precise chronology of this incident is currently under investigation. The times presented are approximate, and still under investigation at this time. The following is a summary of the events as they are understood as of today — Wednesday, November 24, 2021.

Incident Narrative

1. At approximately 8:05 a.m., the San Francisco Department of Emergency Management received a 911 call from an employee of the residential hotel, whom I will refer to as “Victim #1” throughout this summary. Victim #1 reported a man in the building with a “knife in his hand” as a male voice is heard yelling in the background. The male is described as, “like Cauca... — like Hispanic,” or “Arabian” by the 911 caller. The 911 operator attempts to collect additional information, but Victim #1 states that she cannot stay on the phone while the male “has a knife to my face.” The call then abruptly disconnects.
2. At 8:07 a.m., officers were dispatched to the location and immediately responded.
3. The dispatcher provided additional information over the radio to the responding officers and relayed that Victim #1 said she was “not gonna stay on the phone while he has a knife to her face.”
4. At 8:10 a.m., the two officers arrived on-scene and gained entry into the building.
5. The officers contacted Victim #1 and Victim #2 on the second floor, who are both building employees. Victim #1 and Victim #2 identified the male subject as Mr. Ajmal Amani at this time.
6. Victim #1 and Victim #2 reported that Mr. Amani had threatened Victim #2 with a knife. Victim #2 grabbed a knife and showed the officers. Victim #2 stated that Mr. Amani was carrying a similar knife stating, “he came at me like this,” while simulating brandishing a knife above his head in a threatening manner. Victim #2 stated that Mr. Amani also said he was going to “stab you right now — I’m going to kill you.”
7. Officer #2 asked Victim #1 if Mr. Amani was known to be violent, and Victim #1 replied, “very violent.”
8. The officers requested additional officers to the scene and began walking down the hallway towards Mr. Amani’s room. As they began walking down the hallway, they observed a male briefly appear at the end of the hallway. The male’s description was consistent with that of Mr. Amani, who began yelling and pointing at the officers before walking back out of sight.
9. Officer #1 and Officer #2 then walked back to the victims, and reconfirmed Mr. Amani’s description. Officer #1 and Officer #2 then established a position in the hallway to observe Mr. Amani and attempt communication.
10. At this point in time, Officer #1 was armed with his department issued firearm, which was drawn and held in front of him pointing towards the ground in a “low ready” position. (The term “low ready” describes when a weapon is drawn and exhibited in a posture that is in the general direction of an individual who poses a potential threat — but not directly aimed at that individual.) Officer #2 was armed with an extended range impact weapon (ERIW), also commonly referred to as a “bean bag weapon.”
11. Per Department General Order 5.01, “Use of Force Policy,” SFPD officers are trained to deploy the less-lethal weapon (or ERIW) while paired with an officer who is equipped with a lethal force option (e.g., department-issued firearm). This “lethal cover officer” is designated to protect the “less-lethal officer” and have ready to deploy, if necessary, lethal force options.
12. Officer #1 and Officer #2 formulated a plan. Officer #1 called for additional resources that included an ambulance to stage nearby per department training. Officer #1 also directed the next responding unit to bring a tactical shield consistent with department training. Both officers attempted to speak with Mr. Amani, who screamed back at the officers from around the corner.
13. After approximately one minute, Mr. Amani stepped back into the hallway, screaming and brandishing a knife in his right hand. Mr. Amani then charged towards the officers while brandishing the knife and screaming unintelligibly.
14. Officer #1 yelled multiple verbal commands to “stay back!” as Mr. Amani charged at the officers. Officer #2 also yelled verbal commands as Mr. Amani approached. As Mr. Amani ran toward the officers brandishing the knife, the officers quickly backed up down the hallway, away from Mr. Amani.
15. As Mr. Amani closed the distance, Officer #1 and Officer #2 fired their respective weapons, striking Mr. Amani.

16. Mr. Amani fell to the ground with the knife nearby him on the floor. Officers attempted to communicate with Mr. Amani. Responding officers arrived with a tactical shield and formulated a plan. Responding officers approached, secured the knife, and began to administer emergency medical aid.
17. Medical personnel arrived on-scene, and transported Mr. Amani to Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital and Trauma Center.

Additional Information:

- Mr. Amani was pronounced deceased at ZSFGH.

Evidence

- Preliminary evidence indicates that Officer #1 fired four rounds from his firearm. Officer #2 did not fire his firearm but did discharge a department-issued extended range impact weapon (or ERIW) three times.
- A knife with an approximately 6-inch blade and 5-inch handle was recovered at the scene.
- Video
- Officer #1 and Officer #2 were wearing department-issued body-worn cameras, which were activated at the time of the incident.
- Body-worn camera footage of officers rendering aid.
- Surveillance video (CCTV) in the residential hotel hallway also captured the incident.

Witnesses

- Known witnesses at the scene of the incident have been interviewed.
- Additional witnesses are being sought by investigators.

Subject

- The decedent's name is Ajmal Amani, date of birth April 30, 1980.

Involved Members

- The officer discharging the department-issued firearm is: Officer John Quinlan #1507
- The officer discharging the extended range impact weapon (ERIW) is: Officer Danny De Leon Garcia #1825

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