

ABRIDGED SUMMARY OF CATEGORICAL USE OF FORCE INCIDENT AND FINDINGS BY THE LOS ANGELES BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS

OFFICER-INVOLVED ANIMAL SHOOTING – 086-08

Division	Date	Duty-On (X) Off ()	Uniform-Yes(X) No()
77th	10/03/08		

Officer(s) Involved in Use of Force	Length of Service
Officer A	3 years, 10 months

Reason for Police Contact

Officers responded to a vicious dog call and found a dog that appeared to be mortally wounded and in pain. The dog owner requested officers to shoot the dog in order to humanely end the dog's suffering.

Animal	Deceased (X)	Wounded ()	Non-Hit ()
Dog.			

Board of Police Commissioners' Review

This is a brief summary designed only to enumerate the salient points regarding this Categorical Use of Force incident and does not reflect the entirety of the extensive investigation by the Los Angeles Police Department (Department) or the deliberations by the Board of Police Commissioners (BOPC). In evaluating this matter, the BOPC considered the following: the complete Force Investigation Division investigation (including all of the transcribed statements of witnesses and addenda items); the Training Evaluation and Management System materials of the involved officers; the Use of Force Review Board recommendations; the report and recommendations of the Chief of Police; and the report and recommendations of the Inspector General. The Los Angeles Police Department Command Staff presented the matter to the Commission and made itself available for any inquiries by the Commission.

Because state law prohibits divulging the identity of police officers in public reports, for ease of reference, the masculine pronouns (he, his, and him) will be used in this report to refer to male or female employees.

The following incident was adjudicated by the BOPC on June 23, 2009.

Incident Summary

77th Street Area uniformed police officers responded to a vicious animal radio call. The vicious animal was described as a Pit Bull dog that had injured another dog and had chased some people.

Officer A and his partner arrived at the scene and were directed by several individuals to an injured dog lying on the sidewalk. The injured dog was bleeding, had several puncture wounds on its chest, and one of its legs was nearly severed. The injured dog was making crying noises and appeared to be in extreme pain.

Officer A and his partner requested that personnel from the Department of Animal Services respond and care for the injured dog. Officer A located a witness who identified herself as the owner of the injured dog. The dog owner asked Officer A to shoot her dog to put an end to its suffering. Officer A then telephoned 77th Street Area Watch Commander and informed him of the dog owner's request. The Watch Commander granted permission to Officer A to shoot the injured dog.

Officer A moved the injured dog from the sidewalk to a grassy area and placed a towel over the injured dog's head to prevent the dog from biting him and to minimize the trauma to bystanders. Officer A then drew his pistol and discharged one round at the left side of the dog's head, which resulted in the death of the dog.

Los Angeles Board of Police Commissioners' Findings

The BOPC reviews each Categorical Use of Force incident based upon the totality of the circumstances, namely all of the facts, evidence, statements and all other pertinent material relating to the particular incident. In every case, the BOPC makes specific findings in three areas: Tactics of the involved officer(s); Drawing/Exhibiting/Holstering of a weapon by any involved officer(s); and the Use of Force by any involved officer(s). All incidents are evaluated to identify areas where involved officers can benefit from a tactical debriefing to improve their response to future tactical situations. This is an effort to ensure that all officers benefit from the critical analysis that is applied to each incident as it is reviewed by various levels within the Department and by the BOPC. Based on the BOPC's review of the instant case, the BOPC made the following findings.

A. Tactics

The BOPC found Officer A's tactics to warrant a Tactical Debrief.

B. Drawing/Exhibiting/Holstering

The BOPC found drawing and exhibiting did not apply to this incident.

C. Use of Force

The BOPC found Officer A's Use of Force to be in policy.

Basis for Findings

A. Tactics

In adjudicating this incident, the BOPC identified no tactical considerations.

B. Drawing/Exhibiting

The BOPC evaluated the circumstances and determined that drawing/exhibiting did not apply.

C. Use of Force

During this incident, Officer A was requested to humanely end the suffering of a dog that had been severely mauled by a vicious dog, and the officer obtained permission from the Watch Commander to use the force. The BOPC found Officer A's use of lethal force to be objectively reasonable, and, thus, in policy, requiring no further action.