



## Information Release



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**Date: Tuesday, March 9, 2021**

### **Cooperative Cities Crime Response Unit (CRU) Update #42- Lakewood Police Department Officer-Involved Shooting**

The Cooperative Cities Crime Response Unit's (CRU) independent investigation into the May 1st, 2020, Lakewood Police Department officer-involved shooting is complete. The completed investigation represents the end of the active investigation phase by CRU. The investigation has been forwarded to the Pierce County Prosecutor's Office for review per the Law Enforcement Training and Community Safety Act (LETCSA). The incident occurred prior to the operational activation of official PC FIT (Pierce County Force Investigation Team)

CRU recognizes that there is significant community interest in this case, and the case has taken a significant amount of time to come to completion. CRU also understands that the community expects transparency in instances where a police officer uses deadly force. As such, CRU feels that it is in the best interest of both law enforcement and the community to release the investigative findings to the public. Be advised that our conclusions are strictly limited to the facts of the investigation. Any determination about whether an officer should be charged criminally is the responsibility of the Pierce County Prosecutor's Office.

Based upon the comprehensive, independent investigation conducted, CRU has made the following findings:

- Lakewood Police Officers Michael Wiley and Zach Schueller were on duty on May 1st, 2020. Officers Wiley and Schueller were

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driving in separate marked patrol vehicles. Both officers were in uniform.

- Officers Wiley and Schueller were traveling eastbound on Steilacoom Boulevard Southwest. Officer Wiley was traveling in front of Officer Schueller when a vehicle, driven by Said Joquin, failed to stop for a stop sign at Whitman Avenue Southwest. Mr. Joquin's car came to an abrupt stop in the middle of Steilacoom Boulevard Southwest about two car lengths after the intersection he failed to stop for, blocking both eastbound lanes. Officer Wiley had to brake quickly to avoid a collision with Mr. Joquin's vehicle. Officer Schueller's in-car audio/video system ("dash cam") captured this event. Officer Wiley's vehicle was not equipped with an in-car audio/video system.
- The traffic stop initiated by Officers Wiley and Schueller occurred at 15:59:56 hours. Mr. Joquin was accompanied by a male passenger seated in the front passenger's seat.
- Officer Wiley's patrol vehicle was the lead patrol vehicle in the traffic stop. Officer Schueller's patrol vehicle was directly behind Officer Wiley's vehicle. As a result of Officer Wiley's vehicle being in front of Officer Schueller's vehicle, the view of the dash camera was blocked, and the incident was not captured on video. However, Officer Schueller's in-car audio/video system did record the incident's audio.
- Within a few moments of contacting the driver, Officer Wiley observed a pistol on the driver's floorboard of the vehicle. Through Officer Wiley's statements and audio enhancements to Officer Schueller's in-car audio/video system, investigators determined the following exchange occurred:

Officer Wiley stated, "So real quick, I see there's a weapon in the (unintelligible) in the car. If you reach for anything, alright, you will be shot. Do you understand? Put your hands on your head. Do you have a permit for the weapon?"
- Due to traffic noise, some of the conversation between Officer Wiley and Mr. Joquin was obscured.
- At 16:01:40 Officer Schueller advises dispatch that there is a "gun in the car" and the subject is compliant. During this time, Officer Schueller also explained to the passenger to keep his hands up

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and the officers planned to wait for additional units. Officer Schueller provided verbal clarification to the passenger about what was occurring and the need for their cooperation. This conversation carried on for several seconds. Meanwhile, Officer Wiley is speaking with Mr. Joquin and can be heard asking Mr. Joquin, "you found it on the street?", referring to the pistol. Officer Wiley again warns him to keep his hands up with the threat of being shot. Investigators believe that Mr. Joquin knew to keep his hands up as the audio enhancement recorded Mr. Joquin stating, "I don't want to get shot."

- There is a brief lull in audio before Officer Schueller can be heard saying, "Hey Wiley, I can't see the gun from where I'm at. Where is it at?" As Officer Schueller inquired about the location of the gun, gunshots were immediately heard on Officer Schueller's in-car audio/video system.
- According to Officer Wiley's statement, Mr. Joquin suddenly lunged down toward the gun with his hands, which he believed created a grave risk of the officers being shot.
- At 16:04:37 Officer Wiley alerted dispatch that shots had been fired and requested medical aid priority. Investigators determined through physical evidence at the scene and audio enhancements that Officer Wiley fired four rounds in less than one second.
- Lakewood Police Sergeant Charles Porche arrived moments after the shots were fired. Sergeant Porche and Officer Schueller removed the passenger from the vehicle without incident as other units arrived and began to render medical aid to Mr. Joquin.
- Mr. Joquin was transported to Tacoma General by ambulance, where he was pronounced dead.
- The passenger in Mr. Joquin's vehicle and other witnesses were interviewed by CRU investigators on the day of the incident.
- The passenger, Mr. Vargas, stated that Mr. Joquin failed to stop for a stop sign, saw that Mr. Joquin possessed a handgun that day and on other multiple occasions, said that Mr. Joquin's behavior was "off" and he was driving "kinda crazy".
- A canvas of the neighborhood was conducted by CRU detectives. The canvas led to video and photographs that had been taken following the incident.

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- Officers Wiley and Officer Schueller provided detailed statements regarding the incident.
- The Washington State Patrol Crime Scene Response Team (WSP CSRT) processed the scene, and later, Mr. Joquin's vehicle. WSP CSRTT recovered four spent shell casings from the roadway at the scene of the shooting. The casings were all consistent with the type of ammunition issued by the Lakewood Police Department.
- WSP CSRT recovered a loaded .22 caliber handgun from the driver's side floorboard of Mr. Joquin's vehicle. The recovered handgun was processed for DNA by the WSP Crime Laboratory. Mr. Joquin's DNA was found on several locations on the firearm and magazine. Aside from Mr. Joquin's DNA, additional DNA from other unknown contributors was found on the firearm. The unidentified DNA was compared to Officer Wiley, Officer Schueller and several other initial responding officers' DNA. The unidentified DNA did not match Officer Wiley, Officer Schueller or any other DNA of the initial responding officers.
- The .22 caliber handgun recovered from Mr. Joquin's vehicle came back clear (not reported stolen). The registered owner of the firearm was deceased and had been for several years. Consequently, investigators were unable to determine how Mr. Joquin came into possession of the firearm.
- Mr. Joquin was not prohibited from possessing a firearm. However, at the time of the incident Mr. Joquin did not possess a concealed weapons permit, a requirement to carry a pistol in the manner it was being carried by Mr. Joquin.
- The Pierce County Medical Examiner's Office conducted an autopsy on Mr. Joquin's body. The autopsy detailed that Mr. Joquin sustained four gunshot wounds. Three rounds struck Mr. Joquin's left forearm/elbow area passing through his arm and into his torso. The fourth round was directly into the left abdomen.

The findings presented by CRU represent information that has been corroborated via the analysis of physical evidence, statements by witnesses and the involved officers, as well as police incident reports and other information.

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CRU will continue to support the Pierce County Prosecutor's Office with any additional follow-up they may request.

Requests for copies of CRU's investigation should be submitted to the Puyallup Police Department Records Unit via <https://cityofpuyallup.nextrequest.com/requests/new>.

Finally, the conclusion of this investigation represents CRU's final law enforcement deadly force investigation. The Pierce County Force Investigation Team (PCFIT) is now responsible for conducting all law enforcement deadly force investigations in Pierce County that result in death or serious injury to individuals.

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**Date: Thursday, March 4, 2021**

**Cooperative Cities Crime Response Unit (CRU) Update #41-  
Lakewood Police Department Officer-Involved Shooting**

The Cooperative Cities Crime Response Unit's (CRU) independent investigation into the Lakewood Police Department officer-involved shooting remains active. The outstanding lab requests have been completed and investigators are working on their final reports based upon the lab results.

Please be advised that the completed investigation will be presented to the Pierce County Prosecutor's Office for review.

This release is distributed in accordance with the requirements of the Law Enforcement Training and Community Safety Act (LETSCA). LETSCA requires weekly updates on the status of investigations into incidents in which law enforcement officers use deadly force.

**Date: Thursday, February 25, 2021**

**Cooperative Cities Crime Response Unit (CRU) Update #40-  
Lakewood Police Department Officer-Involved Shooting**

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