



SOUTH CAROLINA HIGHWAY PATROL
MULTI-DISCIPLINARY ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION TEAM

Agency Notes

- N/A
- Case Fact Sheet
- Witness Sheet
- Occupant Sheet
- Supervisor Checklist
- PIO Field Sketch
- PIO Notes
- Other: _____
- Other: _____
- Other: _____
- Other: _____

AGENCY I.D.
SC0250000

HAMPTON COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
INCIDENT REPORT

CASE NUMBER
S O - 1 5 0 0 3 1 4 4
CL-062-15
NCIC
15003144

INCIDENT TYPE	COMPLETED	FORCED ENTRY	PREMISE TYPE	UNITS ENTERED	TYPE VICTIM
1. 90T - TRAFFIC FATALITY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	13		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Individual <input type="checkbox"/> Business <input type="checkbox"/> Financial Inst. <input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Relig. Orgn. <input type="checkbox"/> Soc./Public <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> Police Off.
2.	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO			
3.	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO			

INCIDENT LOCATION (SUBDIVISION, APARTMENT AND NUMBER, STREET NAME AND NUMBER) **SANDY RUN RD., BRUNSON SC** ZIP CODE **29911** WEAPON TYPE

INCIDENT DATE	24 HR. CLOCK	TO	DATE	24 HR. CLOCK	DISPATCH DATE/TIME 24 HR. CLOCK				LOCATION NO.
07/08/2015	0440		07/08/2015	0440	DISP. DATE	DISP. TIME	TIME ARRIVED	DEPART. TIME	
					07/08/2015	0440	0440	0639	

COMPLAINANT'S NAME (LAST, FIRST, MIDDLE)	RELATIONSHIP TO SUBJECT	RESIDENT	RACE	SEX	AGE	ETH	DAYTIME PHONE	EVENING PHONE
CAPERS, RONNIE LEVON	#1 RU #2 #3	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> U	B	M	50	N	[REDACTED]	
ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	ZIP CODE	LOCATION NO.				
[REDACTED]	HAMPTON	SC	29924	05				

VICTIM'S NAME (LAST, FIRST, MIDDLE)	RELATIONSHIP TO SUBJECT	RESIDENT	RACE	SEX	AGE	ETH	DAYTIME PHONE	EVENING PHONE
SMITH, STHEPHEN NICHOLAS	#1 #2 #3	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> U	W	M	19	N		
HEIGHT	WEIGHT	HAIR	EYES	FACIAL HAIR, SCARS, TATOOS, GLASSES, CLOTHING, PHYSICAL PECULIARITIES, ETC.				
5-7	165	BRO	BRO					
ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	ZIP CODE	LOCATION NO.				
[REDACTED]	BRUNSON	SC	29911					

VISIBLE INJURY (VICT. 1) YES NO EXPLAIN -
 VICTIM (NO. 1) USING: ALCOHOL: YES NO UNK. DRUGS: YES NO UNK.
 TWO-MAN VEH. ONE-MAN VEH. DETECTIVE/SPLASMT. OTHER ALONE ASSISTED **J - This Jurisdiction S - State O - Out of State U - Unknown**

SUSPECT	SUBJECT NAME (LAST, FIRST, MIDDLE)	RACE	SEX	AGE	ETH.	DATE OF BIRTH	HEIGHT	WEIGHT	HAIR	EYES
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SUSPECT	PERSON, UNKNOWN/UNTRACKED	U	U	00	U					
<input type="checkbox"/> RUNAWAY	FACIAL HAIR, SCARS, TATOOS, GLASSES, CLOTHING, PHYSICAL PECULIARITIES, ETC.									
<input type="checkbox"/> WANTED	ADDRESS									
<input type="checkbox"/> WARRANT	CITY									
<input type="checkbox"/> ARREST	STATE									
<input type="checkbox"/> JAIL	ZIP CODE									
<input type="checkbox"/> SUMMONS	LOCATION NO.									
	SUBJECT (NO. 1) USING: ALCOHOL: <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNK.		ARRESTED NEAR OFFENSE SCENE <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO		DATE/TIME OF OFFENSE		DATE/TIME OF ARREST			
	DRUGS: <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNK. TYPE:		TOTAL # ARRESTED 0		07/08/2015		0440			

Offenses:
TRAFFIC FATALITY

ON THE ABOVE DATE AND TIME, THE COMPLAINANT CALLED DISPATCH AND STATED THAT THERE WAS SOMEONE LAYING IN THE ROAD AT SANDY RUN AND PRINCE WILLIAM RD. UPON ARRIVAL, I CPL. BRIDGES RODE THE AREA AND FOUND NO ONE IN THE ROAD AND STARTED TO LEAVE THE AREA, BUT DECIDED TO RIDE TOWARD JOE MILEY RD. AS I RODE I SPOTTED A PERSON LAYING IN THE MIDDLE OF SANDY RUN APPROX. 1/4 FROM JOE MILEY. THE PERSON WAS A WHITE YOUNG MALE WITH A SEVERE HEAD WOUND. I, BRIDGES CALLED FOR MY PARTNER EUBANKS AND EMS. THE VICTIM APPEARED TO BE LIFELESS AND WHEN EMS ARRIVED, THEY CALLED FOR THE CORONER. NO ONE ON SCENE COULD ID THE VICTIM, HIGHWAY PATROL ARRIVED AND THE CORONER ARRIVED ON SCENE. AFTER CHECKING THE BODY, IT APPEARS THAT THE VICTIM HAD BEEN SHOT. SGT. SMITH WAS NOTIFIED. LT. PERRY SINGLETON WAS NOTIFIED AND ARRIVED ON SCENE. PICTURES WERE TAKEN AND A CELL PHONE WAS RECOVERED FROM THE BODY.

P R O P E R T Y		JURISDICTION OF THEFT LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY				JURISDICTION OF RECOVERY LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY					
TYPE (GROUP)										TOTAL VALUE	
Burned											
Count./Forged											
Dest./Damaged											
Recovered											
Seized											
Stolen											
Unknown											
SUBJECT IDENTIFIED <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO		SUBJECT LOCATED <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ACTIVE <input type="checkbox"/> ADM. CLOSED		<input type="checkbox"/> ARRESTED UNDER 18		<input type="checkbox"/> EX-CLEAR UNDER 18			
				<input type="checkbox"/> UNFOUNDED		<input type="checkbox"/> ARRESTED 18 AND OVER		<input type="checkbox"/> EX-CLEAR 18 AND OVER			
REASON FOR EXCEPTIONAL CLEARANCE: 1. <input type="checkbox"/> OFFENDER DEATH 2. <input type="checkbox"/> NO PROSECUTION 3. <input type="checkbox"/> EXTRADITION DENIED 4. <input type="checkbox"/> VICTIM DECLINES COOPERATION 5. <input type="checkbox"/> JUVENILE - NO CUSTODY											
REPORTING OFFICER(S)			DATE		UNIT NUMBER		APPROVING OFFICER			DATE	
DEPUTY MICHEAL BRIDGES			07/08/2015		S13						
DEPUTY JASON EDWARD EUBANKS			07/08/2015		S60		FOLLOW-UP INVESTIGATION OFFICER				
							<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO				

INCIDENT REPORT SUPPLEMENTAL

CL-062-15
Page #: 1

Case Number: SO-15003144

Officer: SINGLETON SINGLETON,

Date Entered/Changed: 07/09/2015

Reviewer:

Review Date:

DETAILED STATEMENT OF INVESTIGATION: On 07/08/2015 I Det. Singleton received a call at home from Sgt. Smith with the Hampton County Sheriff's Office requesting my assistance on Sandy Run Rd in Crockettville located in Hampton County in reference to a dead body in the highway. I responded and upon my arrival I was met by Cpl. Bridges who informed me that around 4:00am they received a call from 911 to respond to the location in reference to a person laying in the highway. Once there Cpl. Bridges realized that the person laying in the road was deceased. Cpl. Bridges also mentioned that one Ronnie Capers Jr. reported this to 911. I, Det. Singleton, went up to take a look at the body and noticed a slender build white male on the highway with khaki shorts and a white polo shirt. SLED crime scene was called to process the scene. The deceased had on his person (1) cellular phone and a car key. Highway patrol later located the deceased person's vehicle on highway 601N in the county of Hampton. The vehicle was a 2007 yellow Chevy Aveno. A search warrant was obtained for the vehicle in order for SLED to process it, which they did. A wallet was taken from the vehicle by myself and a picture ID (driver's license) of the deceased male was in the wallet. The deceased was identified as Stephen Nicholas Smith. The body was sent to MUSC for an autopsy which revealed no bullet hole in the deceased but there was evidence of a head injury (see autopsy report).

This case has been turned over to highway patrol and is now closed for the Hampton County Sheriff's Office.



N

Not To Scale

Not All items shown

All measurement are approximate.

Pole # 10963009

RP1

feet 32'6"

Head 32'2"

Pole # 10963011

RP1

32'6"

10'4"

32'2"

10'

← edge of roadway

CORN FIELD

Address:
5874

Location: Hampton, SC

Victim: Stephen N. Smith

7-8-2015

By: James B. Tallon

Activities involving Possible
Hit & Run
Sandy Run Road near Joe Miley Road
Stephen N. Smith
1/29/1996

July 8th, 2015

I was called by Cpl. Allen at 0537hrs advising we had a possible Hit & Run fatality on Sandy Run Road. He was advised to call the on-call commander (Lt. King).

Cpl Allen called me back at 0608hrs to advise the MAIT team was enroute to the scene and he was almost there. I left my residence and headed to the scene and was advised by Cpl. Allen that it was a homicide, not a hit & run. I advised Cpl. Allen to make sure that was the ruling of the coroner and Hampton County Sheriff's Office and that I would be there shortly. I arrived on scene at approximately 0625hrs and observed a white male lying in the roadway on the center line with head trauma to the right side above his brow. I spoke with Hampton County Coroner Ernie Washington, who immediately advised me it was a homicide. He pointed out the wound to be a gunshot wound and showed me the entry point. Assistant Coroner Kelly Greene then began to show me photographs they took, again pointing to the entry point to the head and also a defensive wound to the hand. I then asked for clarity if they were sure it was a homicide and their response was yes. I then advised we no longer needed the MAIT team. I asked if our assistance was needed and I was told no, they were just waiting of SLED's crime scene unit to arrive. I walked the scene and saw no evidence of any car parts or pieces and then had all units clear the scene.

At approximately 1615hrs I was called by L/Cpl. Rowell, who advised the Sheriff T.C. Smalls called him and advised an autopsy was conducted as MUSC and that no bullet was found and it was determined to be a Hit & Run. I immediately called Sheriff Smalls [REDACTED] to clarify the issue. He advised me that the Doctor was ruling it a motor vehicle accident and they were turning it over to us. I asked if he was the lead investigator and he advised me Lt. Perry Singleton was the lead investigator and gave me his phone number [REDACTED]. I immediately called Lt. Singleton and asked for any notes or information he had and he told me he was not at his desk and would call me back in thirty minutes. I then called Hampton County Coroner Ernie Washington at 1640 hrs and asked him if that was his ruling as well and he stated he would have to go with the Doctor's ruling. I then reminded him that earlier that morning they were certain it was a gunshot wound and he told me he had to go by the opinion of the Doctor. I asked him where the body was at and he stated it had been taken to Rhoden funeral home in Hampton per the family's wishes at the time of the death notification. I asked him what time and who they notified and he stated that they notified the mother and father (Joel and Sandra Smith) at their home at [REDACTED] at approximately 1030 hrs. I called the funeral home and spoke with Gordon Rhoden [REDACTED]. I asked him if he had the clothing the deceased was wearing so we could pick it up and he stated it was in a paper bag with the body. I asked him to immediately stop whatever preparations they were making to the body and cover him up and we would come get the clothing. He agreed to do so and I had L/Cpl. Rowell pick up the clothing shortly, I then called Lt. King at 1757 hrs to advise him what was occurring and he told me he would make some calls and get back with me. I immediately called back Ernie Washington and asked for the name and phone number of the Doctor who conducted the autopsy. I was given her number and called a Doctor Aaron Presnell to try and understand what brought her to that decision. She said that it was not a gunshot wound and no bullet or fragments were found during the x-ray and that it didn't look like a bullet wound in her opinion and that since the body was found in the roadway, she could only theorize that it had to

be a motor vehicle that caused the death. I asked if he had any other injuries and she stated only a partial dislocated right shoulder. I asked her if she found any glass fragments or any other evidence of a motor vehicle and she stated no. I then asked her why she was ruling it as a motor vehicle accident and what she thought caused the head injury. She told me it was not her job to figure that out, it was mine. I then tried calling Lt. Singleton back since he had not returned my phone call and all I got was his voicemail. I then hung up and call Sheriff Smalls to see if he could get me the information they had and he stated he would call me right back. After not hearing back from him as well, I called him back and got his voicemail as well. I then called L/Cpl. Rowell to see if he was in Hampton and he advised he was on his way from Bamberg. I told him to go back by the scene and make sure the body had been marked and to start looking to any vehicle debris in both directions. He called back and advised he could find no debris at all. I then called L/Cpl. Altman and told him when he came out to go to the scene at Sandy Run Road near Joe Miley Road and look for any vehicle debris. He also called back stating he could find nothing. I then told him to go out to the scene and sit from around 0300 hrs until 0500 hrs to document what type of traffic was moving that time of the morning. Lt. King then called me back at 1928 hrs and advised Lt. Brock with the MAIT team would be calling me and to see if I could get in touch with someone from SLED to come out the next day. I spoke with Lt. Brock at 1940 hrs and explained the entire scenario to him. He advised me to have someone go out to the scene and look for debris. I told him I already had someone on scene and he advised he would have Sgt. Booker call me shortly. I spoke with Sgt. Booker at 2002 hrs and explained the scenario to him. We decided to meet at the funeral home in Hampton the next day at 9am and asked if SLED could meet us there as well. I told him I would find out which agents were there and try and set it up. I called Agent Jeff Croft with SLED, whom I knew, to see if he could find out which agents came to the scene that morning. He called me back with the name and phone number of Brittany Burke [REDACTED]. I called her at 2022 hrs and she stated that she and Agent Trey Tallon were called out at 0610 hrs that morning at the request of the Hampton County Sheriff's Office regarding a homicide. She stated they arrived at the scene around 0900 hrs and looked at the wound and didn't think it was a gunshot wound. She stated they told the Sheriff and Coroner that they didn't believe it to be a gunshot wound. She told me they were adamant it was a gunshot wound, so they mapped the scene and began to gather evidence as they would normally do. She stated that they found a smart phone and car keys in the deceased right pocket. The phone was undamaged but could not get it work. They also located the vehicle of the deceased on US 601 a couple miles from the scene and also checked that as well. They went through the vehicle and found the wallet of the deceased and also noticed the gas cap was off. They also found engine oil in the vehicle and believed that he had vehicle trouble because they could not get the vehicle to start. Since he was found between the vehicle and his residence, they believed he was walking home when the incident occurred. She also advised me that they went to the autopsy along with assistant coroner Kelly Greene and the doctor confirmed it was not a gunshot sound, which is what they (SLED) believed originally. At that point, she stated they left and returned to Columbia. I asked her if she could come to the funeral home the next morning at 9am and she stated she would have to ask her superior and call me back. She called back at 2042 hrs and advised she would be there at that time and would bring all her notes and photos. I called Sgt. Booker back at 2045 and advised him that one of the SLED agents would meet us there at 9am.

July 9th, 2015

I called L/Cpl. Rowell and L/Cpl. Payne at 0550 hrs that morning and told them both to go back out to the scene at Sandy Run Road and look for any debris of any kind or anything out of the ordinary. They called me back and again were unable to find anything and I asked them both to meet me at the Rhoden funeral home at 9am for a meeting. I then spoke with Lt. King at 0835 hrs and briefed him regarding the time and location of the meeting. He advised me to get in touch with CRO Sonny Collins to explain what

was going on before the flyer was sent to him to push out to the media. After leaving a message with him, I had Sgt. Burns call him as I arrived at the funeral home. I met Sgt. Booker and Cpl. Duncan from the MAIT team at 9am along with SLED agent Brittany Burke at the Rhoden funeral home as well as L/Cpl. Rowell and L/Cpl. Payne. The MAIT team took photos of the deceased and spoke with Agent Burke regarding her finding and reviewed her notes and photos. MAIT also inspected the body of the deceased for any evidence and injuries. There were no visible injuries to the deceased, other than his head wound and a small amount of road rash on both arms. He had no broken bones and no injuries whatsoever on his torso or lower extremities. I turned the clothing over to Cpl. Duncan and after a discussion by all parties as to why this did not appear to be related to a motor vehicle, I went with the MAIT team along with L/Cpl. Rowell to Ronnie Capers, Jr.'s residence to speak with him. He was not home, but the MAIT team did look over his wrecker sitting on the dirt road in front of his house but didn't find anything that looked suspicious. We then went to the scene on Sandy Run Road and along with MAIT, looked for any evidence at the scene for approximately 100 yards in both directions. Cpl. Duncan and L/Cpl. Rowell left the scene to go speak with the family of the deceased, while I stayed with Sgt. Booker to assist him as he documented the scene. When they returned, they were told by the family their son was gay and that they did not know of any enemies their son had, but anything was possible regarding his death. L/Cpl. Rowell got a call from Lt. Singleton advising they had the phone and wallet of the deceased. L/Cpl. Rowell, Sgt. Booker and I met with him at their substation in Varnville. After a discussion with Lt. Singleton, who stated he thought a log truck may have struck him, gave us what information they had and Sgt. Booker signed for the cell phone. The wallet was left with Lt. Singleton since it had been unsecured since the previous morning and had money in it. He was advised to return it to the Coroner's office. A warrant was obtained in Hampton County for the phones contents and was forwarded to Sgt. Booker to take to SLED to retrieve the information on the phone. Sgt. Booker returned back to Charleston and L/Cpl. Rowell and I began riding the area looking at possible logging sites. They were all old sites that obviously not been used recently. We then went to McMillan Farms on the same road and L/Cpl. Rowell and I spoke with Mr. McMillan who runs the farm. We asked if we could look at his trucks and he agreed. He had a few seed trucks that we looked at, but we did not see any damage or evidence of bodily fluid or blood. After speaking with Mr. McMillan, he advised his trucks weren't running at this particular time since there was no grain to haul. When asked he stated he did not know of any trucks logging in the area, nor did he know of any particular trucks that would be running during the early morning hours. After we left McMillan Farms, L/Cpl. Rowell was advised to ride the area further to look for farming or log trucks and I went to Bobcat landing where the deceased had supposedly hung out the night before swimming. I did not see anyone there or anything out of the ordinary.

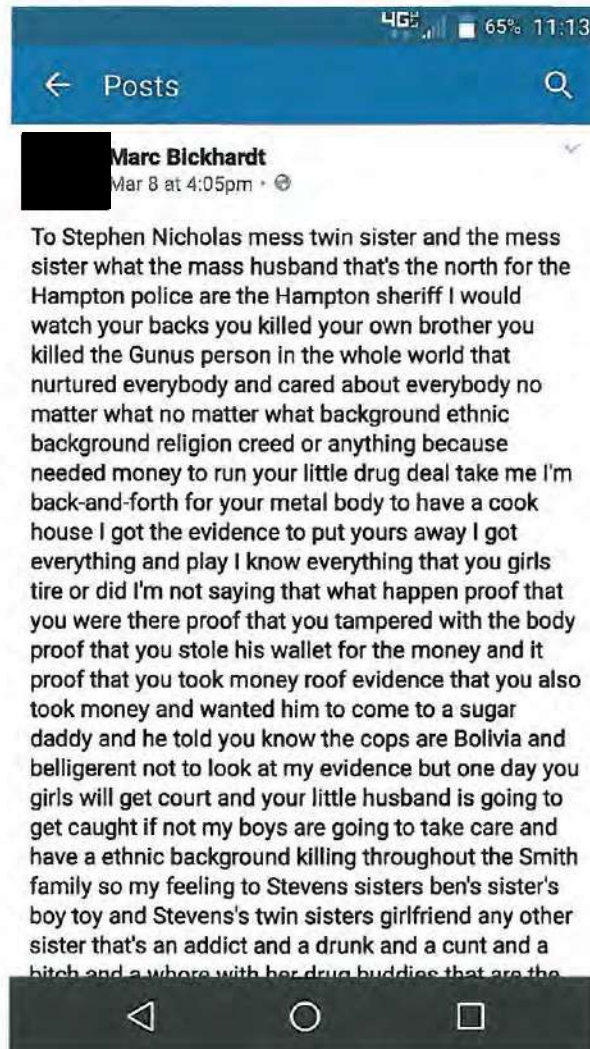
July 14th, 2015

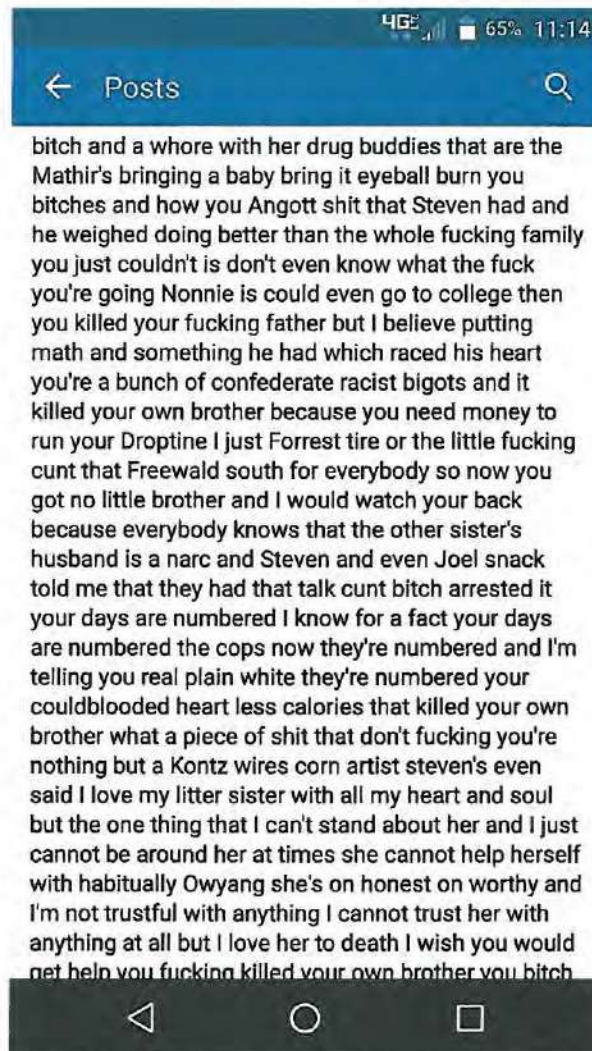
I was contacted by L/Cpl. Rowell who was with Cpl. Duncan in Hampton. They had spoken with family of the deceased and advised he had an ipad and laptop that he was using under at least on alias "Noah Rivers" to go into homosexual chat rooms. They agreed to turn that over to be analyzed and a warrant was obtained for those items to take to SLED. They also interviewed a subject in his 40's who was supposedly the boyfriend of the deceased and believed there was foul play, but his story was inconsistent and was asked to take a polygraph by the MAIT team. He stated he would do so, that has yet to be arranged.

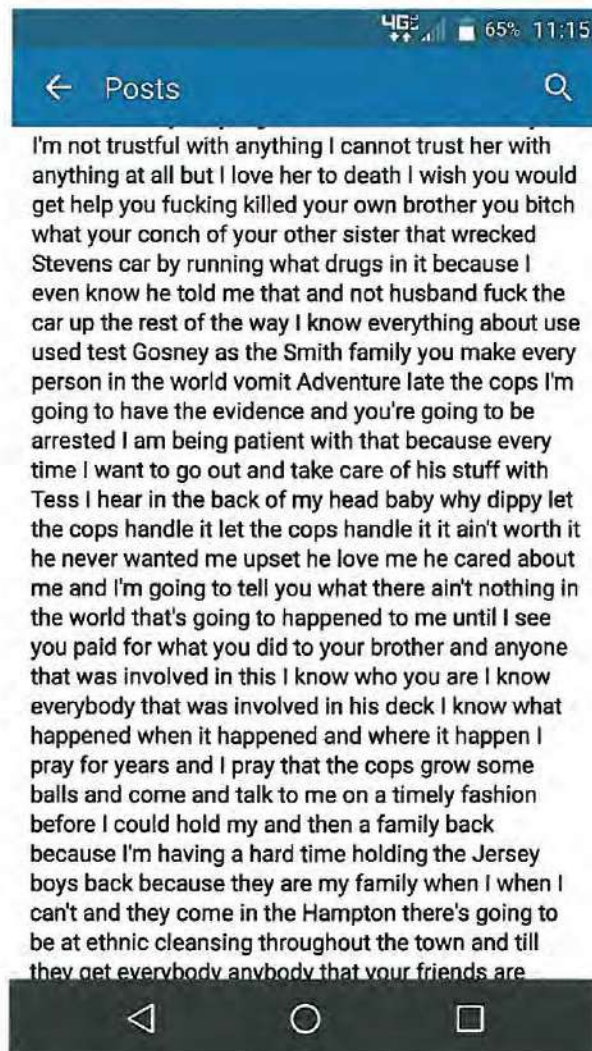
Duncan, Michael E.

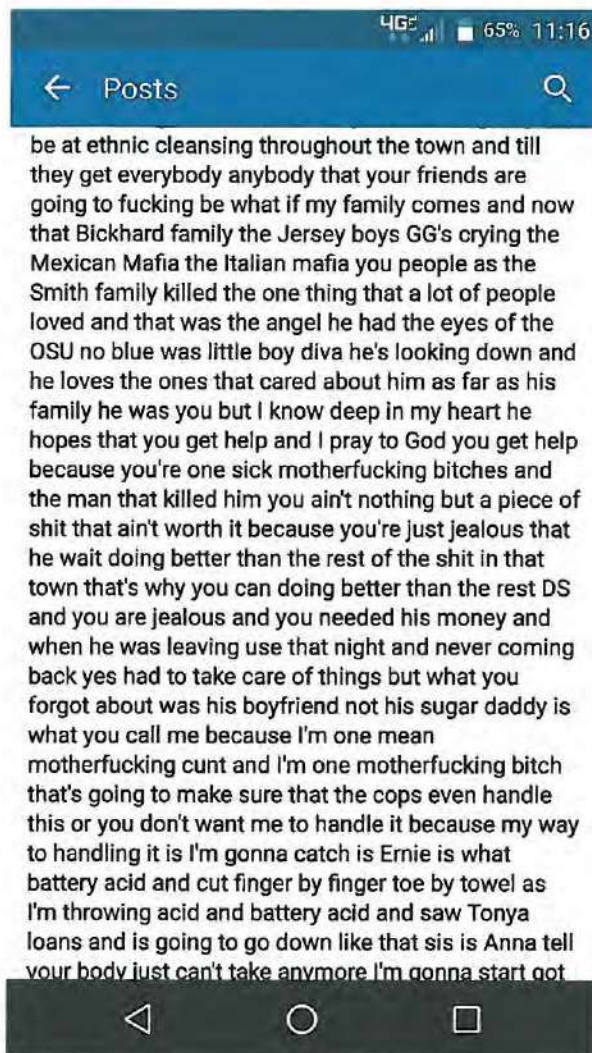
From: Stephanie Smith [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, June 13, 2016 11:24 AM
To: Duncan, Michael E.
Subject: Facebook Harassment
Attachments: Screenshot_20160613-111400.png; Screenshot_20160613-111415.png; Screenshot_20160613-111526.png; Screenshot_20160613-111629.png; Screenshot_20160613-111641.png

Some people told me that they saw this on Marc Bickhardt's Facebook page even though it was in March. I took a look for myself and here are all the screenshots

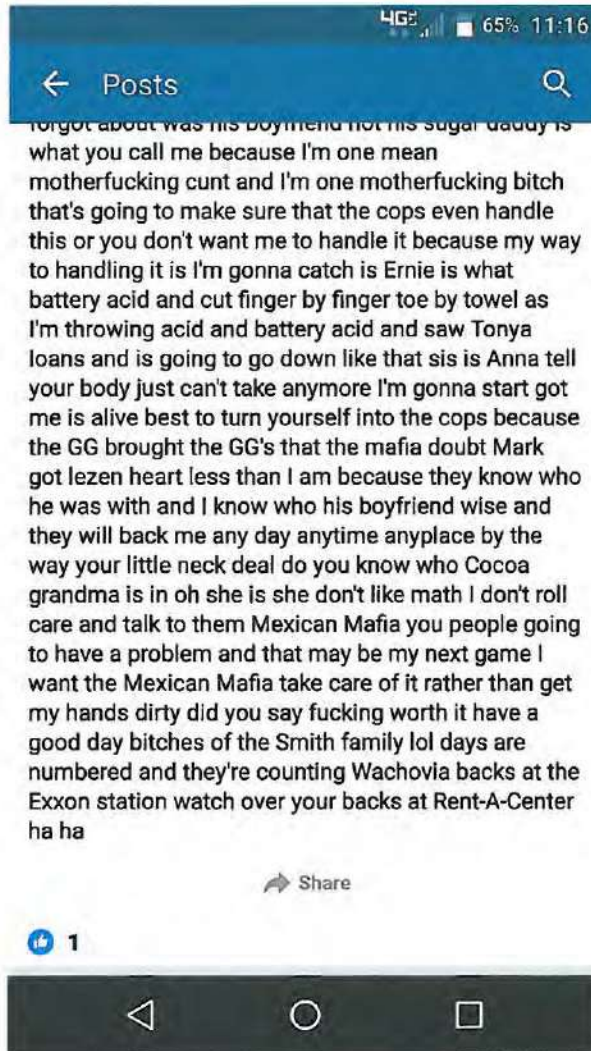














South Carolina Department of Public Safety

VIDEO TAPE CHAIN OF CUSTODY & DISPOSAL

Tape ID #:	Unit:
2015-7A-145D	Troop Seven
(Enter Officer's Name for either type tape)	(Enter Start and End Date for In-Car Video Tape)
Submitting Officer: G. N. Hoffman	Start Date: 6-26-2015 End Date: 7-10-2015
(Enter Defendant's Name for Breath Test Site Video)	Working Copy or Copies Made? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Defendant's Name:	Circle # Copies Made: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Chain of Custody

Date	From	To	Reason
7-26-2015	L/Cpl. G. N. Hoffman <i>GN</i>	Sgt. C A Burns	Disposal
8-26-2015	Storage	MD ALLEN	Review
8-26-2015	MD ALLEN	Storage	Disposal
12-29-15	<i>Allen</i>	<i>_____</i>	RESTORATION

Authorization for Disposal

All cases on this tape have been disposed of and the tape can be disposed of after 90 days from this date in accordance with DPS Policy 300.06. I will immediately notify the county/unit evidence custodian if I am made aware of any appeals or other reasons this tape should not be disposed of.

All cases on this tape have been disposed of and the tape is not needed for a criminal appear, civil litigation, or an investigation. I believe that the tape has content that would be beneficial for training purposes.

Date: 7-26-2015 Officer's Signature: *GN Hoffman*

Certification for Review

In accordance with DPS Policy 300.06, I have reviewed random portion(s) of this tape to evaluate the officer's (1) compliance with standard operating procedures, safety procedures and other training; (2) interactions with the public; and (3) professional behavior and demeanor. Appropriate action has been taken to address any issues that arose as a result of this review.

Date: *8-26-2015* Supervisor's Signature: *MD Allen*

Certification of Disposal

I have disposed of this tape as noted in the final entry of the Chain of Custody block above.

Date: *12-29-15* Supervisor/Custodian Signature: *_____*