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Statement Regarding May 22 Officer Involved Shooting

Jacksonville, FL (May 24, 2016) On Monday May 23 JSO conducted our follow up news conference to Sunday's officer involved shooting in Jacksonville's Springfield area. As you know, we have a protocol of speaking at the scene, following incidents such as this. We also conduct a second news conference, usually the day following our on-scene comments, to provide whatever additional details we can when a police involved shooting occurs.

There were several facts about Sunday's incident discussed at the news conferences that I want to reiterate and clarify for the public:

- Sunday afternoon, the suspect was seen driving a vehicle known to have been stolen during an armed robbery to a residence on March 20th (CCR 179972). The suspect (Vernell C. Bing, Jr.) was travelling at 53 miles per hour and rammed his vehicle into the officer's vehicle. The data recorder in the vehicle showed no signs of an attempt to brake. This was following a police pursuit of several miles, through area neighborhoods. He also had a "near miss" with a citizen and her small child on foot (Main Street), and another officer in his car, during this pursuit.
- Officer Landreville exited his car, after being rammed, and for reasons not yet known to us the Officer fired five shots at the suspect, who was struck one time, in the head.
- Through the Officer's legally protected rights he cannot be compelled to provide a statement. We don't have any further details about the incident at this time, nor can we speculate.
- The JSO follows a process for these investigations in accordance with law. This process involves three agencies:
 - First, a criminal investigation is conducted by the State Attorney's Office.
 - The Jacksonville Sheriff's Office Cold Case detectives are fact gathering and taking witness statements, which are all reviewed by the SAO, independently.
 - All evidence is submitted to the crime lab at FDLE for evidence processing, thereby creating an impartial forensic component to the investigation.
 - NO further administrative investigation can begin, again by statute, until the criminal investigation by the SAO is completed and the State has rendered its findings.

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- Then a Response to Resistance Board (administrative investigation) will take place, conducted to determine if any policy violations occurred. The Jacksonville Sheriff's Office RTR's were closed to the public by the court, but we remain committed to sharing the outcomes. Even when the finding by the SAO shows no criminal intent, officers involved in shootings have received additional training as a result of the RTR Board hearings. Also, as a result of our administrative investigations, officers have been disciplined up to and including termination, as a result of their departure from policy in the use of force. Any inference or statement that officers are not held accountable for their actions by a deliberate and thoroughly investigated process is untrue.**

Witnesses to this or any incident are critical for a thorough investigation. I would like to reiterate that ANYONE who has first-hand knowledge of this event should contact the JSO non-emergency number at (904) 630-0500. We cannot comment on and will not respond to the conjecture, opinions, and speculation via the media other than to say that ANYONE who actually saw this incident should contact the police.

In light of the shooting, public discussion has once again turned to body cameras, and I will again reiterate my position on this. (Note: if a body camera had been worn by the officer in yesterday's shooting, that would still have to be submitted as evidence, in both the criminal and subsequent administrative case, and the process would not change. The release of evidence is governed by the rule of law.)

I continue to support the use of body cameras by police. I know that a large amount of citizen complaints and other allegations of wrong doing can be effectively handled with this tool. We have been looking into body cameras. There have been statutory corrections made to the law recently, which will help.

The challenge for large law enforcement agencies like JSO is the funding AND the sustainability of camera programs. We have to ensure that every police officer is outfitted – this can't be random or partial. We have to ensure that the hardware and software are properly maintained with upgrades and required maintenance. And, the unknown costs of ever-increasing storage of the data must be considered, as our storage/infrastructure needs will grow *exponentially* as officers' video is downloaded, stored, reviewed, edited for legal exemptions, etc. Infrastructure requires that we have all the resources needed to fill records requests.

Once we start the program we cannot simply do away with it because of a lack of revenue. This isn't something a grant can be used to pay for, because grants do not automatically recur each year. Stability for a body camera program is possible ONLY with a continual annual revenue commitment – *it must be sustained once it begins*. The *start-up cost* is estimated at \$3-5 million. This expense must be looked at in the context of the annual essential costs of hiring; training; and outfitting officers with cars, computers, software, uniforms, guns, ECDs, bullets, salaries, healthcare, pension costs and *everything* associated with the operation of one of the nation's largest police agencies.

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Undersheriff Ivey and I spent the day Monday speaking with community leaders. I want to thank them for taking the time to have conversations with us and for allowing us to answer their questions. Our commitment to the community includes working with organizations that want to have productive dialogue and work together on solutions as we address the issues of crime and violence in our community and policing in the 21st century.

Thank you

Mike Williams, Sheriff
Duval County, FL

**The term “justifiable” is a legal term, referencing the threshold used to determine criminal intent and violation of *the law*. This is a finding made by the State Attorney’s Office, as a result of a criminal investigation. Officer accountability, as it relates to violations *of policy*, is the result of the RTR Board administrative investigation, and addresses rule violation and discipline should policy violations be founded.