

Karl Jacobson
Chief of Police



Justin Elicker
Mayor

CITY OF NEW HAVEN
DEPARTMENT OF POLICE SERVICE
INTERNAL AFFAIRS UNIT
ONE UNION AVENUE | NEW HAVEN, CONN. | 06519

(203) 946-6249

newhavenct.gov

To: Lieutenant J. Agosto
From: Sergeant Jonathan R. Caron
Date: January 31, 2025
Re: Internal Affairs Case #24I-035

Complainant: Chief Karl Jacobson

Date of Incident: March 17, 2024

Allegation: Rules of Conduct

Subject: Officer Trevor Canace

Summary

On April 15, 2024, The New Haven Police Department Chief of Police, Karl Jacobson, ordered an internal investigation on Officer Trevor Canace for a motor vehicle stop conducted on March 17, 2024, which damaged his patrol vehicle. This incident was documented under New Haven Police case #24-011191. On April 24, 2024, this investigation was assigned to Internal Affairs Investigator Detective Ann Testa. On October 23, 2024, this investigation was reassigned to this investigator by Lieutenant J. Agosto.

New Haven Police Incident Report #24-011191

Officer Canace authored the following incident report:

"On 3/17/24 at approximately 0056 hours, while on routine patrol in a marked police vehicle, I observed a black BMW sedan with heavily tinted windows traveling northbound on Sargent Dr. This vehicle was observed operating with no headlamps illuminated, in violation of CGS 14-96a as this vehicle was traveling after sunset. Note this area of Sargent Dr. which is in close proximity to the mobil gas station at 220 Sargent Dr. and the Terminal 110 night club, is an area known to the New Haven Police department to be plagued with quality of life issues, including violent crime, which has been documented on several previous occasions.

I conducted a U-Turn in the area of Sargent Dr. and Canal Docks Rd. and began traveling behind the above stated vehicle, I could then see the displayed marker plate, CA marker [REDACTED] I began traveling behind the vehicle, and illuminated the flashing lights and sirens on my vehicle. I observed the vehicle slow down, and begin moving to the right side of the road. The vehicle then appeared to begin conducting a U-turn. Behind the vehicle, I also conducted a U-turn and became stationary in the road, leaving a full lane open and unobstructed for the above vehicle to travel in, waiting for the vehicle to pass me so that I could continue this attempted traffic stop. Note that due to the calm nature the vehicle was initially driving, and slow speed, as well as the close proximity and direction to the IKEA parking lot, I believed this vehicle was conducting a U-turn to pull into the Ikea parking lot for a safe traffic stop location.

As I was stationary in the roadway, watching the vehicle conduct a U-turn, I observed the vehicle then accelerate suddenly, striking the front portion of my vehicle, ultimately tearing the front bumper off of my vehicle. The vehicle then struck Ofc. D. Smith's vehicle and continued driving south bound on Sargent Dr. I attempted to follow the vehicle, however I quickly noticed my vehicle jerking sideways out of my control. Fearing that the damage to my vehicle was severe, and that my vehicle could not be controlled, I stopped my vehicle in the roadway immediately, and contact NHPD dispatch via radio. Ofc. D. Smith followed the vehicle, attempting to stop it. The vehicle continued traveling in a reckless manner onto I 95 South bound, the pursuit was then terminated.

POLICING WITH HEART
HONOR • EXCELLENCE • ACCOUNTABILITY • RESPECT • TENACITY

I was able to exit my vehicle, where I confirmed I was not injured. I then inspected the damage to my vehicle, finding significant front end damage. This damage included the complete removal of the front bumper. Ofc. D. Smith returned to the scene, and confirmed he was also not injured. Upon inspecting his vehicle, we found minor damage including a scratch and dent to the front passenger side bumper.

Sgt. Rawlinson responded to the scene, he was made aware of this incident.

I conducted an NCIC search of the above stated marker plate found that the plate was assigned to a 2008 BMW 4 door sedan registered to a [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] with a Los Angeles CA address. ALPR search of the vehicle's marker plate found that it had been read 6 times in New Haven prior to this incident, between 2/19-3/17.

A BOLO was broadcast for the above stated vehicle, including the description of a "punisher" (skull) sticker on the rear of the trunk.

Any further investigation information, warrant affidavits, or arrests will be noted in supplemental report.

BWC/DC recording."

Officer Canace's Dashboard Camera Car #33

On March 17, 2024, Officer Canace operated New Haven Police cruiser #33. At Approximately 12:57:16 a.m., the dashboard camera was activated. Officer Canace was traveling northbound on Sargent Drive approaching the intersection of Canal Dock Road in the middle travel lane. Officer Canace approached the intersection, placing his marked cruiser behind a dark-colored BMW, also traveling northbound in the middle travel lane. Both vehicles stopped for a displayed red traffic signal at approximately 12:57:25 a.m. There were no other vehicles in proximity to the intersection. At approximately 12:57:40 a.m., the traffic signal turned green, and the BMW and Officer Canace continued to travel northbound, passing the IKEA entrance in the middle travel lane. Before both cars left the intersection, Officer Canace activated his cruiser's emergency lights behind the dark-colored BMW and chirped his sirens, activating a motor vehicle stop.

The BMW slowly merged into the right travel lane, and Officer Candace followed. At the turn in the roadway, just past Canal Dock Road, and without stopping, the dark-colored BMW conducted a U-turn. Officer Canace was close and performed a U-turn behind the BMW traveling at 11 MPH. The BMW completed its U-turn in the far-right southbound travel lane. As the BMW straightened in its travel lane, Officer Canace abruptly traveled into the far-right southbound lane at 11 MPH and collided with the front driver's side panel of the BMW. Officer Canace did not stop nor leave the far-right southbound lane open as he indicated in his incident report. Per Officer Canace's cruiser dashboard camera, he traveled at a consistent speed of 11 MPH from the beginning of his U-turn until the collision occurred with the BMW in the middle of the far-right southbound lane.

Operating cruiser #93, Officer Daniel Smith was traveling behind Officer Canace. Officer Canace's dashboard camera captured Officer Smith conducting a U-turn. Still, Officer Smith stopped in the left southbound travel lane, leaving the far-right southbound lane open, providing enough room for the BMW to egress.

The dark-colored BMW attempted to flee the initial collision with Officer Canace. Still, the force of the collision caused the BMW to cross the dotted white line into Officer Smith's traveling lane. It collided with Officer Smith's front passenger quarter panel at approximately 12:58:05 a.m. Once the BMW struck Officer Smith's stopped patrol vehicle, the BMW continued to merge back into the far-right southbound travel lane and accelerated. Officer Canace straightened his cruiser and pursued the BMW, traveling southbound toward Canal Dock Road at approximately 4 MPH. In a short distance, Officer Canace pursued the BMW and accelerated to speeds of 40 MPH, ramming the rear bumper of the BMW before Canal Dock Road. At approximately 12:58:19 a.m., the BMW fled the area, continuing southbound on Sargent Drive. At the entrance to IKEA, Officer Canace stopped his cruiser and notified dispatch he was involved in a motor vehicle accident with the BMW and provided its marker plate. While traveling in the left southbound lane, Officer

Smith followed the BMW until it merged onto I91 South; Sergeant Rawlinson terminated the pursuit. Officer Canace deactivated his dashboard camera at 12:59:09 a.m.

Officer Canace's Body-Worn Camera

On March 17, 2024, Officer Canace's body-worn camera is activated inside his cruiser at approximately 12:57:16 a.m. Officer Canace is captured typing a marker plate into his mobile computer while stopped at a red traffic signal. At approximately 12:57:43 a.m., it appeared Officer Canace passed through the intersection and activated his cruiser's emergency lights. At approximately 12:57:57 a.m., Officer Canace chirped his siren. At approximately 12:58:00, Officer Canace is seen quickly turning his steering wheel to the left, and the first collision occurred at approximately 12:58:02 a.m. Officer Canace immediately straightened his wheel and accelerated. Officer Canace's left hand is seen on the left side of the steering wheel, and his right hand is by his chest. Officer Canace abruptly used his left hand to turn the vehicle to its right, and the second collision with his cruiser could be heard at approximately 12:58:12 a.m. Officer Canace then used his right hand to immediately assist in controlling his vehicle before using his right hand to grab the microphone. Officer Canace then radioed to dispatch and relayed the accident at approximately 12:58:16 a.m. Officer Canace deactivated his body-worn camera at approximately 12:59:12 a.m.

At approximately 1:00:36 a.m., Officer Canace reactivated his body-worn camera from the interior of his police cruiser. Officer Canace repositioned his cruiser, blocking both travel lanes of the southbound lanes on Sargent Drive before the IKEA entrance. Officer Canace exited his cruiser to inspect the damage. Officer Canace removed his cruiser's front bumper from the roadway, which was completely detached. I conducted a secondary search on Milestone for extra video footage from this intersection during the accident; however, no video footage was saved due to the time-lapse.

Officer Smith's Dashboard Camera Car #93

On October 23, 2024, I attempted to review Officer Smith's dashboard camera for this incident through Evidence.com. However, there does not appear to be any saved footage. I searched for possible deleted footage but was unsuccessful.

Officer Smith's Body-Worn Camera

Officer Smith activated his body-worn camera on March 17, 2024, at approximately 12:57:15 a.m. It appeared Officer Smith was traveling northbound on Sargent Drive as I observed the concrete barrier of I95 through his passenger window. At approximately 12:57:27 a.m., it appeared Officer Smith stopped at a displayed red traffic signal at Canal Dock Road. At approximately 12:57:47 a.m., I observed flashing red and blue lights through his front windshield as he passed through the intersection, meaning Officer Smith was directly behind Officer Canace. I noticed Officer Smith's dashboard camera signaling green, which meant his dashboard camera was not recording. At approximately 12:58:01 a.m., Officer Smith abruptly turned his cruiser to the left, and I heard the first collision involving Officer Canace and the dark-colored BMW. At approximately 12:58:05 a.m., Officer Smith stopped his cruiser, and it appeared he was attempting to place his vehicle into park when the BMW struck his cruiser. Officer Smith straightened out his wheel and pursued the BMW as Officer Canace notified dispatch. Officer Smith's dashboard camera was still signaling a green light, meaning it was not recording. At that time, I observed his emergency lights were activated, which indicated his AXON dashboard camera malfunctioned and did not activate once he activated his emergency lights. At approximately 12:48:38 a.m., while passing Mobil, Officer Smith grabbed his radio and waited for Officer Canace to finish his radio transmission. At approximately 12:58:43 a.m., Officer Smith notified dispatch that the BMW had struck his vehicle and merged onto I95 South. At approximately 12:59:18 a.m., a supervisor is heard over the radio telling Officer Smith to terminate the pursuit if it was only due to the damaged cruisers. At approximately 12:59:28 a.m., Officer Smith acknowledged the supervisor and terminated the pursuit at approximately 12:59:38 a.m. His body-worn camera is then deactivated.

Sergeant Rawlinson's Body-worn Camera

Sergeant Vincent Rawlinson activated his body-worn camera at approximately 1:05:39 a.m. Sergeant Rawlinson is speaking with Officer Candace, but the first 30 seconds of the video have no audio. Officer Canace explained that the dark-colored BMW had accelerated and slammed into his cruiser. Officer Canace explained that the suspect was conducting a U-turn, so he also performed a U-turn, and the suspect rammed into the hood of his cruiser and then into Officer Smith's cruiser. During the recording, Sergeant Rawlinson explained to Officer Canace and Officer Smith how unpredictable these "street racers" are. Sergeant Rawlinson explained they have the right to enforce violations on the

POLICING WITH HEART

HONOR • EXCELLENCE • ACCOUNTABILITY • RESPECT • TENACITY

street racers, but this was the outcome and that their safety is more important. Officer Canace replied that when attempting to enforce the street racers, he thought about how society felt about them. Officer Canace explained that an unknown male had just complained to him about the street racers and that they had surrounded his vehicle. Officer Canace explained that street racers are a menace to society, and we, the police, must try something to stop them. Sergeant Rawlinson explained he felt differently because he had spent 25 years living in New Haven before becoming a Police Officer and knew from his experience that the risks outweighed the rewards. Sergeant Rawlinson photographed the damages to both vehicles and confirmed both Officers were not injured. While doing so, Officer Smith and Officer Canace explained to Sergeant Rawlinson that they did not believe the suspect vehicle was a part of the street racing groups and was only conducting a U-turn to pull into the IKEA parking lot. Officer Canace only explained after the BMW struck their vehicles and fled, he believed it was a part of the street racers. Officer Canace explained that when he initially observed the BMW, the car pulled out of the Mobil gas station on Sargent Drive without any headlights lit.

Incident Memorandum

Detective Testa noted that Sergeant Vincent Rawlinson completed a memorandum to Captain Marcucio regarding this incident. Sergeant Rawlinson also completed a supervisory investigation into both Officers' actions. He found that Officer Canace did not violate any policies.

Damage Report to Vehicle

Detective Testa noted she received a copy of the summary report regarding damage to vehicle 133NH, which Officer Canace operated at the time of this incident. The estimated damage was \$13,551.33. Detective Testa conferred with the head of the New Haven Police Garage, William Franceschi, that no damage was done to the suspension, alignment, or wheels that would suddenly cause Officer Canace's vehicle to jerk to the right.

Officer Canace's Compelled Interview

On May 31, 2024, at approximately 11:56 p.m., Detective Ann Testa and Sergeant Christopher Fennessy conducted an audio-recorded interview with New Haven Police Officer Canace at 1 Union Avenue Internal Affairs Office. Officer Canace was represented by the President of the Elm City Local Union, Officer Florencio Cotto. Officer Canace read, signed, and understood the False Statement form. Officer Canace read, signed, and understood the Internal Investigation form. Officer Canace was allowed to read the incident report he authored under New Haven Police case number 24-011191. Officer Canace was allowed to review the body-worn camera footage from this incident report.

In summary, Officer Canace explained he observed a black BMW exiting the area of Terminal 110 nightclub without its headlights or taillights lit. From his training and experience, this is a sign of an impaired drunk driver. Officer Canace explained he drove behind the vehicle, which stopped at a red traffic signal. When the light turned green, he followed the vehicle toward Brewery Street. He activated his emergency lights and sirens to attempt to conduct a motor vehicle stop for the observed violations of no headlamps or taillights being lit at night. Officer Canace explained that the vehicle slowed down and pulled to the right but then conducted a U-turn. Officer Canace believed the vehicle was performing a U-turn to pull into the IKEA parking lot. Officer Canace explained that he also conducted a U-turn, and from what he thought, he left ample room for the vehicle to travel. He explained that the vehicle then accelerated, hit the front of his vehicle, and proceeded to hit Officer Smith's vehicle before fleeing. Officer Canace explained he attempted to follow the vehicle after the collision but quickly felt his vehicle losing control and swerving to the side due to the possibility of the front bumper being lodged under his vehicle. Officer Canace stated he stopped, pulled over, and notified dispatch of the incident.

Officer Canace explained Officer Smith continued to follow the vehicle until it merged onto the highway. That was when Officer Smith stopped following the car and returned to the accident scene. Officer Canace mentioned he was not injured during the incident and contacted Sergeant Rawlinson, who responded to the scene.

Detective Testa asked Officer Canace if he had notified dispatch when he initially attempted to conduct his motor vehicle stop. Officer Canace replied that he believed he had only contacted dispatch after the vehicle had fled the scene. Detective Testa asked Officer Canace to explain the damage sustained to his cruiser. Officer Canace explained his front bumper was detached from his cruiser, and that was when he lost control of the vehicle. Detective Testa asked Officer Canace if his vehicle was deemed inoperable after the accident. Officer Canace responded after removing the front

POLICING WITH HEART

HONOR • EXCELLENCE • ACCOUNTABILITY • RESPECT • TENACITY

bumper; he drove the vehicle to the maintenance garage. Detective Testa asked Officer Canace if he was in pursuit of the vehicle, and he replied that he had been in pursuit for a very short period until he felt he had lost control of the vehicle and immediately stopped. Detective Testa asked Officer Canace how many times the fleeing vehicle struck him, to which he replied he believed it was only one time. Detective Testa asked Officer Canace if he was familiar with our police department's pursuit policy and use of force policy, to which he replied he was. Officer Canace also explained he attended the New Haven Police Academy, where he completed necessary motor vehicle training. Detective Testa asked Officer Canace if he had ever been trained in completing pit maneuvers, and Officer Canace stated he had not. Detective Testa asked Officer Canace if he had conducted a pit maneuver in this incident, and he said he did not. Detective Testa asked Officer Canace if he provided ample room for the vehicle to conduct a safe U-turn, and Officer Canace explained he couldn't recall if his vehicle was rolling at a slow speed waiting for the vehicle to pass him or if he had stopped, but there was room between them.

Detective Testa asked Officer Canace if he was familiar with our department's dashboard and body-worn camera policies, and he stated he was. Detective Testa asked Officer Canace if he was aware his videos were tagged under different categories, and he said he was unaware of that.

Detective Testa asked Officer Canace to elaborate on when the BMW struck his vehicle. Officer Canace explained that the car had begun conducting a U-turn and intended to leave a significant amount of space for the vehicle to pass him and pull into the IKEA parking lot. But the vehicle accelerated and struck his vehicle and then Officer Smith's vehicle before fleeing.

Sergeant Fennessy asked Officer Canace to explain his contact points with the subject's vehicle. Officer Canace explained that the subject's front driver's side quarter panel came into contact with his front passenger side quarter panel. Sergeant Fennessy asked Officer Canace how often his vehicle came into contact with the subject's vehicle, and Officer Canace recalled only once. Sergeant Fennessy and Detective Testa logged into Evidence.com and played the footage captured on Officer Canace's dashboard camera. Officer Canace confirmed the location and video. The entirety of the dashboard footage was shown to Officer Canace. Sergeant Fennessy stopped the video and told Officer Canace he had contacted the subject's vehicle twice. Sergeant Fennessy explained the initial contact when the subject vehicle conducted a U-turn and then the second time following the collision with Officer Smith's vehicle. Officer Canace explained he did not believe his vehicle came in contact with the subject's vehicle a second time and that the collision appeared to have occurred when his front bumper suddenly, in a violent manner, ripped off.

Sergeant Fennessy and Detective Testa played Officer Canace's body-worn camera footage. The video was stopped after the subject's vehicle struck Officer Smith, and Officer Canace claimed he lost control of his vehicle. Sergeant Fennessy asked Officer Canace if this was when his front bumper came off. Officer Canace responded that was when he felt something dislodged from the vehicle and pulled his vehicle to the right. Officer Canace explained that is where you can see him placing his hands on the wheel to correct it, so he didn't veer to the right. Officer Canace explained at that time; he decided it was not worth pursuing the vehicle because his vehicle was in no condition to do so as an emergency vehicle. The Investigators played one of the videos again. Once again, Officer Canace explained he believed the vehicle swerved at him during the initial contact while making a U-turn and that after the subject vehicle made contact with Officer Smith's vehicle, he never had contact with that vehicle a second time. The sudden movements and jolts from the video were due to the front bumper being lodged under his cruiser, which violently shook the cruiser. The interview was completed at 12:14 p.m.

Officer Smith's Compelled Interview

On June 6, 2024, at approximately 4:08 p.m., Detective Testa and Sergeant Jason Koenig conducted an audio-recorded interview with New Haven Police Officer Smith at 1 Union Avenue Internal Affairs Office. Officer Smith was represented by the Elm City Local Union Representation, Officer David Vega. Officer Smith read, signed, and understood the False Statement form. Officer Smith read, signed, and understood the Internal Investigation form. Officer Smith was allowed to read the incident report that Officer Canace authored under New Haven Police case number 24-011191. Officer Smith was allowed to review the body-worn camera footage from this incident report.

In summary, Officer Smith explained that he was assigned to the Hill section of the city on the night of the incident, working his midnight shift. During his tenure, he was in the nearby area, possibly clearing from another call for service relating to complaints made against the street racers. Officer Smith explained he and Officer Canace were driving in tandem. He explained while on Sargent Drive during the late hours, he observed a vehicle with window tints and without working headlights and taillights leaving the area of Terminal 110 nightclub. He explained that Officer Canace had followed the car and attempted to make a motor vehicle stop, and he was a covering unit. Officer Smith stated that the subject vehicle had pulled over to the side and made a U-turn on Sargent Drive. Officer Smith explained he believed the subject vehicle was intending to pull into the IKEA parking lot and was possibly a drunk driver. Officer Smith stated it isn't uncommon for vehicles to turn off of Sargent Drive and pull into parking lots. Officer Smith said as the vehicle was completing its U-turn, he and Officer Canace also started conducting a U-turn. Officer Smith stated as he was making his U-turn, he observed Officer Canace's front bumper being ripped off his vehicle; he started placing his vehicle into park, but the subject vehicle drove directly into his vehicle. Officer Smith stated that after the vehicle struck him, it fled, and he began to follow it onto the highway. That was when he turned his emergency lights off and discontinued following the vehicle.

Sergeant Koenig asked Officer Smith if he had observed the area of impact in which the subject vehicle had struck Officer Canace, and he stated he had not. The only thing he recalled was seeing Officer Canace's vehicle shaking. Officer Smith said he was not injured during the incident and that his cruiser sustained minor damage to the front passenger-side quarter panel.

Officer Smith stated that during the incident, his body camera activated when he turned on his emergency lights, but it wasn't until after that he realized his dashboard camera did not turn on as it was supposed to. The interview was completed at 4:15 p.m.

Traffic Officer J. Franceschi's Interview

On June 14, 2024, at approximately 10:07 a.m., Detective Testa and Sergeant Koenig conducted an expert witness interview with New Haven Police Traffic Officer Jamie Franceschi. Officer Franceschi has been a member of the New Haven Police Department for approximately 15 years and has been a certified Training Officer in EVOC (Emergency Vehicle Operation Course) since 2017. This certification consists of but is not limited to pursuit driving, State Statutes, use of force, and anything regarding the operation of emergency vehicles. Officer Franceschi has trained approximately 2,500-6,000 officers in his career.

In summary, Officer Franceschi stated he read and reviewed dashboard camera footage pertaining to this incident. While reviewing the dashboard camera footage, Officer Franceschi notes Officer Canace initiating a motor vehicle stop. He explained that the operator of the subject vehicle had immediately pulled to the right, but the Officer and operator never came to a complete stop. Officer Franceschi stated the subject operator made a U-turn. Officer Franceschi noted that in his career, he had conducted thousands of motor vehicle stops and, in his training and experience, that the subject vehicle wasn't going to stop, and the operator maneuver was an attempt to flee the motor vehicle stop. Officer Franceschi explained from his perception that Officer Canace made his U-turn, never stopped, and drove in front of the subject vehicle where the first collision occurred. Officer Franceschi stated the offending vehicle continued on Sargent Drive, and Officer Canace got behind it while accelerating. From that point, it violated our department's pursuit policy since the offending vehicle was trying to flee the motor vehicle stop. Officer Franceschi further explained Officer Canace accelerated and almost matched the speeds of the fleeing vehicle and appeared to attempt to ram or pit maneuver the rear quarter panel of the fleeing vehicle. Detective Testa asked Officer Franceschi if those techniques were taught by either our department or by POST, and he stated they were not. Detective Testa asked Officer Franceschi if those techniques or actions appeared reasonable, and he stated they were not.

Detective Testa asked Officer Franceschi what circumstances allow Officers to pursue a vehicle. Officer Franceschi stated that officers are permitted to pursue vehicles when they know there is a violent felony or when a serious crime has been committed. He explained from his observations that this incident stemmed from a minor motor vehicle violation for not having its headlights on. Detective Testa asked Officer Franceschi if his explanation was consistent with the New Haven Police Department General Orders, and he stated that it was. He also explained that pursuits are covered under Connecticut General Statutes 14-283a, the state statute for motor vehicle pursuits.

POLICING WITH HEART

HONOR • EXCELLENCE • ACCOUNTABILITY • RESPECT • TENACITY

Officer Franceschi explained that he trained Officer Canace in the Emergency Vehicle Operation and that his techniques and actions were unreasonable. Officer Franceschi stated he also trained Officer Smith in the Emergency Vehicle Operation and, after reviewing video footage, said his actions and techniques were reasonable.

Sergeant Koenig asked Officer Franceschi to elaborate on the definition of ramming and pit maneuvers. Officer Franceschi stated that these techniques are used when an Officer matches the speed of the fleeing vehicle and uses the front of the police cruiser to make contact with the fleeing vehicle's rear quarter panel. This contact would essentially cause the rear tires of the fleeing vehicle to experience sliding friction, which will cause a car to oversteer, forcing the vehicle to lose control. Officer Franceschi stated after reviewing the video that when the subject vehicle initially made a U-turn, and Officer Candace made a U-turn behind the car, he would not have an issue with that. But the fact Officer Canace drove in front of the vehicle or cut off its movement would be considered a ram or roadblock. The interview was completed at 10:17 a.m.

Sergeant Rawlinson's Compelled Interview

On July 1, 2024, at approximately 10:17 a.m., Detective Testa and I conducted an audio-recorded interview with New Haven Police Sergeant Rawlinson at 1 Union Avenue Internal Affairs Office. Sergeant Rawlinson was represented by the Elm City Local Union Representative, Officer R. Ramirez. Sergeant Rawlinson read, signed, and understood the False Statement form. Sergeant Rawlinson read, signed, and understood the Internal Investigation form. Sergeant Rawlinson was allowed to read the incident report that Officer Canace authored under New Haven Police case number 24-011191. Sergeant Rawlinson was allowed to review the body-worn camera footage from this incident report.

In summary, Sergeant Rawlinson said he became aware of this incident after it was transmitted over the radio and responded to the scene when he heard an Officer was involved in a motor vehicle accident. Sergeant Rawlinson explained to his knowledge that the only Officer who pursued the vehicle was Officer Smith after the second collision, but he terminated that pursuit over the radio. Sergeant Rawlinson said that when he arrived at Sargent Drive and Canal Dock Road, both police vehicles were damaged and in the middle of the intersection. Sergeant Rawlinson noted that at that time, he did not believe Officer Canace's vehicle was operable or that he was afraid to try to move the car.

Sergeant Rawlinson said Officer Canace informed him he was trying to initiate a motor vehicle stop on the northbound lane. He explained that the subject vehicle slowed, put on its brakes, tapped them, and then made a U-turn. Sergeant Rawlinson said Officer Canace told him he also made a U-turn, and in doing so, the subject vehicle collided with his cruiser and then Officer Smith's cruiser. Detective Testa asked Sergeant Rawlinson if he had reviewed the dashboard camera footage for this incident, and he stated he had. Detective Testa asked Sergeant Rawlinson if he had completed a report for this incident, and he stated he had completed a PR1, a department memorandum, and a fleet accident report. He further said he forwarded the report to the New Haven Police Garage.

Detective Testa asked Sergeant Rawlinson what the outcome of his investigation was. Sergeant Rawlinson said after reviewing the dashboard footage; he did not find Officer Candace or Officer Smith violating any department policy, standard operating procedures, or general orders. Sergeant Rawlinson explained his perception that he didn't believe Officer Canace conducted a roadblock, which was his biggest concern. Sergeant Rawlinson explained that the officers had blocked a portion of the roadway, and the vehicle had collided with Officer Smith's car before taken off. Detective Testa asked Sergeant Rawlinson about the second collision with Officer Canace. Sergeant Rawlinson said his interpretation was that he had lost control of the vehicle and clipped it. He said others may understand the collision differently, but that was what he observed. Detective Testa asked Sergeant Rawlinson if he completed a pursuit form for this incident. Sergeant Rawlinson explained he could not recall and would need to check to see if one was done. Detective Testa asked if he felt this incident was a pursuit, and he stated he didn't believe it was. Sergeant Rawlinson said Officers have a specific time and space to trail the vehicle before it is considered a pursuit. Sergeant Rawlinson finished his statement by adding that from his experience as an Officer, his perspective on this incident was straightforward. The interview was completed at 10:24 a.m.

Conclusion

On March 17, 2024, at approximately 12:56 a.m., Officer Canace was working his scheduled shift in the Hill section of the city. During his shift, Officer Smith and Officer Canace patrolled the area of Sargent Drive for reported street racers. Officer Canace was operating NHPD cruiser #33 on Sargent Drive and noticed a black BMW leaving the area of Terminal 110 onto Sargent Drive with no headlamps or taillights lit. Officer Canace was familiar with this area and the nightclub on Terminal Lane and, from his training and experience, believed the operator of the black BMW was possibly impaired. Officer Canace followed the black BMW northbound on Sargent Drive until they stopped at a displayed red traffic signal at Canal Dock Road, also the entrance to IKEA. The traffic signal turned green, and before exiting the intersection, Officer Canace activated his emergency lights and sirens to conduct a motor vehicle stop on the black BMW. The black BMW slowly merged into the far-right lane and performed a U-turn approximately 350 feet from the intersection of Sargent Drive and Canal Dock Road. This distance was measured using Googlemaps.com. A diagram was printed and added to this case file.

Officer Canace never stopped in the far-right lane and performed a U-turn behind the BMW at 11 MPH. Officer Canace's cruiser speed was captured at 9 MPH as he crossed over the double yellow line into the southbound lanes. Once in the southbound lanes, Officer Canace's speed accelerated to 11 MPH as he crossed over the left southbound lane and into the far-right southbound lane, colliding with the black BMW. His dashboard camera captured the collision, indicating Officer Canace did not leave ample room for the black BMW to egress.

After the first collision, Officer Canace's front passenger side bumper was partially ripped off the vehicle, but the left side bumper was still attached. The black BMW then collided with the front passenger side quarter panel of Officer Smith's cruiser and continued to travel southbound on Sargent Drive while increasing its speed. Officer Canace's dashboard camera captured that collision with Officer Smith, which displayed that Officer Canace had stopped at 0 MPH. Officer Canace then turned right around Officer Smith's cruiser, and within 112 feet, he accelerated to approximately 40 MPH behind the black BMW, matching its speed. During that time, Officer Canace's front bumper was still attached and bouncing. Officer Canace then attempted to PIT maneuver the black BMW by using the front right bumper of his cruiser and ramming into the black BMW's rear bumper at 40 MPH. At that time, Officer Canace's front bumper is observed being ripped off his vehicle. I determined this by observing this collision frame by frame. Meaning Officer Canace's front bumper was not lodged under his car, causing him to lose control, as he documented in his report and compelled statement. Officer Canace is then captured slowing down and deactivating his dashboard and body camera as he came to a complete stop and notified dispatch of the accident. Shortly after that, Officer Canace reactivated his body-worn camera but moved from his final resting position in the intersection and positioned his cruiser on the opposite side of the intersection to inspect his damage.

Detective Testa interviewed Traffic Officer Franceschi as an expert witness certified in Emergency Vehicle Operations. Officer Franceschi reviewed Officer Canace's report and dashboard camera footage and determined Officer Canace rammed the black BMW in its first collision by blocking its egress. Secondly, Officer Franceschi said Officer Canace performed a pit maneuver during the second collision because Officer Canace matched the speeds of the black BMW and used his front passenger bumper to ram the rear bumper of the black BMW.

In addition to Officer Franceschi's interview, Detective Testa spoke with the head mechanic at the New Haven Police Garage, who confirmed that the damage to Officer Canace's cruiser would not cause the vehicle to suddenly jerk violently, as Officer Canace stated in his report.

Although Sergeant Rawlinson initially cleared Officer Canace from any wrongdoing or violations, it was through my investigation that I determined Officer Canace had violated several General Orders by the evidence gathered in interviews, reports, and body-worn and dashboard camera footage.

In conclusion, based on the above facts and circumstances, this investigation was determined by a preponderance of the evidence that the misconduct or wrongdoing complained of did occur. Officer Canace initiated a motor vehicle stop for a minor equipment violation (infraction) for no headlamps or taillights lit, which resulted in Officer Canace ramming into the subject vehicle head-on while performing a U-turn. This collision resulted in the subject vehicle striking Officer Smith's vehicle before fleeing the scene. While attempting to escape, Officer Canace accelerated and matched the speeds of the subject vehicle and performed a pit maneuver by ramming his vehicle into the rear bumper of the subject

vehicle, creating substantial damage to his cruiser. This information was corroborated by an expert witness trained in Emergency Vehicle Operations.

This investigation concluded that Officer Canace violated the following:

GENERAL ORDER 12.03: VEHICLE PURSUITS

12.03.02: POLICY: It is the policy of the New Haven Department of Police Service (NHPD) that a pursuit shall be based on the Police Officer's conclusion that the immediate danger to the Police Officer and the public created by the pursuit is less than the immediate or potential danger to the public should the occupant(s) of such vehicle remain at large. Deciding where to pursue a motor vehicle is a critical decision that must be made quickly and under difficult and unpredictable circumstances. In recognizing the potential risk to public safety created by vehicular pursuits, no Officer or Supervisor shall be criticized or disciplined for deciding not to engage in a vehicle pursuit because of risks involved. It is recognized that vehicle pursuits situations are not always predictable, and decisions made pursuant to this General Order will be evaluated according to the totality of the circumstance's reasonably available at the time of the pursuit.

12.03.03: DEFINITIONS

PURSUIT: An attempt by a Police Officer in an authorized emergency vehicle to apprehend any occupant of another moving motor vehicle, when the driver of the fleeing vehicle is attempting to avoid apprehension by maintaining or increasing the speed of such vehicle or by ignoring the Police Officer's attempt to stop such vehicle. The mere fact that an Officer has activated his or her lights or sirens does not constitute a pursuit.

RAMMING: The deliberate tactic by one or more police vehicles to forcibly strike, while attempting to stop, a pursued vehicle.

PIT MANEUVER (PURSUIT INTERVENTION TECHNIQUE): A deliberate tactic by a police operator to cause a pursued vehicle to turn sideways abruptly which causes the driver to lose control and stop. This tactic is performed when an Officer places the front quarter of their cruiser next to the back quarter of the fleeing vehicle. The Officer then steers into and taps the rear of the fleeing vehicle. This slight contact causes the fleeing vehicle to lose traction, spin and stall.

12.03.04 PROCEDURES: INITIATION OF PURSUIT

- An Officer may only engage another vehicle in a pursuit if that Officer has reasonable suspicion to believe that the driver or occupant has committed or is attempting to commit a crime of violence, or there are exigent circumstances that warrant the need to apprehend the suspect in a timely manner because of the potential for harm to the public if the apprehension does not occur. The Officers must be able to articulate the exigent need to apprehend the driver or occupant because the potential harm or risk to the public.
- Offenses that constitute infractions, city ordinances, property crimes, (to include stolen motor vehicles), non-violent felonies shall not be justification to engage in a pursuit of another vehicle, absent articulable exigent circumstances.

PURSUIT OPERATIONS

- When engaged in a pursuit, Officers shall drive with due regard for the safety of persons and property.

PURSUIT TACTICS

- The following activities are prohibited during the course of a motor vehicle pursuit:
 - Boxing in
 - Forcing Collision
 - Overtaking
 - Ramming
 - Roadblocks
 - PIT and brake checking maneuvers

TERMINATION OF THE PURSUIT

- A pursuit shall be terminated if the Officer knows or is reasonably certain, that the fleeing motor vehicle is being by a juvenile and the suspected offense is not a violent felony.

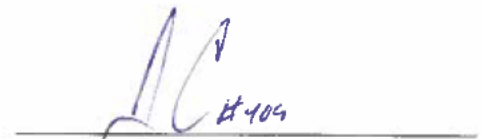
GENERAL ORDER 6.01: USE OF FORCE

6.01.02: POLICY

It is the policy of the New Haven Department of Police Services (NHPD) to provide clear procedures to sworn officers regarding the use of force in the performance of their duties. The safety of innocent persons and officers is of paramount importance. In compliance with applicable law, all sworn police officers employed by the NHPD must use minimum level of force necessary to achieve a lawful purpose. Any use of force must be reasonable, proportionate to the threat, and employed in a manner consistent with this policy. While not an actual use of force, the mere presence of a police officer can be intimidating to some. Therefore, officers should be mindful of their body language and tone of voice upon arrival at a scene and throughout their interaction with subjects, complainants, and witnesses.

These findings of facts shall be forwarded to the Chief of the New Haven Police Department, Karl Jacobson, for review and final disposition.


Lieutenant J. Agosto
OIC Internal Affairs


Sergeant Jonathan Caron
Internal Affairs Investigator



CITY OF NEW HAVEN
DEPARTMENT OF POLICE SERVICE
ONE UNION AVENUE | NEW HAVEN, CONN. | 06519

TO: Lieutenant J. Agosto
FROM: Detective D. Conklin
DATE: January 28th, 2025
RE: Internal Affairs Complaint 24i-037

Complainant: Chief K. Jacobson
Date of Incident: April 12th, 2024
Allegations: Police Conduct
Subject Officers: Officer Trevor Canace

Summary

On April 15th, 2024, New Haven Chief of Police Karl Jacobson ordered an internal investigation to be conducted regarding a motor vehicle pursuit Ofc. Trevor Canace engaged in on April 12th, 2024. As of April 15th, 2024, Ofc. Canace was placed on Administrative Leave.

New Haven Police Department Incident Report

No Incident Report was completed regarding this incident. I conducted a record check through the New Haven Police Department's Record Management System (RMS) and OpCenter for this Incident Report and was met with negative results. I also contacted the New Haven Police Department's Records Supervisor, Donna Rockhill, who also confirmed that no Incident Report regarding this pursuit was completed. A Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) Activity Report for April 12th, 2024, for Ofc. Canace showed a Motor Vehicle Stop occurring at 7:01 PM with a location of Kimberly Ave. and Interstate 95 North Entrance Ramp (I-95 N) with a Case Number of 24-15242. That Case Number appears to be associated with the pursuit Ofc. Canace was engaged in.

Ofc. Canace's Body Worn Camera (BWC) and Dashboard Camera (DC) footage capturing this pursuit were tagged with New Haven Police Department Case Number of 24-15229. Rockhill informed me that the only record that was submitted regarding Case Number 24-15229 was a Traffic Stop Statistic Form. This Traffic Stop Statistic Form appeared to be for motor vehicle stop Ofc. Canace made approximately 16 minutes prior to the motor vehicle pursuit he was involved in. The two incidents do not appear to be related to each other. As such, I recategorized the BWC and DC Footage of the pursuit under Case Number 24-15242, which is assigned to the pursuit.

Sgt. Cole's Memo

On April 18th, 2024, Sgt. Justin Cole submitted a memo to Capt. Nicholas Marcucio, the Patrol Commander, regarding Ofc. Canace's pursuit. Sgt. Cole was assigned as the Shift Commander for the B-Squad on April 12th, 2024. Sgt. Cole states that at 6:55 PM on April 12th, 2024, he heard Ofc. Canace transmit over the police radio that he was attempting to stop a motor vehicle on I-95 N near Exit 50. Sgt. Cole wrote that Ofc. Canace provided a description of the vehicle he was pursuing and then terminated the pursuit himself, later asking for a case number for a motor vehicle stop. Sgt. Cole then documented that the radio transmission was "difficult to understand due to his radio not being clear". Sgt. Cole, citing his experience with our police radio system,

believed Ofc. Canace may have transmitted over the police radio from outside of the City of New Haven which drew his attention to this incident.

Sgt. Cole continued that he later went to Axon's evidence.com to see if the Dash Camera footage involving Ofc. Canace's pursuit was available for review. Sgt. Cole was able to review the Dash Camera footage and provided a summary of the pursuit in his memo. Sgt. Cole wrote that the pursuit began at approximately 6:53 PM in the area of the "Hill District". Sgt. Cole continued that Ofc. Canace eventually got behind a silver vehicle which then began traveling at a high rate of speed in an effort to speed away from Ofc. Canace. Sgt. Cole wrote that Ofc. Canace then activated his overhead lights and siren and was observed traveling on Howard Ave. at approximately 70 MPH. Sgt. Cole notes that Howard Ave. is a residential area where the posted speed limit is 25 MPH. Sgt. Cole continued that he observed Ofc. Canace violated a traffic control signal, failed to clear an intersection, and operated his vehicle on the wrong side of the road; all while never notifying police dispatch or other officers of his actions.

Sgt. Cole continued that he then observed Ofc. Canace pursue the vehicle onto I-95 N at "an extremely high rate of speed", noting a top speed of 119 MPH with moderate traffic observed. Sgt. Cole stated that Ofc. Canace notified police dispatch when he and the silver vehicle approached Exit 50; specifying that it was approximately two minutes after Ofc. Canace tried to initiate a motor vehicle stop. Sgt. Cole then documented that after Ofc. Canace terminated the pursuit it appeared as if he continued to pursue the vehicle with no emergency lights or siren on. Sgt. Cole stated that Ofc. Canace exited I-95 N at Exit 53.

Sgt. Cole stated that he then called Sgt. Caron, Ofc. Canace's patrol supervisor, and expressed to him his "serious concerns" regarding this pursuit. Sgt. Cole stated that he then requested Sgt. Caron to come to his office to also review the pursuit footage. Sgt. Cole then contacted Capt. Marcucio and made him aware of this incident. Sgt. Cole stated that Capt. Marcucio directed him to remove Ofc. Canace from patrol duties and have him assigned to New Haven Police Department's Detention facility until April 15th, 2024.

A copy of this memo will be retained in the investigative case file.

Sgt. Caron's Memo

On April 18th, 2024, Sgt. Jonathan Caron submitted a memo to Capt. Marcucio regarding Ofc. Canace's pursuit. Sgt. Caron was assigned as the Patrol Supervisor for both Hill North and Hill South Districts for the B-Squad on April 12th, 2024. Sgt. Caron stated that on April 12th, 2024, at approximately 6:55 PM Ofc. Canace notified police dispatch that he was attempting to conduct a motor vehicle stop on a silver Infinity, bearing a Vermont temporary marker plate, on I-95 N in the area of Exit 50. Sgt. Caron continued that Ofc. Canace reported the vehicle was not stopping for him and was subsequently terminating the pursuit.

Sgt. Caron continued that he was later contacted by Sgt. Cole regarding Ofc. Canace's attempted motor vehicle stop on I-95 N. Sgt. Caron notes that Sgt. Cole expressed "major safety concerns" with Ofc. Canace's actions and directed him to meet in the Shift Commander's Office. Sgt. Caron stated that he and Sgt. Cole then reviewed the Dash Camera footage from Ofc. Canace's pursuit. Sgt. Caron wrote that at approximately 6:53 PM Ofc. Canace was traveling north on Hallock Ave. and then turned left onto Second St, approaching Howard Ave. Sgt. Caron continued that at this point a silver-colored sedan is seen in front of Ofc. Canace which "appeared to be accelerating and gaining speed". Sgt. Caron noted that Ofc. Canace then also accelerated his speed on Howard Ave, activated his emergency lights and siren, and reached a speed of nearly 70 MPH in a residential area with a posted 25 MPH speed limit. Sgt. Caron continued that Ofc. Canace proceeded to follow the vehicle onto Sea St. and passes the rotary on the wrong side of the road before getting onto I-95 N.

Sgt. Caron documented that on I-95 N, Ofc. Canace reached speeds of 119 MPH and continued to pursue the vehicle on I-95 N over the Pearl Harbor Memorial Bridge (Q Bridge). Sgt. Caron continued that when Ofc.

Canace was approaching Exit 50 Ofc. Canace notified police dispatch that he was attempting a motor vehicle stop and then was terminating his attempt. Sgt. Caron documented that this was approximately two minutes after Ofc. Canace initially attempted the motor vehicle stop on Howard Ave. Sgt. Caron continued that Ofc. Canace's Dash Camera was then deactivated, but was reactivated and it appeared as if Ofc. Canace was still following the silver vehicle until Ofc. Canace exited I-95 N at Exit 53.

Sgt. Caron concluded his memo by noting he directed Ofc. Canace to meet with Sgt. Cole and himself in the patrol offices. Sgt. Caron stated that he asked Ofc. Canace what was the reason for the motor vehicle stop, to which Ofc. Canace replied it was for "front window tints". Sgt. Caron then noted that he advised Ofc. Canace of how "reckless this pursuit was", noting the time it took Ofc. Canace to notify police dispatch and the speed of 119 MPH being reached. Sgt. Caron stated that he then directed Ofc. Canace, per Sgt. Cole, to park in the Knights of Columbus Parking Lot for the remainder of the shift and to complete any outstanding reports.

A copy of this memo will be retained in the investigative case file.

Dash Camera Footage – Patrol Cruiser #53

I then reviewed the Dash Camera Footage from Patrol Cruiser #53 for this pursuit, documented under New Haven Police Case Number 24-15242. This recording is 4 minutes and 10 seconds long and starts at 6:52:34 PM. The data on the Dash Camera shows that Ofc. Canace is logged in.

The Dash Camera Footage begins at 6:52:34 PM with Ofc. Canace traveling north on Hallock Ave. towards 2nd St. At 6:52:41 PM Ofc. Canace turns onto 2nd St. from Hallock Ave. and the silver vehicle is seen for the first time. Ofc. Canace then proceeds west on 2nd St. towards Howard Ave. At 6:52:50 PM Ofc. Canace violates the Stop Sign at the intersection of 2nd St. and Howard Ave. and the proceeds south on Howard Ave. behind the silver vehicle. It is at this point Ofc. Canace begins to accelerate south on Howard Ave. behind the silver vehicle. At 6:53:02 PM Ofc. Canace reaches a top speed of 78 MPH on Howard Ave. and activates the Patrol Cruiser's emergency lights. It should be noted that the posted speed limit for this portion of Howard Ave. is 25 MPH. Ofc. Canace continues south on Howard Ave. and at 6:53:06 PM Ofc. Canace violates a traffic control signal at the intersection of Howard Ave. and 5th St, passing through the intersection with a red traffic control signal light at speeds of 71 MPH. Ofc. Canace activates his siren at 6:53:10 while on Howard Ave. approaching 6th St.

While still in pursuit of the silver vehicle, Ofc. Canace then turns west onto Sea St. from Howard Ave. At 6:53:24 PM Ofc. Canace enters the rotary on Sea St. via the wrong side of the road and proceeds over the rotary on the wrong side of the road. At 6:53:45 PM Ofc. Canace then enters the onramp to I-95 N from Ella T. Grasso Blvd. and continues to proceed onto I-95 N. While on I-95 N the traffic conditions were moderate with vehicles occupying all travel lanes. At 6:54:31 PM Ofc. Canace reaches a top speed of 119 MPH while traveling north on I-95 N in the area of the I-95 N onramp from Long Wharf Dr. Ofc. Canace continues north on I-95 N past the split with Interstate 91 North (I-91 N) and at 6:54:53 PM passes a vehicle in the right-side breakdown lane at speeds of 98 MPH. Ofc. Canace then proceeds north on I-95 N towards the Pearl Harbor Memorial Bridge at speeds reaching 99 MPH.

At 6:55:18 PM, approximately 2 minutes and 16 seconds after he activated his emergency lights, Ofc. Canace makes his first contact with police dispatch regarding this pursuit while on the Pearl Harbor Memorial Bridge. Ofc. Canace states, "5-3... 5-3. 95 northbound, uh passing Exit 50. I got a grey Infiniti 2-door taking off on me. Trying to get a plate right now, it's a paper tag, looks like it is, maybe Vermont [REDACTED] maybe. We're just passing Exit 51, I'm gunna cut it off". While making this radio transmission Ofc. Canace reached a top speed of 102 MPH. At 6:56:07 PM, just pass Exit 51 on I-95 N, Ofc. Canace deactivates his siren then emergency lights. However, Ofc. Canace continued to pursue this vehicle with no siren or emergency lights activated while reaching top speeds of 94 MPH. Ofc. Canace continued to accelerate and follow behind the

vehicle, making no effort to terminate the pursuit or slow his police cruiser. At 6:56:44 PM the Dash Camera appears to be manually deactivated and the recording ceases. At that time, Ofc. Canace is still on I-95 N, in East Haven, CT, and is still directly behind the pursued vehicle.

At 6:56:45 PM the Dash Camera reactivates and shows Ofc. Canace still behind the silver vehicle while proceeding north on I-95 N. After 7 seconds, at 6:56:52 PM the Dash Camera appears to be manually deactivated for a second time. At 6:56:52 PM the Dash Camera reactivates again and shows Ofc. Canace slowing and pulling to the right lane while the silver vehicle continues north on I-95 N at a high rate of speed. After 6 seconds, at 6:56:58 PM the Dash Camera appears to be manually deactivated for a third time. At 6:57:23 PM the Dash Camera reactivates again and shows Ofc. Canace traveling north on I-95 N in the right lane. The silver vehicle is no longer in sight, and it does not appear as if Ofc. Canace is still pursuing the vehicle. After 43 seconds, at 6:58:06 PM the Dash Camera appears to be manually deactivated for a fourth time. Prior to it being deactivated, it shows Ofc. Canace taking Exit 53 in Branford, CT, and exiting I-95 N.

Body Worn Camera Footage – Ofc. Canace

I then reviewed the Body Worn Camera Footage for this pursuit, documented under New Haven Police Case Number 24-15242. This recording is 4 minutes and 15 seconds long and starts at 6:52:35 PM. The data on the Body Worn Camera shows it belongs to Ofc. Canace.

Due to the viewing angle of the Body Worn Camera, much of what is captured is of the interior cabin of the Police Cruiser. The Body Worn Camera did not capture the road or the silver vehicle. At portions of the footage, the speedometer of the Police Cruiser is visible and appears to be consistent with the speed displayed in the Dash Camera Footage. The footage also confirms that Ofc. Canace's first attempt to utilize his police radio to make contact with police dispatch was at 6:55:18 PM, approximately 2 minutes and 16 seconds after he active his emergency lights. The footage also shows Ofc. Canace manually deactivating his Dash Camera at 6:56:44 PM before manually deactivating his Body Worn Camera at 6:56:51 PM. There was no other Body Worn Camera Footage from Ofc. Canace located regarding this pursuit.

Compelled Interview – Ofc. Canace

On May 31st, 2024, Sgt. C. Fennessey and I conducted an audio recorded interview with Ofc. Canace in the New Haven Police Department's Office of Internal Affairs. Ofc. Canace was represented by Elm City Local President F. Cotto. Ofc. Canace read, signed, and stated he understood an Internal Investigation Form and a False Statement Form.

Over the course of the interview, Ofc. Canace stated that he recalled the incident occurring on April 12th, 2024, at approximately 6:52 PM, and classified it as an attempted motor vehicle stop. Ofc. Canace stated that he observed the vehicle traveling at a high rate of speed with "very dark window tint". He continued that at that time he believed that it may have been a stolen vehicle, but was unable to recall the exact source of that information. Ofc. Canace stated that he attempted to catch up to the vehicle which turned from Hallock Ave. onto 2nd St. onto Howard Ave, but was unable to get into close proximity to initiate a traffic stop. Ofc. Canace stated that the vehicle then sped down Howard Ave. and that he attempted to catch up at a speed "significantly faster than the speed of traffic" and then activated his emergency lights and siren.

Ofc. Canace continued that the vehicle then got onto the highway and that he also went on the highway with his emergency lights and siren still activated as he was "at a significant catch-up speed". Ofc. Canace stated that he made a "radio call" when he was able to see the license plate and notified police dispatch to the situation. He continued that he then deactivated his emergency lights as he observed the vehicle was not stopping and got off the highway shortly thereafter at the next available exit. Ofc. Canace confirmed that the reason for the initial attempt at a motor vehicle stop was for speed, window tints, and possibly being a stolen auto.

Ofc. Canace continued that he considered that the attempted motor vehicle stop was made on the highway as that was the point he got into close proximity with the vehicle. Ofc. Canace continued that as the vehicle did not stop for his Police Cruiser's emergency lights and siren he then deactivated them and began to drive at a "normal highway speed". Ofc. Canace specified that "normal highway speed" for him is 80-85 MPH with moderate traffic conditions. Ofc. Canace continued that he was no longer attempting a motor vehicle stop on that vehicle at that time.

I then asked Ofc. Canace if he was aware of any of the speeds he reached while engaged in this pursuit; Ofc. Canace stated that he could not recall. I then informed Ofc. Canace that on Howard Ave. he reached 78 MPH and on I-95 N he reached 119 MPH. When I asked Ofc. Canace if he considered to have been in a pursuit on Howard Ave, he stated no because he was not in close enough proximity to the vehicle to signal it to stop. He again clarified that he was trying to get into close proximity to signal it to stop, not pursuing the vehicle. Ofc. Canace confirmed that his emergency lights and siren were activated and that the vehicle was driving away from him at that point.

I then played Dash Camera Footage for Ofc. Canace showing his pursuit of this vehicle. I showed Ofc. Canace that the vehicle he was pursuing was still visible to the Dash Camera while his emergency lights and siren were on. I showed Ofc. Canace that he got on I-95 N with his emergency lights and siren activated and reached speeds of 119 MPH while the vehicle he was pursuing was still visible to the Dash Camera. I showed Ofc. Canace that he passed a vehicle in the breakdown lane while traveling at 98 MPH while the vehicle he was pursuing was still visible to the Dash Camera. However, Ofc. Canace disagreed that he was engaged in a pursuit and again stated that he was just catching up to the vehicle.

Ofc. Canace did agree that he was engaged in a pursuit after he broadcast the vehicle information over the police radio while reaching a speed of 102 MPH. Ofc. Canace then broadcast that he would be terminating the pursuit over the police radio. Ofc. Canace agreed that at that time he was too close to Exit 51 to safely exit the highway at that time.

I then asked Ofc. Canace if he stopped pursuing the vehicle after he deactivated his emergency lights and siren. Ofc. Canace stated that he stayed within close proximity to the vehicle, but was no longer attempting to stop it. Ofc. Canace confirmed that he deactivated his emergency lights and siren but stayed with the vehicle because they were going the same speed. Ofc. Canace stated that the vehicle then accelerated, but he chose not to and the distance between them grew as he continued to operate the Patrol Cruiser at a "stagnant speed". I then informed and showed Ofc. Canace that he engaged in numerous lane changes and reached speeds of 94 MPH with his emergency lights and siren off after he terminated the pursuit, which was broadcast over the police radio.

I then asked Ofc. Canace if he manually deactivated the Dash Camera at that time. Ofc. Canace stated that he did and cited the reason for it on a "force of habit". When asked why he continued to pursue the vehicle after he terminated his emergency lights and siren, Ofc. Canace stated that he could not recall exactly. Ofc. Canace continued that he was likely to be looking for "abnormal behavior" or to see if something was thrown from the vehicle. When asked why Ofc. Canace manually deactivated his Dash Camera for a second time he again cited a "force of habit".

Ofc. Canace stated that he was contacted by Sgt. Caron a short time after the pursuit and was directed to go and see him in the Shift Commander's Office. Ofc. Canace stated that Sgt. Cole was present with Sgt. Caron when he got to the Shift Commander's Office. Ofc. Canace stated it was then that he was made aware he would not be working in a Patrol capacity in his upcoming shifts, but assigned to Detention. Ofc. Canace stated that they did not discuss the pursuit at this time. Ofc. Canace stated that he did not recall being asked the reasoning for the pursuit at that time.

When asked about writing an Incident Report for this pursuit, Ofc. Canace stated that he requested a case number and “incompleted” the Incident Report. He stated that after the pursuit he responded to a domestic dispute where arrests were made. As such, he had numerous obligations related to the arrest and arrestee and was not able to complete the Incident Report. When asked why he could not complete the Incident Report his following shift in Detention, Ofc. Canace stated that he did not feel well and did not work the shift. Ofc. Canace clarified that on the first shift he returned to duty he placed on Administrative Leave.

It should be noted that I later reviewed Ofc. Canace’s Activity Report for B-Squad on April 12th, 2024. This confirmed he assisted in a domestic dispute involving an arrest and transported the arrestee to detention later in his shift. A review of the Master Detail also confirmed Ofc. Canace was on Sick Leave from C-Squad on April 13th, 2024 through April 15th, 2024, when he was placed on Administrative Leave.

Sgt. Fennessey then asked Ofc. Canace if he had received formal training on motor vehicle pursuits. Ofc. Canace stated that he has through the New Haven Police Department and through his military training. No further questions were asked and Ofc. Canace stated that all answers were given truthfully and completely.

Compelled Interview – Sgt. Cole

On June 4th, 2024, Sgt. C. Fennessey and I conducted an audio recorded interview with Sgt. J. Cole in the New Haven Police Department’s Office of Internal Affairs. Sgt. Cole waived his right to union representation and read, signed, and stated he understood a Union Representation Waiver Form. Sgt. Cole also read, signed, and stated he understood an Internal Investigation Form and a False Statement Form.

Over the course of the interview, Sgt. Cole reiterated much of the information he documented in his memo to Capt. Marcucio regarding this incident. Sgt. Cole confirmed that he was the Shift Commander for B-Squad on April 12th, 2024, and became alerted to this pursuit due to the poor quality of Ofc. Canace’s transmission when requesting a case number. Sgt. Cole stated he then reviewed Ofc. Canace’s Dash Camera Footage of this pursuit and was “... disturbed at the policy violations that were quite obvious that he committed. I was also, ya know, disturbed, concerned, at his speed...”. Sgt. Cole went on to say that he observed that Ofc. Canace was operating his Police Cruiser at 119 MPH on I-95 N at a time he considered to be “busy”.

Sgt. Cole continued that he alerted Sgt. Caron, who was the Hill Supervisor, to this incident and that they then viewed the Dash Camera Footage together. Sgt. Cole stated that they then called in Ofc. Canace to speak with him regarding this pursuit. Sgt. Cole stated that Ofc. Canace answered his questions in a truthful manner, but was concerned about Ofc. Canace’s attitude towards himself and Sgt. Caron. Sgt. Cole stated that Ofc. Canace became “somewhat argumentative” during their conversation. Sgt. Cole stated that, after speaking with Capt. Marcucio, he directed Ofc. Canace to stay at the New Haven Police Department and finish any outstanding reports and to not to go back into service. Sgt. Cole stated that Ofc. Canace was directed to work his following shift in the New Haven Police Department’s Detention Facility.

When asked if Ofc. Canace provided a reason for the pursuit, Sgt. Cole stated that Ofc. Canace said it was due to tinted windows. Sgt. Cole continued that Ofc. Canace also said the vehicle may have been involved in a serious incident, but did not recall the exact details regarding that serious incident. However, Sgt. Cole clarified that Ofc. Canace stated that he did not know about the serious incident at the time he initiated the pursuit. When reminded, Sgt. Cole recalled that the “serious incident” may have been related to a stolen auto out of East Haven, CT.

Compelled Interview – Sgt. Caron

On June 6th, 2024, Det. A. Testa and I conducted an audio recorded interview with Sgt. J. Caron in the New Haven Police Department's Office of Internal Affairs. Sgt. Caron waived his right to union representation and read, signed, and stated he understood a Union Representation Waiver Form. Sgt. Cole also read, signed, and stated he understood an Internal Investigation Form and a False Statement Form.

Over the course of the interview, Sgt. Caron reiterated much of the information he documented in his memo to Capt. Marcucio regarding this incident. Sgt. Caron confirmed that he was the Supervisor for the Hill North and Hill South districts of New Haven for B-Squad on April 12th, 2024, and became alerted to this pursuit when he heard Ofc. Canace put out information regarding it over the police radio. Sgt. Caron stated that he was later contacted by Sgt. Cole in regards to Ofc. Canace's pursuit, who articulated some concerns over the pursuit. Sgt. Caron stated that he then met with Sgt. Cole at the New Haven Police Department and that they then reviewed the Dash Camera Footage of the pursuit together.

Sgt. Caron stated that after he reviewed the Dash Camera Footage he found the pursuit to be outside general orders. Sgt. Caron stated that he and Sgt. Cole then directed Ofc. Canace to come into the New Haven Police Department to discuss the pursuit. Sgt. Caron stated that Ofc. Canace informed him the reason for the pursuit was "front window tints". Sgt. Caron stated that they directed Ofc. Canace to complete any outstanding reports in his Patrol Cruiser and "not to respond to any calls for service".

Conclusion

On April 12th, 2024, Ofc. T. Canace was on duty assigned to a Patrol B-Squad shift. Ofc. Canace was assigned as Unit 53 in the Hill South District. At approximately 6:52 PM Ofc. Canace engaged in a motor vehicle pursuit beginning in the area of Howard Ave. and 2nd St. and terminating on Interstate 95 Northbound in East Haven near Exit 51. The reason for this attempted motor vehicle stop and subsequent pursuit was for window tints, speed, and possibly being a stolen auto; which Ofc. Canace was not able to confirm or cite the source of that information. It should be noted that window tint violations are considered traffic infractions in the State of Connecticut.

Ofc. Canace was engaged in this pursuit for approximately 2 minutes and 16 seconds and traveled approximately 3 miles before he notified police dispatch of the pursuit. On Howard Ave, Ofc. Canace reached speeds of 78 MPH in a 25 MPH zone. On Interstate 95 Northbound, Ofc. Canace reached speeds of 119 MPH in a 55 MPH zone. Ofc. Canace continued to pursue this vehicle after he terminated the pursuit over the police radio and deactivated his Police Cruiser's emergency lights and siren; reaching speeds of 94 MPH. Officer Canace did not notify his immediate supervisor regarding this pursuit or complete and Incident Report. When interviewed, Ofc. Canace denied that he was involved in a motor vehicle pursuit and was simply attempting to catch up to the fleeing vehicle to attempt a motor vehicle stop.

The New Haven Police Department's General Order 12.03 – Vehicle Pursuits, defines what a pursuit is. The General Order defines a pursuit as, "An attempt by a Police Officer in an authorized emergency vehicle to apprehend any occupant of another moving motor vehicle, when the driver of the fleeing vehicle is attempting to avoid apprehension by maintaining or increasing the speed of such vehicle or by ignoring the Police Officer's attempt to stop such vehicle. The mere fact that an Officer has activated his or her lights or siren does not constitute a pursuit."

Therefore, Officer Trevor Canace is in violation of;

General Order 12.03 – Vehicle Pursuits

12.03.04 Procedures

Initiation of Pursuit

- An Officer may only engage another vehicle in a pursuit if the Officer has reasonable suspicion to believe that the driver or occupant has committed or is attempting to commit a crime of violence, or there are exigent circumstances that warrant the need to apprehend the suspect in a timely manner because of the potential for harm to the public if the apprehension does not occur. The Officers must be able to articulate the exigent need to apprehend the driver or occupant because the potential harm or risk to the public.
- Offenses that constitute infractions, city ordinances, property crimes, (to include stolen motor vehicles), non-violent misdemeanors and non-violent felonies shall not be justification to engage in a pursuit of another vehicle, absent articulable exigent circumstances.
- A pursuit shall not be undertaken, even if allowable by other provisions of this policy, unless and until the Officer, based upon the information available to him or her at the time, shall make an objectively reasonable determination that the threat of imminent death or serious physical injury to the Officer, the public or both, created by the pursuit is less than the immediate or potential danger to the public, should the suspect(s) or occupant(s) remain at large. A decision to engage in a pursuit shall be based upon the following:
 - That the immediate danger to the public and the Police Officer created by the pursuit is less than the immediate danger to the public should the occupants of the pursued vehicle remain at large;
 - Location, speed, direction of other traffic, population density, type of vehicle being pursued and operators driving behaviors.
 - Population density, vehicular and pedestrian traffic.

Pursuit Operations

- All authorized emergency vehicle operations shall be conducted in strict conformity with C.G.S. Secs. 14-283a-1 to 14-283a-4, inclusive, of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, and C.G.S. Sec. 14-283a.
- Upon engaging in or entering into a pursuit, the pursuing vehicle shall activate the appropriate warning equipment simultaneously, which includes both emergency lights and audible sirens so that individuals with sensory and/or auditory disabilities can be made reasonably aware of the pursuit. An audible warning device and emergency lights shall be used during the entirety of all such pursuits.
- Upon engaging in a pursuit, the Officer shall immediately notify Communications of the location, direction and speed of the pursuit, the description of the pursued vehicle and the initial purpose of the stop. The Officers shall keep Communications updated on the pursuit. Communications personnel shall immediately notify the Supervisor of the Officer involved in the pursuit, or in that Supervisor's absence, an available Supervisor and the Shift Commander, clear the radio channel of non-emergency traffic, and relay necessary information to other Officers of the involved police agency or agencies, and adjacent police agencies in whose direction the pursuit is proceeding.
- When engaged in a pursuit, Officers shall drive with due regard for the safety of persons and property.

Termination of the Pursuit

- The Officer serving as the primary unit engaged in the pursuit shall continually reevaluate and assess the pursuit situation, including all of the initiating factors, and terminate the pursuit whenever he or she reasonably believes that the risks associated with continued pursuit are greater than the public safety benefit of making an immediate apprehension.
- When a decision is made to terminate a pursuit, Officers shall:
 - Immediately pull over, turn off their emergency lights and siren, notify the Dispatcher of their location, and acknowledge the order to terminate the pursuit;
 - No longer follow or parallel the suspect vehicle;
 - Remain at the termination point until instructions are received from a Supervisor.

Interjurisdictional Pursuits

- The primary unit shall notify Communications when it is likely that a pursuit will continue into a neighboring police agency's area of law enforcement responsibility or cross the state line. Municipal police agencies and the State Police shall notify each other whenever entering the other's area of law enforcement responsibility.
- Agencies pursuing a vehicle into another jurisdiction must notify that jurisdiction as soon as practical, and provide that agency with all available information pertinent to the pursuit, including but not limited to:
 - The reason(s) for the pursuit, or primary offense the driver or occupant(s) are believed to have committed.
 - Location, speed, and direction of travel.
 - Vehicle and occupant(s) description.
 - The number of vehicles and agencies involved in the pursuit.
 - Whether assistance is requested/needed or not.
 - Other available information as to the conditions of the pursuit.
- The pursuing agency will notify the other jurisdiction whether or not the pursuit has been terminated or is leaving their jurisdiction.

Other Pursuit Considerations

- High speed operation: An Officer in pursuit may operate their vehicle at a speed that the condition of the vehicle, existing road, traffic, environmental conditions, and the Officer's driving abilities will safely permit.
- Officers shall operate available emergency warning lights and their vehicle siren to alert other motorists to unexpected pursuit vehicle maneuvers.

- A police pursuit vehicle entering any intersection against traffic control signals or signs shall slow to safe speeds and be prepared to slow or stop to avoid any collision.

Post Pursuit Reporting – Primary Officer

- The primary Officer shall complete the appropriate incident or arrest report.
- The reports shall be completed prior to the end of the Officer's shift unless there are extenuating circumstances. For example, Officers shall not be required to complete reports by the end of their shift if they are involved in a pursuit that results in serious injury or death.

These findings of fact shall be forwarded to the New Haven Police Department's Chief of Police, Chief Karl Jacobson, for review and final disposition.

Det. D. Conklin #506

Investigator

Det. D. Conklin #506 1/29/25

Signature & Date

Lt. J. Agosto #304

OIC – Internal Affairs

Lt. J. Agosto #304 1/28/25

Supervisor Signature & Date

POLICING WITH HEART

HONOR • EXCELLENCE • ACCOUNTABILITY • RESPECT • TENACITY