Kansas Bureau of Investigation

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Officer-involved shooting in Topeka

TOPEKA, Kan. – The Kansas Bureau of Investigation (KBI) is investigating an officer-involved shooting that occurred Friday night in Topeka, Kansas.

The Topeka Police Department (TPD) requested the KBI conduct an investigation on Friday, Jan. 17, at around 9:10 p.m. KBI agents and the Crime Scene Response Team responded to the scene.

At around 9 p.m., a Topeka police officer initiated contact with a man riding a bicycle in an alley near 21st St. and SW Buchanan St. The man was later identified as Joseph L. Pham-Gardner, 37, of Topeka.

Preliminary information indicates that when the officer returned to his patrol vehicle to check the man's information, Pham-Gardner climbed on his bike and fled. The officer gave commands for him to stop and chased him on foot. The TPD officer caught up to Pham-Gardner and a struggle ensued. He fell off his bike. The man threatened to shoot the officer.

During the confrontation, the officer fired multiple times striking Pham-Gardner. After shots were fired officers and deputies from multiple agencies responded to assist. A K-9 officer from the Shawnee County Sheriff's Office was deployed so officers could safely secure the handgun near Pham-Gardner and render aid to him. No law enforcement officers were injured during the incident.

EMS transported Pham-Gardner to an area hospital. He was later transported to a Kansas City hospital for surgery. At this time his injuries do not appear to be life-threatening.

This independent investigation aims to discover all events leading up to the officer-involved shooting. In police use of force cases, the KBI releases details to the public as soon as possible. This information is preliminary in nature, and is based on evidence collected and early statements of the parties involved, witnesses, medical personnel and others. It does not represent final or thorough findings which take several weeks to complete.

When this investigation concludes case findings will be presented to the Shawnee County District Attorney for determination of charges. The investigation is ongoing.

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