

Florida Department of Corrections



Office of the Inspector General

**CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION
INVESTIGATIVE ASSIST
CASE # 17-10009**



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL
INVESTIGATIVE ASSIST SUMMARY REPORT



Table of Contents

I. AUTHORITY	4
II. METHODOLOGY.....	4
III. ANALYSIS.....	4
IV. DEFINITIONS	5
V. PREDICATE	6
VI. SUMMARY OF INVESTIGATIVE FINDINGS.....	6
VII. CHARGES.....	7
VIII. CONCLUSION.....	8



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Case Number: 17-10009

OIG Inspector: Inspector Bobby Hartwell

Outside Agency: Florida Department of Law Enforcement

Outside Agency Investigator: Special Agent Travis Lawson

Date Assigned or Initiated: June 8, 2017

Complaint Against: NA

Location of Incident – Institution/Facility/Office: Northwest Florida Reception Center Annex #125

Complainant: Inmate Eric Wilson #V09525

Outside Agency Case #: PE-37-0080

Use of Force Number: NA

PREA Number: NA

Classification of Incident: Suicide

Confidential Medical Information Included: Yes No

Whistle-Blower Investigation: Yes No

Chief Inspector General Case Number: NA



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL
INVESTIGATIVE ASSIST SUMMARY REPORT



I. AUTHORITY

The Florida Department of Corrections, Office of the Inspector General, by designation of the Secretary and § 944.31, Florida Statutes, is authorized to conduct any criminal investigation that occurs on property owned or leased by the department or involves matters over which the department has jurisdiction.

The testimony references included in this report are summations of oral or written statements provided to inspectors. Statements contained herein do not necessarily represent complete or certified transcribed testimony, except as noted. Unless specifically indicated otherwise, all interviews with witnesses, complainants, and subjects were audio or video recorded.

II. METHODOLOGY

The investigation reviewed the derivations of the allegation advanced by the complainant. The scope of this investigation does not seek to specifically address tort(s), but violations of criminal statutes. The criterion used to evaluate each contention or allegation was limited to the following standard of analysis:

1. Did the subject's action or behavior violate Florida criminal statutes?

III. ANALYSIS

The standard and analysis in this investigation is predicated with the burden of proving any violation of law, established by probable cause. The evidence considered for analysis is confined to the facts and allegations stated or reasonably implied. The actions or behavior of the subject are presumed to be lawful and in compliance with the applicable Florida law, unless probable cause indicates the contrary.



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL
INVESTIGATIVE ASSIST SUMMARY REPORT



IV. DEFINITIONS

Unfounded:

Refers to a disposition of a criminal case for which probable cause does not exist to suggest the suspect's behavior or action occurred nor is an arrest or formal charge being initiated.

Closed by Arrest:

Refers to a disposition of a criminal case for which probable cause exists that an identified subject committed the offense and one for which an arrest or formal prosecution has been initiated.

Exceptionally Cleared:

Refers to a disposition of a criminal case for which probable cause exists that an identified suspect committed the offense, but one for which an arrest or formal charge is not initiated, or in the case of a death investigation, one for which no evidence exists that the death was the result of a crime or neglect.

Open-Inactive:

Refers to a disposition of a criminal case for which a criminal investigation commenced, but where evidence is insufficient to close as unfounded, closed by arrest, or exceptionally cleared.

Investigative Assist Closed

Refers to a disposition of an investigative assist, where the conduct being investigated by the outside agency did not concern allegations against a Department employee, contractor, inmate, offender, or other person either employed or under the supervision of the Department.



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL
INVESTIGATIVE ASSIST SUMMARY REPORT



V. PREDICATE

On June 8, 2017, the Department of Corrections, Office of the Inspector General received notification of a deceased inmate at NWFRC Annex. It was alleged Inmate Eric Wilson #V09525 was found hanging from a sheet in his cell J2-103. Upon initial notification Senior Inspector Hartwell responded to the institution to provide investigative assistance to the Florida Department of Law Enforcement on June 8, 2017.

VI. SUMMARY OF INVESTIGATIVE FINDINGS

Based on the exhibits, witnesses' testimony, subject officer's statements, and the record as a whole, presented or available to the primary inspector, the following findings of facts were determined:

On June 8, 2017, at approximately 6:17 a.m., confinement staff were in J2 dormitory passing out the morning food trays. When officers reached J2-103, they found Inmate Eric Wilson hanging from a sheet in his cell. Inmate Wilson was the only occupant of the cell. As staff members attempted to enter the cell, they found the door to be jammed closed from the inside. After some manipulation the door was opened and the ligature was cut from Inmate Wilson's neck. Inmate Wilson was

At approximately 7:42 a.m., Inmate Wilson was pronounced deceased by [REDACTED]. At approximately 7:00 a.m., FDLE help desk is notified and at 8:07 a.m., Special Agent (SA) Travis Lawson arrives at NWFRC Annex. An investigative demand is completed and a copy of the dormitory video, and all documents associated to the incident are copied to FDLE. FDLE agents interview involved FDC staff and [REDACTED]

At approximately 9:40 a.m., Investigator Andrew Winkler with the 14th Circuit Medical Examiner's Office arrives and photographs the body and crime scene. At approximately 11:44 a.m., Investigator Winkler leaves the institution with the deceased. The crime scene logs are completed and FDLE leaves the institution.

On June 9, 2017, electronic correspondence was received by the Inspector General's Office from Charles Wohlust, Attorney at Law, in reference to Inmate Wilson's death at NWFRC Annex on June 8, 2017.

Attached to the correspondence is several Inmate requests with complaints of Inmate Wilson being in fear of his life from [REDACTED] and his desire to be housed alone for the remainder of his incarceration with the Department. Inmate Wilson alleged he is receiving retaliation for his attempts at gaining protective management and indicated staff are attempting to silence him from complaining. Inmate Wilson complained of not being allowed to keep a [REDACTED] in his cell while in confinement. These allegations were forwarded to SA Travis Lawson with FDLE for inclusion in his investigation.

A copy of the correspondence to Warden Scott Payne at Franklin CI from Inmate Wilson's attorneys was forwarded to Inspector Hartwell who forwarded the item to SA Travis Lawson for inclusion in his investigation. The letter complained of Inmate Wilson being housed with murderers and rapist when he had a short sentence.



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL
INVESTIGATIVE ASSIST SUMMARY REPORT



On June 14, 2017, Dr. Raphael Tapia and Dr. Marina Cadreche, from Centurion Health, were interviewing inmates who were housed in confinement at the same time as Inmate Wilson. One of the inmates gave the doctors a note supposedly written by Inmate Wilson, which discussed his money situation and the paying of extortion for protection. The note was turned over to Inspector Hartwell who forwarded a copy to SA Travis Lawson at FDLE for inclusion in his report.

The fixed wing video for J-2 dormitory on June 7, 2017, through June 8, 2017, was reviewed. A time line of the review is attached to this report. There were a couple of instances where Inmate Eric Wilson could be heard on the recorded audio in the dormitory. Inmate Wilson stated several times “My name is Eric Wilson and I do not want to hurt myself.” There was no time where Inmate Wilson could be heard [REDACTED] No one ever entered the cell with Inmate Wilson until it was opened when he was found [REDACTED] and hanging. During the video, Inmate Wilson can be seen standing in the cell door window most of the day and into the evening.

On September 20, 2017, the Medical Examiner’s Office provided autopsy report number 2017 MLA 0203 for Inmate Wilson. The summary of Autopsy Findings:

1. [REDACTED]
 - a. [REDACTED]
 - b. [REDACTED]
 - c. [REDACTED]
 - d. [REDACTED]
2. [REDACTED]
3. [REDACTED]
4. [REDACTED]
5. [REDACTED]
6. [REDACTED]
7. [REDACTED]
8. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The cause of death was listed as [REDACTED] and the manner was listed as “Suicide.”

On October 2, 2017, SA Lawson with FDLE provided an electronic copy of the FDLE investigative reports associated to this investigation.

The final report concluded with the medical examiner’s report indicating no further investigation activity anticipated.

VII. CHARGES

There were no criminal charges. The medical examiner, Doctor Jay Radkt, ruled Inmate Eric Wilson’s death was a result of a suicide.

VIII. CONCLUSION



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL
INVESTIGATIVE ASSIST SUMMARY REPORT



Based on the information gathered during their investigation, it is the recommendation of FDLE Special Agent Travis Lawson the death of Inmate Eric Wilson, be termed as follows:

- **Exceptionally Cleared**

Inspector Hartwell reviewed the investigation completed by FDLE, and no administrative issues were identified.