



For Immediate Release

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Washington State Patrol Independent Investigation Team Seeks Witnesses

Olympia, WA – The Washington State Patrol (WSP) assembled an Independent Investigation Team (IIT) to investigate the death of Mr. Manuel Ellis. The incident that led to his death occurred on March 3, 2020 between 11:00 p.m. and 11:30 p.m. at the intersection of 96th and Ainsworth in Tacoma, Washington. The investigators wish to speak to any persons who witnessed Ellis's interaction with Tacoma Police officers, or any of the events immediately preceding that interaction. Witnesses are asked to call the Washington State Patrol at 360-654-1142 if they have any information related to this investigation.

This update is required in compliance with WAC 139-12, which mandates weekly updates be sent out by the lead investigative agency in investigations where a Washington State Peace Officer uses deadly force in the capacity of his or her law enforcement duties. These updates are required even if no new information is available at the time of the update.

Original Press Release

Washington State Patrol Independent Investigation Team

Olympia, WA – The Washington State Patrol (WSP) assembled an Independent Investigation Team (IIT) to investigate the death of Mr. Manuel Ellis. Mr. Ellis died while being arrested in Tacoma on March 03, 2020. Governor Jay Inslee named WSP as the independent investigatory agency on June 17, 2020.

With the passage of [Washington State Initiative 940](#) in 2018, and [Substitute House Bill 1064](#) in 2019, incidents where the use of deadly force by a peace officer results in death, substantial bodily harm, or great bodily harm require an independent investigation. This investigation must be conducted in the same manner as a criminal investigation and state law now requires an "independent investigation" completely independent of the involved agency.

Currently, the WSP has established a family liaison, met with the Office of the Attorney General, and selected three community representatives who are responsible for the vetting of the IIT certified law enforcement investigators assigned to the case.

The process moving forward is the IIT will develop and follow an investigative plan that will ensure all of the facts of the case are gathered systematically and thoroughly. Once completed, the case will be turned over to the Office of the Attorney General for review and determination of any appropriate charges.

Weekly updates will be provided as the investigation continues. The policies and operating procedures of the IIT are available to the public at: <https://www.wsp.wa.gov/about-us/our-mission/> or directly at: <https://www.wsp.wa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/CID-IIT-Protocol.pdf>

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