



# Colorado Bureau of Investigation

## Case Master Report 2022-211

Date Initiated 08/25/2022

### Primary Information

AGENCY:	<b>COLORADO BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION</b>
DIVISION:	<b>INVESTIGATIONS</b>
OFFICE:	<b>GRAND JUNCTION</b>
Lead LEO:	<b>BENNETT, JAMES BROOKS AGT (0889 / GRAND JUNCTION / Colorado Bureau of Investigation - Grand Junction)</b>
Type Of Case:	<b>Miscellaneous</b>
Case Description:	<b>Allegation that a Member of the Colorado State Patrol Altered a Report to Remove Relevant Info</b>
Total Time:	<b>73:00</b>

### Case Status

Case Status:	<b>OPEN</b>
Case Status Date:	<b>08/25/2022</b>
Dissemination:	<b>Chain of Command</b>



Colorado Bureau of Investigation  
**INVESTIGATIVE SUPPLEMENT 2022-211/14**

Report Date: 10/06/2022

**Primary Information**

Description: **Additional Investigation Regarding the Reviewed Reports**  
Occurrence From: **10/06/2022 00:00**  
Occurrence To: **10/06/2022 00:00**  
Reporting LEO: **BENNETT, JAMES BROOKS AGT (0889 / GRAND JUNCTION / Colorado Bureau of Investigation - Grand Junction)**  
Report Status: **Approved**  
Report Status Date: **10/19/2022**  
Approved By: **REESE, COLLIN AIC (7366 / Colorado Bureau of Investigation - Grand Junction)**

**Synopsis**

This report documents my investigation into additional report changes discovered after my interview with Colorado State Patrol Sergeant Aaron Laing.

Through his attorney, Sgt. Laing declined a second interview to discuss these additional reports.

**Subject #1 - ATTORNEY #1 - GODDARD, DAVID**

**Primary Information**

Subject Name: **GODDARD, DAVID**  
Record Type: **ATTORNEY**  
Bio: **WHITE, MALE**  
Juvenile: **NO**

**Employment Information**

Occupation: **BRUNO, COLIN & LOWE, PC**

**Addresses**

<u>Relationship</u>	<u>Address</u>
<b>BUSINESS LOCATION</b>	<b>3401 Quebec OFFICE #7000 Front Line Law, DENVER, COLORADO 80207 UNITED STATES</b>

**Telephones / E-Addresses**

<u>Relationship</u>	<u>Number/E-Address</u>
<b>BUSINESS WORK PH#</b>	<b>(720) 282-1266 (BUSINESS)</b>

**Officers**

LEO  
**Bollen, Christian (Colorado State Patrol)**  
**Vrbas, Jeffrey (Colorado State Patrol)**

**Narrative begins on the following page.**

**SYNOPSIS:**

This report documents my investigation into additional report changes discovered after my interview with Colorado State Patrol Sergeant Aaron Laing.

Through his attorney, Sgt. Laing declined a second interview to discuss these additional reports.

**ACTION TAKEN:**

As documented in previous reports, I conducted a review of twelve (12) additional reports approved by Colorado State Patrol Sergeant Aaron Laing. Those reports had been provided to me by the Colorado State Patrol Professional Standards Unit, subsequent to their review of numerous reports from the Fruita Section of the Smuggling, Trafficking, and Interdiction unit.

During my review of those reports, I discovered several changes to the reports prepared by the Troopers. Some of those changes were minor changes to correct grammatical issues, but others were more substantial, sometimes resulting in additions or deletions from the original report. The review of the additional reports (documented in sup #10) occurred after the interview of Sgt. Laing.

On October 5, 2022, a meeting was held with members of the 21<sup>st</sup> Judicial District Attorney's Office to update them on the status of this investigation. During the meeting, I was requested to attempt a second interview with Sgt. Laing, to discuss the most substantive issues discovered during my review of the additional reports.

Prior to attempting the second interview of Sgt. Laing, I spoke with Troopers Christian Bollen and Jeff Vrbas, as the most serious changes were found in reports they prepared.

On Thursday, October 6, 2022, during a phone interview, Tpr. Bollen and I discussed report #ST21035. This report had the following paragraph added to the end of his report.

“On September 23, 2021, Trooper Aydtt executed a search warrant upon this same Mustang while it was being held by Ace towing. During the search of the Mustang, an additional 42 packages of suspected methamphetamine was found and seized from the rear quarter panels of the Mustang. See report of Trooper Aydtt.”

Tpr. Bollen confirmed this was added to his report after he had submitted it to Sgt. Laing. He said that he only became aware of the results of the search warrant when Tpr. Aydtt called him to let him know

additional drugs had been located. He was on vacation at the time, and was not present for the execution of the search warrant.

Tpr. Bollen told me he makes it a practice not to include information in reports unless he observes it for himself, and he would not have included this paragraph in his report.

After speaking with Tpr. Bollen, I called Trooper Jeff Vrbas.

We first discussed report ST210395, which contained the following changes:

Changed "I observed the car was weaving dramatically onto the shoulder and into the left lane from the right lane where the tires crossed each lane." to "I observed the driver travel back across the right lane and into the left lane where both left tires completely crossed the hashed divider line."

Added the sentence "I found it interesting Mr. Ramsey was smoking in the interior of a rental vehicle knowing how expensive of a fine it is to smoke inside a rental vehicle."

Tpr. Vrbas believes the way Sgt. Laing reworded the description of the violation significantly changes what Tpr. Vrbas was trying to convey.

He also stated he never thought about the fine for someone smoking in a rental vehicle and therefore, never considered it as a relevant fact to the stop or subsequent investigation. He stated he would not have had a reason to include this sentence in the report.

We then moved to report ST210460, which contains the following changes:

Removed the sentence "The ALPR was checked but it didn't indicate anything unusual about this vehicle."

Changed "I returned to the Fruita office to assist with booking in evidence." to "I returned to the Fruita office to assist Trooper Aydt and Sergeant Laing with the processing and submission of all the packages of suspected marijuana. They had found a total of 115 packages of suspected marijuana weighing in total approximately 131.4 pounds."

Tpr. Vrbas stated he included the sentence about the ALPR information because, during previous court hearings, he has been asked by attorneys if he had checked that information. Including it in his report

documents the check was done, regardless of results. Having this removed from the report would become problematic if he was asked that question in court. If he referred to his report and did not see it in there, he would testify that he had not checked the ALPR, when in fact he had.

Tpr. Vrbas does not have an issue with Sgt. Laing adding the information about the number of packages and weight of the marijuana. Since he had included that information in his synopsis, he knows he must have known the details of the evidence, even though he did not include it in the narrative section of his original report.

Finally, we discussed report ST220064, which contained the following changes:

Changed “The sport utility vehicle came as close as one second behind a semi before it changed lanes.” to “I observed McGee following the rear of the commercial vehicle too closely. I used the stopwatch function in my cell phone and began timing as the rear of the commercial vehicle passed an erect delineator post and ended the timing as the front of the sport utility vehicle passed the same delineator post. I observed McGee was following the rear of the commercial vehicle unsafely at approximately one second.”

Added the sentence “I found this odd since I do not see normal traveling motorists placing air fresheners in a rental vehicle.”

Tpr. Vrbas said that he does use the method described by Sgt. Laing, and has discussed his practice with Sgt. Laing. He believes that because Sgt. Laing knows how he uses his cell phone as a stopwatch, Sgt. Laing inserted the description of that task into the report. Tpr. Vrbas does not have an issue with Sgt. Laing being more descriptive in the report; however, he cannot say a delineator post was the stationary object used on that occasion. Tpr. Vrbas will sometimes use signs, bridge railings, shadows, etc. to use as his stationary object and there is no way he can say a delineator post was used for this stop.

Tpr. Vrbas told me he does look for air fresheners in rental vehicles, as they can be an indicator of drug trafficking, so what Sgt. Laing added is accurate. However, Tpr. Vrbas was unaware the sentence had been added to his report.

After speaking with both Troopers, I placed a call to David Goddard, Sgt. Laing’s attorney. My call was forwarded to his voice mail and I left him a message, asking him to return my call. On October 7, 2022, Goddard returned my call. Before agreeing to an interview, Goddard requested I provide him with the case numbers I would be inquiring about, and I provided those to him. Goddard told me he would contact Sgt. Laing and get back to me.

On Thursday, October 13, 2022, Goddard called me and told me he and Sgt. Laing were going to decline a second interview.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

None



Colorado Bureau of Investigation  
**INVESTIGATIVE SUPPLEMENT 2022-211/15**

Report Date: 10/12/2022

**Primary Information**

Description: **Digital Imaging of the external drive provided by Sergeant Aaron Laing**  
Occurrence From: **10/10/2022 00:00**  
Occurrence To: **10/12/2022 00:00**  
Reporting LEO: **BENNETT, JAMES BROOKS AGT (0889 / GRAND JUNCTION / Colorado Bureau of Investigation - Grand Junction)**  
Report Status: **Approved**  
Report Status Date: **10/19/2022**  
Approved By: **REESE, COLLIN AIC (7366 / Colorado Bureau of Investigation - Grand Junction)**

**Synopsis**

**This report documents the digital imaging of the hard drive provided by Colorado State Patrol Sergeant Aaron Laing.**

**Officers**

LEO  
**Russell, Ben AGT (GRAND JUNCTION / Colorado Bureau of Investigation - Grand Junction)**  
**Waterman, Logan (Mesa County Sheriff's Office )**  
**REESE, COLLIN AIC (7366 / GRAND JUNCTION / Colorado Bureau of Investigation - Grand Junction)**

**Narrative begins on the following page.**

**SYNOPSIS:**

This report documents the digital imaging of the external drive provided by Colorado State Patrol Sergeant Aaron Laing.

**ACTION TAKEN:**

As documented in the supplemental report summarizing the interview with Colorado State Patrol Sergeant Aaron Laing, he provided me with an external drive (property of the CSP) on which he stated he kept digital copies of the reports prepared by the Troopers in his section. During his interview, he stated he would categorize the reports under the name of the lead case Trooper, and that the digital files would contain both the original report prepared by the Troopers and the version he created with his corrections.

After a meeting with the chief attorneys for the 21<sup>st</sup> District Attorney's Office, I was contacted by Deputy District Attorney Rich Tuttle. He told me that following our meeting, there had been a discussion among his peers, and District Attorney Rubenstein now wished to have a local private investigator examine the reports contained on the external drive.

On Monday, October 10, 2022, Agent Ben Russell removed the external drive (Item BB2) from evidence and delivered it, and a clean external drive, to Mesa County Sheriff's Office Digital Forensic Analyst Logan Waterman so a digital image of the drive could be made.

On Wednesday, October 12, 2022, after being made aware the copy had been made, I met with Analyst Waterman and took possession of item BB2, as well as the external drive containing the digital image. Item BB2 was taken to the CBI Grand Junction office and placed back in evidence.

On Thursday, October 13, 2022, Agent in Charge Collin Reese delivered the external drive containing the digital image to the District Attorney's Office.

The report prepared by Analyst Waterman documenting his imaging of the original external drive is attached to this report.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

15-1 BB Report prepared by MCSO Forensic Analyst Logan Waterman.



*Colorado Bureau of Investigation*  
**INVESTIGATIVE SUPPLEMENT 2022-211/16**

Report Date: 10/19/2022

**Primary Information**

Description: **Interview with Homeland Security Investigations Resident Agent in Charge Lenny Haran**  
Occurrence From: **10/19/2022 00:00**  
Occurrence To: **10/19/2022 00:00**  
Reporting LEO: **BENNETT, JAMES BROOKS AGT (0889 / GRAND JUNCTION / Colorado Bureau of Investigation - Grand Junction)**  
Report Status: **Approved**  
Report Status Date: **10/19/2022**  
Approved By: **REESE, COLLIN AIC (7366 / Colorado Bureau of Investigation - Grand Junction)**

**Synopsis**

**This report summarizes my interview with Homeland Security Investigations Resident Agent In Charge Leonard Haran.**

**Officers**

LEO  
**Haran, Leonard (HOMELAND SECURITY INVESTIGATIONS)**

**Narrative begins on the following page.**

**SYNOPSIS:**

This report summarizes my interview with Homeland Security Investigations Resident Agent in Charge Leonard Haran.

**ACTION TAKEN:**

On Wednesday, October 19, 2022, I spoke with Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) Resident Agent in Charge Leonard Haran to discuss how his agency interacts with the Colorado State Patrol Smuggling, Trafficking, and Interdiction team during interdiction activities.

According to RAC Haran, he was fairly new to his position in this area during February of 2021 and was still assessing operational activities. At that time, agents would both participate with the CSP by conducting formal operations (involving an operations plan for a specific date) and by just assisting on a daily basis when time allowed. The Agents activity consisted of being in the area to be available to help once a stop resulting in a seizure had occurred. CSP Troopers would invite the HSI Agents to the stop, where they would assist with on-scene interviews, and/or arrange for the suspects to be transported to the HSI office for an interview to further the investigation.

I asked if HSI Agents would assist with finding probable cause for the stops and was told his Agents would not look for any probable cause for a stop, however, they might tell the Troopers if a vehicle they saw had indicators it might be a courier vehicle.

According to RAC Haran, he and members of the Colorado State Patrol have since determined that it is not beneficial to have his Agents waiting along the highway, and the practice is now to respond to the area only when a Trooper asks for their assistance.

RAC Haran told me he has spoken with Agent Carter, who adamantly denied working with Trooper Christian Bollen to set up the suspect vehicle for a traffic violation. RAC Haran stated that at the time, HSI agents did not have the CSP radio channels and any conversation would have had to be by cell phone. RAC Haran does not believe Agent Carter would have consented to help Trooper Bollen, even if Trooper Bollen had requested he get in front of the suspect vehicle.

After speaking with me, RAC Haran went to his office and located an operations plan for January 21, 2021. That operations plan is attached to this report.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

16-1 BB HSI Operations plan for January 20, 2021.