



SALT LAKE COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
2001 S. STATE STREET, S 3500
www.districtattorney.slco.org

PRESS NOTICE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: February 11, 2008

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DA's Office Completes Review of Officer Involved Shooting

DA's Office: Officer's Actions Lawful under Utah Code

SALT LAKE CITY – The Salt Lake County District Attorney's Office has issued a letter to the South Salt Lake Police Department notifying the police agency that the actions leading to the shooting of Mr. Ross M. Sullivan were lawful under Utah Code Title 26, chapter 2, Part 4.

Evidence reviewed by the DA's Office indicates that on January 21, 2008, at 10:49 am, four officers from the South Salt Lake Police Department responded to a disturbance call at 256 E. Helm Avenue. Officers learned that the subject, Mr. Sullivan, had a large sword which he had used to threaten another person. Officers negotiated with Mr. Sullivan for one and a half hours to no avail. During negotiations, Mr. Sullivan thrust the sword through the door. Concerned for the safety of the public, and the possibility that someone other than the subject was in the apartment, the officers attempted to take Mr. Sullivan into custody. After a failed attempt to apprehend the subject with a Taser, the officers entered the apartment and tried to subdue Mr. Sullivan by hand. Before the officers could reach Mr. Sullivan, Mr. Sullivan grabbed the previously mentioned sword and swung at and hit the closest officer. Mr. Sullivan then turned toward Officer Jason Rasmussen. As Mr. Sullivan started to swing the sword a second time, Officer Rasmussen fired upon and fatally shot Mr. Sullivan.

Nate Bryan, a spokesman for the District Attorney's Office, said that while the incident has been difficult for all involved, the officers acted according to statute. "In this instance, the officers involved made every attempt to resolve the situation through peaceful and non-lethal means," he said. Adding, "Once those attempts failed and his life was being directly threatened, Officer Rasmussen acted within his rights to protect himself, his fellow officers and the community."



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The District Attorney's Office reviews Officer Involved Critical Incidents (OICI) to determine whether any criminal action has occurred on the part of the officers. A decision not to file criminal charges does not indicate that an officer's actions are justified according to a given law enforcement agency's policies, procedures, and training. Whether or not an officer is cleared to return to active duty is a determination left to the employing police agency.

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