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CONTACT: mediarequest@mcso.maricopa.gov

UPDATE on Deputy Involved Shooting (09/20/17)

Maricopa County Sheriff’s Deputies shot and wounded a suspect who had pointed a weapon at them during a welfare check in Tonopah. Michael J. Bilinski (DOB 06/18/1981) remains hospitalized with a gunshot wound to the abdomen and is charged with two (2) counts of Aggravated Assault with a Deadly Weapon. The investigation is ongoing and may result in additional charges.

MCSO Deputies D. Rau and R. Roque were dispatched to a Tonopah residence at about 5AM on 9/20/2017. A caller, who is believed to be Suspect Bilinski, claimed a murder may have taken place. The caller, who sounded intoxicated, told the dispatcher he may be drunk and then disconnected the call.

Deputy Rau and Deputy Roque arrived on scene at the same time. Both deputies noticed lights on in the residence and heard movement. Both deputies attempted to make contact with the occupants by knocking on the windows and doors and verbally identifying themselves as deputies.

After several minutes of attempting contact, Suspect Bilinski opened the front door, brandished a rifle and pointed it at Deputy Roque. As Deputy Roque took cover, Bilinski continued to point the rifle at him. In response, Deputy Rau, pulled his service weapon and fired a single round at Bilinski, striking him in the abdomen. The suspect immediately fell to the deck outside the front door, dropping the rifle. Both Deputies yelled commands to Bilinski, who retreated into the residence, leaving his rifle on the deck.

MCSO SWAT Team, additional deputies, and other resources where dispatched to the scene. After a 2.5-hour stand-off, Suspect Bilinski gave up without further incident. Medical personnel treated him at the scene and then transported him to a West Valley hospital. Tests have confirmed that Suspect Bilinski was intoxicated.

The MCSO Homicide Unit is conducting the investigation, but there was no homicide at the scene as caller had indicated to MCSO Dispatch. A search warrant for the property was executed. Suspect Bilinski’s rifle, a .22 caliber Crossman Nitro Venom Air Rifle, was recovered at the
scene along with other evidence. Statements obtained from both deputies involved matched the evidence located at the scene.

Deputy Roque has been with MCSO for 18 years and Deputy Rau for 17 years. Both deputies were wearing and activated their body worn cameras. Per standard operating procedure, the deputies are on paid administrative leave pending completion of a review by MCSO Professional Standards Bureau.

MCSO would like to thank Buckeye Police Department, Department Of public Safety, Phoenix Police Department, and Buckeye Valley Fire for responding and assisting us on this incident. Also a special thank you to all employees involved working directly or indirectly on this incident as oneMCSO.