MCSO Compelled To Use Lethal Force Against An Attacking Pit Bull

A Maricopa County Deputy Sergeant used lethal force against an attacking pit bull Sunday in Wittmann. Sergeant Daniel McPheeters and Deputy Fernando DeLaTorre were conducting a welfare check early Sunday evening at 24219 W Patton Road in Wittmann. As Sgt. McPheeters and Deputy DeLaTorre were approaching the home they encountered an aggressive pit bull.

The MCSO first responders decided to back away, and in doing so, Sgt. McPheeters slipped and fell backward. The pit bull charged and the Sgt. discharged a single round, hitting the animal. Its owner transported the dog to an emergency veterinarian. The pit bull is currently in the care of its owner. Sgt. McPheeters had minor injuries from his fall and Deputy DeLaTorre was unhurt.

The original call came from a citizen tip about possible criminal activity at the home. The tip was determined to be unfounded.

Following standard operating procedures, MCSO supervisors reviewed body cam video of the incident and supported the use of force. MCSO Professional Standards Bureau is also reviewing the situation.

“We do care for the safety of all when we respond to these calls,” said District III Captain Paul Chagolla. “This is a very unfortunate situation that could have resulted in significant harm to our first responders.”

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
A downloadable video clip of the use of force as captured by a body camera is available here:

- https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0B0dKKop22QOFmM2NVM2VXOTJLRVU?usp=sharing

MCSO will not be doing interviews about this incident.