

Investigative Summary

Complaint Number: 19-06069

Investigator: Sergeant Rebecca Lane

Officer: Officer Lamandre Wright, Badge # 7874

Case Type: Administrative

Date of Incident: April 24, 2019

Complaint Filed: April 29, 2019

CASE OVERVIEW

On April 24, 2019, Officer Lamandre Wright was on-duty and working Squad 132 with his partner Officer Billi White. At approximately 0125 hours, Officers Wright and White were dispatched to a person with a gun call at 1515 4th St S. The caller (a security guard) gave a location and description of the suspect and stated the suspect had a gun in his back pocket.

Officers Wright and White were the first officers on scene. Officer Wright exited the driver's seat of the squad car and deployed his patrol rifle. Officer Wright and White walked toward the front entrance of the building. There was an occupied vehicle in front of the entrance to the building and Officer Wright illuminated the passenger area with his handheld flashlight. He put his flashlight away and continued to walk toward the entrance of the building. A person matching the description of the suspect appeared from the entrance of the building. Officer Wright leveled his patrol rifle and pointed it in the direction of the suspect. Officer Wright yelled at the suspect and simultaneously fired one shot in the direction of the suspect. The bullet missed the suspect and hit a cement block wall behind the suspect. The suspect ran through the parking lot and he was apprehended after a short foot chase.

A handgun was recovered in a grassy area near where the suspect was apprehended.¹ The suspect was charged with being in possession of a firearm by a person convicted of a crime of violence².

ALLEGATIONS

Allegation 1: It is alleged that Officer Wright failed to safely handle his patrol rifle and unintentionally discharged a round while responding to a person with a gun call. **5-401 HANDLING OF FIREARMS**

CASE INVESTIGATION

This case was referred to the Office of Police Conduct Review after a notification to the Minneapolis Police Department Internal Affairs Unit was made regarding an unintentional discharge of a rifle by Officer Lamandre Wright. On April 29, 2019, the case was assigned to be investigated. The PIMS Report, Body Worn Camera, and training records were reviewed. An interview with Officer Wright was also conducted.

Minneapolis Police Department Range Patrol Rifle Training and Qualification

On August 14 - 18, 2017, Officer Wright attended the Patrol Rifle Certification Course.³ At that time, he declared a Colt M4 rifle, serial # **13.37** with a weapon mounted light as a duty weapon.⁴ Officer Wright last qualified with his Patrol Rifle on June 25, 2018.⁵

PIMS GO Report 19-114646

Officer Wright wrote a Non-Public Narrative after the event. He wrote that he responded to a person with a gun call and the following occurred:

I removed my rifle from the squad and charged it and began to walk towards the entrance and hanging my rifle to (sic) around my neck by its sling. I

¹ PIMS GO Report # 19-114646

² MNCIS - Kalid Abdikadir Ali, DOB 4/11/1999, CASE NO. 27-CR-19-9630

³ Minneapolis Police Range Sign in Sheet – M4 Rifle School August 14 – 18, 2017

⁴ Declaration of Duty Handgun/Patrol Rifle

⁵ Minneapolis Police Range Sign In – M4

*observed a dark silver sedan stopped near the exit of the building. Not knowing the involvement of the vehicle, I hung my rifle down and removed my flashlight from my duty belt to see who was in the vehicle. Due to the surprise look of the occupant I determined the person inside the vehicle was not involved and turned my flashlight off and put it away. While putting my flashlight back in the holster on my duty belt and still advancing towards the door a male fitting the description that most likely was armed with a handgun quickly appeared. I quickly attempted to pick my rifle up from the sling position with intention of being ready to react to a potentially life threatening situation. Simultaneously of giving commands and manipulating my rifle, I heard a bang and realized I had accidentally discharged my rifle. I observed the round to hit a brick wall that was located south of our location to the west of the male that was exiting the building. I did not have intentions to fire my weapon at the moment of my rifle accidentally discharging.*⁶

Body Worn Camera of Officer Lamandre Wright

Body Worn Camera video showed Officer Lamandre Wright and Officer Billie White driving southbound on Washington Av S. Officer Wright was the driver. Officer White was the passenger. Officer White narrated they were responding to a person with a gun call and she read the description of the suspect out loud. Officer White read out loud that the person with the gun was still in the lobby.

Officer Wright and Officer White arrived at 1515 4th St S and decided to approach the front of the building on foot. Officer Wright deployed his patrol rifle which was located in the rifle mount in the front of the squad car. Officer Wright pulled on the charging handle and racked a round into the chamber of the rifle. They approached the front of the building and Officer Wright observed an occupied silver vehicle in front of the apartment complex and shined his light on the vehicle. He turned off his flashlight and continued to walk toward the front entrance. A male matching the description of the suspect appeared from the front entryway. Officer Wright raised his rifle and pointed it in the direction of the suspect. Officer Wright stated, "Put your..." Officer Wright discharged a round from his rifle. He continued his command "hands up now! Oh shoot." The suspect fled on foot into the parking lot and between some cars. Officer Wright and White pursued him. The suspect stops on the other side of the parking lot and he is arrested.

⁶ PIMS GO Report # 114646, Page 25, Non-Public Narrative Officer Lamandre Wright

Minneapolis Police Department Patrol Rifle Training Manual

The Minneapolis Police Department Patrol Rifle Training Manual defines “Squad Ready” as the following:

Squad Ready: The rifle’s bolt is forward on an empty chamber with the safety on. The rifle shall have a 20-round magazine loaded with 18 rounds of issued duty ammunition inserted into the magazine well. If an officer chooses to use 30-round magazines the magazine shall be loaded with 28 rounds of issued duty ammunition. (08/01/11) ⁷

The Minneapolis Police Department Patrol Rifle Training Manual provides detailed instructions on how to set up the rifle “Squad Ready.”

The Minneapolis Police Department Patrol Rifle Training Manual covers four “Cardinal Rules of Firearms Safety.” They are as follows:⁸

- Point the muzzle in a safe direction. Know the status of your weapon system at ALL times.
- Never intentionally cover anything with the muzzle of your weapon that you do not wish to destroy.
- Keep your finger outside the trigger guard until you have a sight picture and you want the hammer to fall! If your eyes come off the sights the finger comes off the trigger.
- Identify your target. Know what is behind it, in front of it, and what’s flanking it.

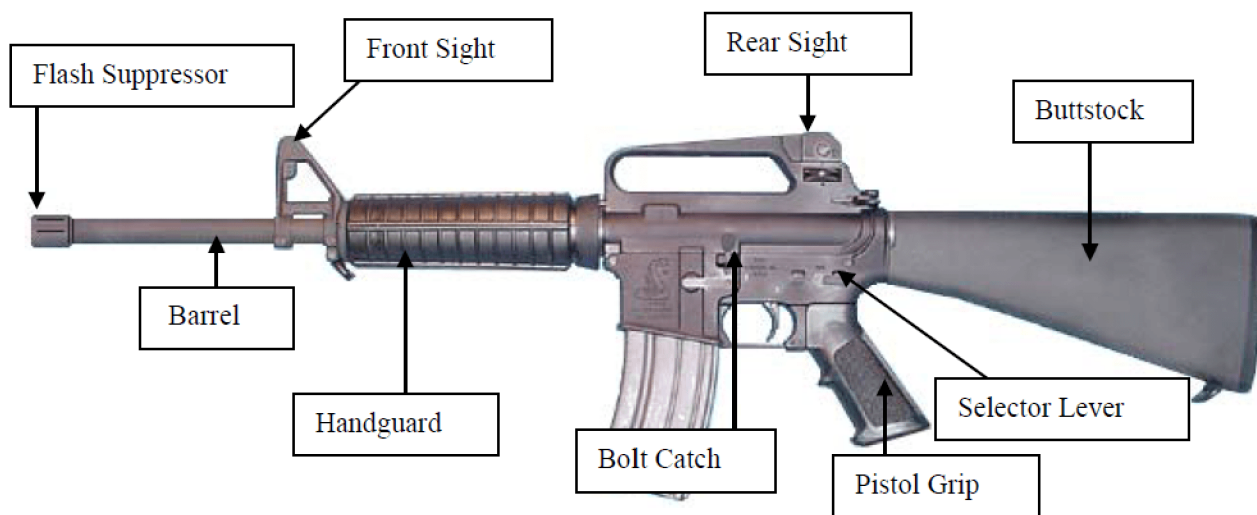


Figure 1 – Patrol Rifle with Nomenclature - From Minneapolis Police Department Patrol Rifle Training Manual

⁷ Minneapolis Police Department Patrol Rifle Training Manual, Page 5

⁸ Minneapolis Police Department Patrol Rifle Training Manual, Page 8

Also covered in the Minneapolis Police Department Patrol Rifle Training Manual is Sympathetic Contraction and the trigger finger, and consequences of these contractions. Sympathetic Contractions can occur as a result of three, uncontrollable, distinct stimuli: Startle Effect, Postural Imbalance, Exertion of Maximum Force.⁹

- **Startle Effect** – When you are startled by a loud noise, or the sudden appearance of someone unexpected, it immediately shocks or disrupts the nervous system causing you to flinch, clutch and jump.
- **Postural Imbalance** – A big term for simply losing your balance. If there is something in your hand (Gun) or near your hand when you lose your balance, you will clutch it or grab for it.
- **Exertion of Maximum Force** – This is the relationship between your muscles and nerves under high stress. If you exert maximum force with one hand, the nerves of the opposite hand will cause that hand to exert up to 25 % of the force at the same time. The more stress, the more force exerted.

The manual states, “The strength that can be exerted by involuntary muscular contractions in one of the above three circumstances may be enough to cause an Unintentional Discharge. If your trigger finger isn’t indexed properly, and you get startled, the resulting flinch or clutch may cause an Unintentional Discharge.”¹⁰

Minneapolis Police Range Functionality Test of Patrol Rifle

After the unintentional discharge that occurred on April 24, 2019, Rangemaster Sgt. Anthony Caspers, picked up the rifle from the Internal Affairs Unit on April 26, 2019. The range staff inspected and preformed a functionality test on the rifle. Sgt. Caspers reported, “Rifle [was] in working order and within factory specifications. The rifle was also test fired and functioned as designed.”¹¹

⁹ Minneapolis Police Department Patrol Rifle Training Manual, Page 9

¹⁰ Minneapolis Police Department Patrol Rifle Training Manual, Page 9

¹¹ Memo from Rangemaster Sgt. Anthony Caspers to Lt. Thomas Wheeler, May 9, 2019

Drug and Alcohol Testing

On April 24, 2019, after the unintentional discharge, Officer Wright submitted to a Drug and Alcohol Test. The test was performed by Occupational Medicine Consultants. The results of the test came back negative.¹²

Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension Firearms Discharge Report

On May 5, 2019, A Minnesota Firearms Discharge Report was submitted to the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension. The form was completed by Lt. Wheeler.¹³

Interview with Officer Lamandre Wright

On June 6, 2019, an interview of Officer Lamandre Wright was conducted. Also present was Sgt. David Garman of the Minneapolis Police Officer Police Federation. Officer Wright signed the Tennesen Warning. He also stated he understood the Garrity Warning I read to him. The following is a summary of the interview, not necessarily in chronological order.

Officer Wright works in the First Precinct on Power Watch. He has been Patrol Rifle certified for approximately two years. He carried a Minneapolis Police Department owned Colt M4 rifle. Authorized equipment, such as optics, sling, and handguard were added to the rifle. When not on duty the rifle was stored in his locker at First Precinct. Initially, Officer Wright stated he remembered setting up his rifle¹⁴ and recounted how he set up the rifle on the day of the accidental discharge.¹⁵ Later, when Officer Wright reviewed the transcript, he stated there was a discrepancy and wanted to clarify remarks he made in his interview. A subsequent interview with Officer Wright was conducted on July 30, 2019, in that interview, he stated he misunderstood the question in the original interview. On April 24, 2018, the day of the accidental discharge, Officer Wright does not recall the specifics on how he set up the patrol rifle.¹⁶

Officer Wright and his partner, Officer White, arrived on the scene. Officer Wright took the rifle from the secured rifle mount in front of the car. Officer Wright chambered a round in the rifle. While approaching the front of the building Officer Wright observed a car and took out

¹² Letter from Occupational Medicine Consultants

¹³ Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension – Supplemental Reporting System for Uniform Crime Reporting

¹⁴ Officer Lamandre Wright Transcript #1, Page 3, Line 22

¹⁵ Officer Lamandre Wright Transcript #1, Page 4, Line 4-18

¹⁶ Officer Lamandre Wright Transcript #2, Page 2, Line 28-29

the flashlight on his belt to look inside the car. Officer Wright took the flashlight from his belt and did not use a weapon mounted light because he did not want to point a weapon at the vehicle not knowing if it was involved. Officer Wright determined the car was not involved. Officer Wright put his flashlight back on his belt.

Officer Wright was surprised when the suspect appeared on the sidewalk in front of the lobby. He stated, "I...it was kind of a surprise because at first it was...they were saying he was in an apartment, then he was in the lobby, and then he popped up in front of me."¹⁷ Officer Wright raised his rifle and attempted to give the suspect commands. He stated, "...by the time I could even utter anything, I heard a bang and realized that my rifle had just went off and that's when I was like shoot."¹⁸

Officer Wright stated he did not intend to fire his patrol rifle. Officer Wright did not remember moving the selector lever from "Safe" to "Fire" during the call.¹⁹

DISCUSSION

Did Officer Wright fail to safely handle his patrol rifle and unintentionally discharge a round while responding to a person with a gun call?

The Minneapolis Police Department's Policy and Procedure Manual at the time of the incident states in part:

5-401 HANDLING OF FIREARMS (03/11/16) (12/17/18)

- A. All employees shall safely handle firearms while performing on-duty assignments or while acting in a law enforcement capacity, in a manner consistent with MPD training and policy.
- B. An employee's finger shall be kept out of the trigger guard and indexed on the frame of the handgun until the employee is on target and intends to fire the gun.
- C. Employees are responsible for any discharge of a firearm in their custody. Any unintentional, reckless, unlawful, or other discharge inconsistent with MPD training and policy may result in discipline.

¹⁷ Officer Lamandre Wright Transcript #1, Page 7, Line 38-39

¹⁸ Officer Lamandre Wright Transcript #1, Page 5, Line 33-34

¹⁹ Officer Lamandre Wright Transcript #1, Page 7, Line 9-11

Officer Wright's patrol rifle was found to be functional by the Minneapolis Police Range. Because the Minneapolis Police Range found the rifle to function as designed, there are only two other ways for the rifle to discharge unintentionally:

1. The safety was never on and/or taken off at some point and Officer Wright had his finger on the trigger and depressed the trigger to the rear of the rifle.
2. Officer Wright had pressure on the trigger and took the safety off while the trigger was depressed to the rear.

Officer Wright had no specific recollection of setting up his rifle squad ready on April 24, 2019. He stated his normal routine would be to set up the rifle "Squad Ready" after Roll Call. "Squad Ready" would include having the selector lever on "Safe." It is unknown at what point (or if ever) the rifle selector lever was on "Safe" and was moved to the "Fire" position.

CLOSING

Did Officer Wright fail to safely handle his patrol rifle and unintentionally discharged a round while responding to a person with a gun call?

- Officer Wright was Patrol Rifle certified approximately two years.
- During an interview with Officer Wright he stated he set the patrol rifle up "Squad Ready" as a part of his daily routine but, could not remember the specific actions he took when setting up the rifle on April 24, 2019.
- On April 24, 2019, Officer Wright responded to a person with a gun call, deployed his patrol rifle, and racked a round into the chamber.
- While approaching the building, Officer Wright had just put his flashlight back onto his belt when the suspect emerged from the front lobby.
- Officer Wright leveled his rifle and yelled at the suspect to put his hands up.
- While Officer Wright yelled these orders to the suspect, Officer Wright unintentionally discharged a rifle round.
- The bullet hit a concrete wall behind the suspect.
- There were no injuries to the suspect.
- The suspect was arrested and charged with being in possession of a firearm by a person convicted of a crime of violence.

I confirm that information I provide in this case is true to the best of my knowledge.



Investigator: Sergeant Rebecca Lane

August 28, 2019

Date

**CITY OF MINNEAPOLIS
OFFICE OF POLICE CONDUCT REVIEW**

COMPLAINT INFORMATION					
Case Number	Precinct	CCN	Date of Incident	Time	Preference
19-06069	1	19-114646	April 24, 2019	0125 hours	
Location of Incident		City/State/Zip		Date of Complaint	
1515 4 th St S		Minneapolis, MN		April 29, 2019	
Complainant Name (Last, First, Middle Initial)			Sex	Race	DOB
Joint Supervisors					
Home Address		City/State/Zip		Primary Telephone	
JURISDICTION			CATEGORY		
OPCR Ord. § 172.20(8)			VIOLATION OF THE P&P MANUAL		
BADGE/NAME			ALLEGED POLICY VIOLATIONS		
7874 ; Wright, Lamandre			MPD P&P § 5-401 – HANDLING OF FIREARMS		
ALLEGATION SUMMARY					
It is alleged that Officer Wright failed to safely handle his patrol rifle and unintentionally discharged a round while responding to a person with a gun.					
SUPERVISOR ASSESSMENT					
INQUIRY (INTAKE – COMPLAINT FILED) <input type="checkbox"/> MEDIATION <input type="checkbox"/> Refer to Mediation COACHING <input type="checkbox"/> Refer to Precinct INVESTIGATIONS <input type="checkbox"/> Preliminary Investigation <input type="checkbox"/> Civilian Investigator: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Sworn Investigator: _____ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Admin Investigation: Investigator Sgt. Lane			3401 <input type="checkbox"/> Draft <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Final approved DISMISS <input type="checkbox"/> Reckoning Period Expired <input type="checkbox"/> No Basis <input type="checkbox"/> Failure to State a Claim <input type="checkbox"/> Failure to Cooperate <input type="checkbox"/> Exceptionally Cleared <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of Jurisdiction <input type="checkbox"/> Withdrawn <input type="checkbox"/> Duplicate <input type="checkbox"/> Refer to Dispatch <input type="checkbox"/> Refer to EIS <input type="checkbox"/> Refer to: _____		
FINAL APPROVED INVESTIGATIVE REPORT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Refer to Panel					
IAU Supervisor <i>[Signature]</i>				Date 9/17/19	
Director – Office of Police Conduct Review <i>[Signature]</i>				Date 9/17/19	

NOTICE OF DISCIPLINE

June 22, 2020

Officer Lamandre Wright
Juvenile Outreach & Diversion
Minneapolis Police Department

RE: OPCR Case Number 19-06069
Notice of Written Reprimand

Officer Wright,

The finding for OPCR Case #19-06069 is as follows:

<u>Policy Number</u>	<u>Sub-Section</u>	<u>Policy Description</u>	<u>Category</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
5-401		Handling of Firearms	B	<u>Merit</u>

As discipline for this incident, you will receive this Letter of Reprimand.

This case will remain in the OPCR files per the record retention guidelines mandated by State Law.

Be advised that any additional violations of Department Rules and Regulations may result in disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

Sincerely,



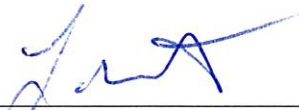
Medaria Arradondo
Chief of Police

By: Michael Kjos, Assistant Chief of Police
Henry Halvorson, Deputy Chief, Professional Standards Bureau

NOTICE OF RECEIPT


Acknowledgement of receipt:

I, Lamandre Wright, acknowledge that I have received my Notice of Discipline for OPCR Case #19-06069.



Officer Lamandre Wright

6-23-20
Date of receipt



Commander Giovanni Veliz

6-23-20
Date

CC: Personnel
Cmdr. Veliz
OPCR