



Office of the New York State Attorney General Letitia James

Office of Special Investigation

September 7, 2023

Report on the Investigation into the Death of Troy Eames

SUMMARY

New York Executive Law Section 70-b authorizes the Office of the Attorney General, through the Office of Special Investigation (OSI), to investigate and, if warranted, to prosecute offenses arising from any incident in which the death of a person is caused by a police officer or peace officer. When OSI does not seek charges, Section 70-b requires issuance of a public report. This is OSI's report concerning the death of Troy Eames.

On Monday, February 7, 2022, off-duty Onondaga County Sheriff's Office (OCSO) Civil Deputy Isaac Eames¹ shot and injured his wife, Karen Eames, and fatally shot his 21-year-old son, Troy Eames, and their family dog, before fatally shooting himself. The incident occurred at the Eames family home, at 4410 Riverview Road in the Town of Brewerton, Onondaga County. As detailed below, OSI's investigation provides no reason to believe that any person other than Dep. Eames caused the death of Troy Eames, thus there is no person left alive who could be prosecuted for that death.

FACTS

Based on the 911 recordings from the Oswego County Department of Emergency Communications, on February 7, 2022, at 7:27 a.m.,² Karen Eames called 911 asking for help. On the call, Ms. Eames sounded panicked and disoriented and seemed to have trouble speaking. Ms. Eames was able to provide her address to the dispatcher, who then transferred the call to the Onondaga County Department of Emergency Communications (OCDEC).³ Based on the OCDEC 911 recordings, while on the phone with the Onondaga County dispatcher, Ms. Eames said that there was blood everywhere and she was bleeding from her face, and that she was in her bedroom. Ms. Eames said she felt like she had been shot, and that her husband and son were also home; when the dispatcher asked if he could speak with her husband, Ms. Eames said she was unable to move or function. Ms. Eames also said she did not know who shot her or whether the person was still there. While trying to articulate what happened, Ms. Eames said she had come upstairs from the basement and the next thing she remembered was calling 911. Ms. Eames also said she could not find her dog, and felt something must be wrong with him. Ms. Eames expressed concern over emergency personnel being able to get inside to help her because her front door was locked. Ms. Eames stayed on the phone with 911 until members of OCSO arrived.

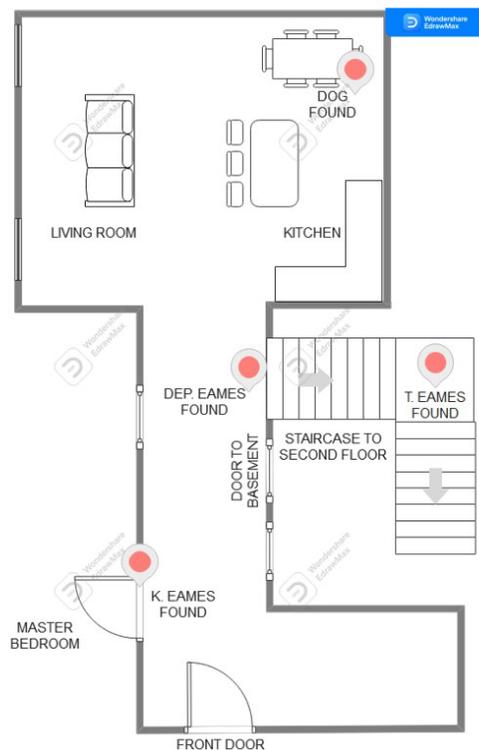
¹ Because Dep. Eames was a deputy sheriff of a county outside New York City he was a "police officer" for purposes of Section 70-b. Criminal Procedure Law 1.20, Section 34.

² All times are approximate.

³ The Eames home was on the Oneida River, which in that area is the line between Oswego and Onondaga Counties.

Based on the Incident Reports of responding OCSO members, and consistent with review of the OCDEC recorded radio transmissions and Ring Camera video footage from outside the Eames house, OCSO Deputies Timothy Hahn and Conor Young arrived at 7:47 a.m. and kicked in the front door after hearing Ms. Eames yell that she could not move. Based on their OCSO Incident Reports, when they got inside, Deps. Hahn and Young saw Ms. Eames on the floor near the front left bedroom, conscious and breathing but covered in blood with apparent injuries to her arm and face, and a man, later determined to be Dep. Eames, lying on his back in the hallway at the base of the stairs leading to the second floor. According to their reports, blood was pooling around Dep. Eames's head, and he appeared to be gasping for air. Deps. Hahn and Young also saw a black handgun on the floor next to Dep. Eames. As Dep. Hahn used his foot to move the gun from Dep. Eames's reach, he saw a man, later determined to be Troy Eames, face down on the center landing of the stairway with an apparent gunshot wound to the head, appearing to gasp for air. Dep. Hahn also found the family dog in the kitchen, dead from an apparent gunshot wound. Based on the OCDEC recorded radio transmissions, Dep. Hahn radioed, "Male and female down, gun recovered, house not clear," followed by, "I got three down."

The diagram below depicts the general layout of the main floor of 4410 Riverview Road, along with the approximate spots where Deps. Hahn and Young said they found the persons and the dog.



This diagram was created by OSI, based on OCSO's Incident Reports and crime-scene photographs and videos, along with OSI's observations of the scene. The diagram is not to scale.

Based on the written OCSO statements of responding emergency personnel and consistent with the OCDEC recorded radio transmissions, once Deps. Hahn and Young and other responding OCSO members cleared the house,⁴ ambulance and fire personnel entered to assess the wounded individuals and render aid. Ambulance personnel transported Ms. Eames and Troy Eames, who still had a pulse, to Upstate University Hospital (UUH); Dep. Eames was pronounced dead on scene. Based on review of UUH records, Troy Eames was pronounced dead at the hospital, and Ms. Eames, who sustained two gunshot wounds – one to her right face/cheek and one to her left upper arm – underwent trauma surgery and was eventually released.

On February 8, 2022, while in the hospital, Ms. Eames provided a written statement to members of OCSO regarding the events that took place on the morning of February 7, 2022, which OSI obtained and reviewed.⁵ In her statement, Ms. Eames said she woke up at 6:30 a.m. and took the dog downstairs to the basement, which was her usual routine.⁶ Ms. Eames went back upstairs at 7:15 a.m. to get ready for the day, and when she went into her bedroom, she saw that Dep. Eames was just getting up and that the top drawer of his nightstand, where he kept his gun, was open. According to Ms. Eames, Dep. Eames took his gun, turned towards Ms. Eames, and said, “This has to happen.” Ms. Eames said she then put her hand up and felt excruciating pain in her face. Ms. Eames said she did not see Dep. Eames leave the bedroom, and next remembered running out of the room and up the stairs to look for her son, who she found lying face down in the stairwell. Ms. Eames said she dragged herself down the staircase walls and saw Dep. Eames lying on the floor near the pantry. Ms. Eames then called 911 and told them she had been shot. In her statement, Ms. Eames said that she did not know why Dep. Eames would shoot them, as they had no issues, and that he had never been physical with her before.

After the shooting incident, an investigation conducted by OCSO and the Onondaga County District Attorney’s Office (OCDAO)⁷ indicated that Dep. Eames, who was responsible for managing grant funds and other financial accounts within OCSO’s Civil Division, might have stolen large amounts of money from OCSO. Based on OSI’s conversations with members of OCSO and OCDAO, just days before the shootings took place, Dep. Eames was questioned by

⁴ Based on OSI’s observations at the scene, OCSO’s Incident Reports and crime-scene photographs, and review of Ring Camera video footage from outside the home, there is no evidence that anyone else had been in the home that morning or was otherwise involved.

⁵ On March 23, 2022, OSI requested, through her attorney, to interview Ms. Eames about the morning of February 7, 2022. On March 25, 2022, Ms. Eames’s attorney notified OSI that Ms. Eames was declining an interview with OSI, indicating she already gave a statement to OCSO and did not want to relive the trauma.

⁶ OSI obtained and reviewed Ring Camera video footage from the basement of the home, confirming that Ms. Eames was in the basement with her dog during this timeframe. There were no Ring or other security cameras on the main floor of the home, thus no video footage capturing the shootings.

⁷ On February 11, 2022, OSI sent a letter to the District Attorney of Onondaga County, reserving to him, under Paragraph 4 of Section 70-b, the authority to investigate possible financial crimes committed by Dep. Eames and/or others, and, if warranted, to prosecute any potential defendants.

a superior at work about a particular financial transaction; Dep. Eames then called in sick on the Thursday and Friday preceding the shootings. Following OCSO's and OCDAO's investigation, Ms. Eames was arrested and later indicted for her alleged involvement in the thefts; Ms. Eames later pleaded guilty to Criminal Possession of Stolen Property in the Second Degree, and on June 12, 2023, was sentenced to six months of incarceration and five years of probation.⁸

Evidence Collection

Following the incident, members of OCSO executed a search warrant at the Eames property and processed the scene. OSI responded to the scene on February 7, 2022, and returned the next day for a walk-through conducted by members of OCSO.

Based on OSI's observations and OCSO's crime-scene photographs and Incident Reports, the gun found next to Dep. Eames's body was his OCSO issued service weapon – a Glock 21 .45 Auto semiautomatic pistol.⁹ Upon examination, OCSO members determined that the gun, which had a capacity of 14 rounds, contained six live rounds (five in the magazine and one in the chamber). OCSO members collected Dep. Eames's empty service weapon holster from the top of his bedroom nightstand, the top drawer of which was open. OCSO members recovered eight spent .45 caliber shell casings within the main floor of the home, including from the master bedroom, front hallway, and staircase. OCSO members recovered four fired projectiles within the home, and located multiple projectile strikes – including one in the door of the master bedroom, two in a window frame above the stairwell landing, and one in the south wall of the stairwell that had apparent tissue and skull matter around it, indicating that Dep. Eames likely shot himself on the stairwell before falling to the base of the stairs.

Based on the UUH records and OCSO Incident and Evidence Reports, UUH staff removed an apparent projectile from Ms. Eames during surgery, which members of OCSO collected. As detailed below, Pathologist Brandy Shattuck recovered an apparent projectile and fragments from Troy Eames's scalp and brain during his autopsy, which were turned over to OCSO.

OCSO submitted the gun, casings, and projectiles to the Onondaga County Center for Forensic Sciences (OCCFS) for analysis, the results of which are summarized below.

Ballistics Analysis

OCCFS test fired Dep. Eames's Glock 21 .45 caliber pistol and found it to be operable. Following examination of the eight spent casings recovered within the Eames home, OCCFS

⁸ [Karen Eames sentenced in her part for stealing from Onondaga County Sheriff's Office \(msn.com\)](#)

⁹ OCSO members also located and collected a Glock 43 9mm handgun, which contained a fully loaded magazine, in the front right pocket of the shorts Dep. Eames was wearing, and a corresponding fully loaded magazine in his other pocket.

identified all eight as having been ejected from Dep. Eames's pistol. OCCFS microscopically examined the fired projectiles recovered within the home and from Ms. Eames and observed "agreement of class characteristics" to test fired projectiles from Dep. Eames's pistol but could neither identify nor eliminate the projectiles as having been fired from Dep. Eames's pistol.¹⁰ OCCFS microscopically examined the projectile recovered during Troy Eames's autopsy and determined it had "physical and design characteristics consistent with being .45 caliber." Following microscopic comparison, OCCFS observed "agreement of class characteristics" but could neither identify nor eliminate the projectile as having been fired from Dep. Eames's pistol.

Latent Print and DNA Analysis

OCCFS analyzed Dep. Eames's pistol and its magazine, the empty holster that was on top of Dep. Eames's nightstand, and the 9mm gun and magazines in Dep. Eames's pockets for latent prints; of those items, only the holster's plastic clip contained a latent print suitable for identification. Following examination of that latent print, OCCFS identified Dep. Eames as its source. OCCFS also analyzed a DNA swabbing from Dep. Eames's pistol's magazine, which indicates that Dep. Eames was a contributor to the swabbing.

Medical Examiner

On February 8, 2022, Pathologist Brandy Shattuck conducted the autopsies of Dep. Eames and Troy Eames at the Onondaga County Medical Examiner's Office's (OCMEO); members of OSI attended the autopsies and spoke with Dr. Shattuck about her findings, and obtained and reviewed Dr. Shattuck's Final Autopsy Reports.¹¹ Troy Eames sustained one gunshot wound to his right forehead; there was no exit wound, and apparent projectile fragments were recovered from his scalp and brain. In her report, Dr. Shattuck listed Troy Eames's cause of death as, "Gunshot wound," and the manner of death as, "Homicide." Dep. Eames sustained one gunshot that entered the right side of his head and exited the left side of his head. In her report, Dr. Shattuck listed Dep. Eames's cause of death as, "Gunshot wound of head," and the manner of death as, "Suicide." Dr. Shattuck told OSI that Dep. Eames's wound was a contact or near-contact wound, as evidenced in part by the abraded contusion surrounding the wound.

CONCLUSION

OSI's investigation indicates that Dep. Eames fired his service weapon eight times on the

¹⁰ OCCFS microscopically compared the projectiles to test fired bullets from the 9mm pistol found in Dep. Eames's pocket, and eliminated them as having been fired from that gun.

¹¹ Based on OCMEO paperwork, Dr. Shattuck also reviewed photographs of Ms. Eames's injuries. Additionally, imaging done at the OCMEO indicates the dog sustained two gunshot wounds, with projectile fragments in his spinal region and torso.

morning of February 7, 2022, striking Ms. Eames twice, the family dog twice, Troy Eames once, and himself once, and twice missing any intended targets. Moreover, there is no evidence anyone other than Dep. Eames was responsible for Troy Eames's death and, therefore, there is no basis on which OSI could seek charges against any living person in this case.

Dated: September 7, 2023.