

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## Identifications from Deputy Involved Shooting in National City

**San Diego** – A Deputy involved shooting occurred after a man fled a traffic stop in National City and apparently shot at a San Diego Sheriff's detective. The detective returned fire, killing the man. A firearm was recovered from the immediate vicinity of the man.

On September 27, 2024, at about 1:22 p.m., uniformed San Diego Sheriff's deputies stopped a white Acura occupied by two men and a woman on the 200 block of Mile of Cars Way in National City. During the stop, the man in the front passenger seat exited the vehicle and fled the stop on foot. The deputies requested assistance from the National City Police Department. The two remaining occupants were detained while officers and deputies checked the area for the missing man. The driver was identified as Dominic Dimaio, described as a 29-year-old white male. The third occupant was Whitney Cowan, described as a 36-year-old white female. Both Dimaio and Cowan were arrested and booked into county jail for narcotics related charges and being felons in possession of body armor.

A citizen in the area flagged down a detective who was in the area searching for the man who fled. The citizen reported he saw the man run through a nearby Dodge dealership and get into a tow truck parked in the lot. With the assistance of a National City motorcycle officer, the detective approached the truck and spotted the man inside. As the detective was giving the man commands, it appears the man fired at least one round in the detective's direction, shattering the passenger window of the tow truck and injuring the detective with shards of broken glass. The detective returned fire, striking the man. Aid was rendered at the scene, but the man did not survive. A firearm was recovered near the male. He has been identified as Gene Stewart of Lakeside, a 46-year-old White male.

The detective involved in this incident, Douglas Akers, was transported to a local hospital for treatment of minor injuries sustained from the breaking glass. He has been employed by the San Diego Sheriff's Office for approximately 35 years. He is currently assigned to the East County Regional Gang Task Force.

Per the Countywide Memorandum of Understanding, the San Diego Police Homicide Unit was called to the scene to conduct the officer-involved-shooting investigation. Detectives are currently gathering evidence, interviewing witnesses, and examining the circumstances surrounding the shooting.

The investigation and review process for officer-involved shootings are extremely thorough. When the Homicide Unit completes its investigation, it will be reviewed by the San Diego County District Attorney's Office to determine if the detective bears any criminal liability for his actions. The Sheriff's Office will conduct an administrative investigation into the detective's discharge of his firearm. The Federal Bureau of Investigations and the United States Attorney's Office will also be monitoring the investigation.

Anyone with information regarding this incident is asked to call the Homicide Unit at (619) 531-2293 or Crime Stoppers at (888) 580-8477.

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