Investigative Summary

On February 24, 2024, Officer Richard Adams, ID 21928, was off-duty and staying with his fiancée, and cohabitant, Victim at the Hampton Inn in Poway, California. They got into an argument with each other, during which Victim alleged Officer Adams' behavior *"got scary."* Victim requested Officer Adams secure his off-duty pistol in the front desk safe. The argument continued into February 25, 2024, when Victim advised Officer Adams, she wished to drive home without him. Despite that advisement, Officer Adams loaded their luggage onto a bellman's cart and walked with Victim to the parking lot. As they walked through the lobby, Officer Adams stopped at the front desk to retrieve his firearm while Victim continued to her car. Officer Adams then caught back up to Victim as she stood at her car, loaded his luggage into the trunk, insisted that she take him with her, and would not allow her to freely leave the premises. At approximately 1608 hours, Victim called 9-1-1 to report the domestic dispute between herself and Officer Adams. As Victim was on the phone with the 9-1-1 operator, Officer Adams walked away and sat in the hotel lobby. San Diego County Sheriff's Department (SDSD) deputies responded to the Hampton Inn and contacted Victim Officer Adams remained in the lobby for the duration of the SDSD investigation. A clerk at the Hampton Inn advised Officer Adams the police were on scene, but Officer Adams did not go outside to speak with the deputies, and no contact was made with him on that day. Following the contact with SDSD deputies, Victim drove by herself back home to Location. Officer Adams returned home later that evening via Lyft.

During the SDSD's investigation into the incident, Victim reported a long history of violence and aggression from Officer Adams during the prior two (2) years of their relationship. Victim made a request for law enforcement action for past incidents of domestic violence involving Officer Adams and advised the deputies she had *"videos of him assaulting people."* **(Exhibit 06.c – 22:23)**. Victim detailed several incidents in which Officer Adams was violent with her including the following:

- In the month of June 2022, Officer Adams dragged Victim out of bed, threw her into a TV, dragged her by her ankles, and used his forearm to cut off her airway which caused blood vessels to rupture in her eye. Victim shared two (2) photographs of a sub-conjunctival hemorrhage in her left eye which were captured on Body Worn Camera (BWC) footage **(Exhibit 06.f)**. Victim called 9-1-1, but claimed she was dishonest with the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department (SBSD) deputies when they arrived on scene, because she did not want Officer Adams to get in trouble and "*lose everything*."

Investigator's Note: Victim *refused to submit the photographs of her eye to the SDSD deputies for inclusion with their investigation.*

- On May 14, 2023, Victim's then 14-year-old daughter (Juvenile #1), called 9-1-1 after witnessing an altercation between Officer Adams and Victim Juvenile #1 reported

Officer Adams threw Victim out of a chair. During the 9-1-1 call, Juvenile #1 abruptly changed her demeanor and requested deputies not respond. Victim stated Officer Adams threw her to the ground and her head struck a brick fireplace. SBSD deputies responded to the residence, but both Victim and Juvenile #1 were dishonest with deputies upon their arrival and no report was taken. Victim wanted to keep Officer Adams out of trouble, and Juvenile #1 did not want to cause a problem on Mother's Day. **(Exhibit 09)**

- On July 13, 2023, after Victim sent a text message to an ex-boyfriend, Officer Adams picked her up and threw her on the ground, dragged her across the house by her ankles, and then threw her out of the front door of their residence. Victim shared ARLO doorbell camera footage she had saved of this event. Victim described the video as evidence of Officer Adams assaulting her in an incident of domestic violence. The footage shows Officer Adams standing behind Victim with his arms underneath hers on her torso. Officer Adams then forcibly propelled Victim out of the front door, and Victim landed violently on her left shoulder on the front porch with her legs still inside the house. Officer Adams then grabbed Victim's right leg and dragged her completely out of the house. During the video, Officer Adams can be heard yelling, *"Are you Fucking kidding me, dude?"* Victim can be heard yelling, *"Richard Stop! Stop!"* Victim allowed the video to be captured on SDSD BWC footage but refused to submit it separately to the deputies for inclusion with their investigation. **(Exhibit 06.b – 41:53)**

Investigator's Note: Although Victim *has a propensity to recant allegations of domestic violence, she has not unequivocally denied or recanted her statement regarding this specific incident that was captured on July 13, 2023. During a follow-up investigatory interview,* Victim *declined to comment further on the events depicted in the video.*

- On February 10, 2024, Officer Adams followed Victim around their house yelling at her and making accusations against her. Officer Adams then grabbed her by her wrist causing her to drop a glass which shattered upon impact with the ground. Officer Adams yelled at her, accused her of making a mess in *"his"* house, grabbed her by the neck, threw her on the ground, punched her in the face twice with a closed fist, kicked her in the stomach, and told her she was *"trash"* and to *"stop acting like a victim."* Victim claimed she was unable to call 9-1-1 on this occasion due to Officer Adams having taken possession of her cell phone, and nobody else being home. **(Exhibit 06.c – 35:16)**

- On an unknown date approximately two (2) years prior to February 2024, Officer Adams pushed Juvenile #1 to the ground and took her cell phone from her. **(Exhibit 06.c – 44:29)**

Investigator's Note: Officer Adams made supervisory notification after each of the abovementioned incidents which resulted in a law enforcement response.

On February 26, 2024, Officer Adams called Morongo Basin Area Sergeant Randy O'Brien, ID 17977, to advise of his involvement in the incident on February 25, 2024, and the response and potential investigation from the SDSD. Sergeant O'Brien notified Morongo Basin Area Commander, Lieutenant Cameron Broyles, ID 14617, who in turn notified Inland Division Assistant Chief Kari Clark, ID 14720.

Based on allegations of domestic violence provided by Victim, and the video and photographic evidence shared on scene with the SDSD deputies, an incident report was generated and forwarded to the SBSD for further investigation.

SBSD Detective Jose Perez, ID G6923, conducted a follow-up investigation based on the information provided by the SDSD, and submitted a report to the San Bernardino County District Attorney's Office (SBCDAO) for review and filing of charges of California Penal Code (CPC) 243(e)(1), *Domestic Battery,* against Officer Adams.

On April 5, 2024, the SBCDAO filed charges against Officer Adams for the abovementioned charge, for the incident of domestic battery memorialized on video on July 13, 2023.

On April 15, 2024, Officer Adams contacted Sergeant O'Brien and advised Victim had received a letter from the SBCDAO informing her she was identified as a victim of domestic violence. Morongo Basin Area Sergeant Aaron Lowe, ID 17420, confirmed the SBCDAO filed one count of 243(e)(1) CPC against Officer Adams. Notification of the case update was made to Assistant Chief Clark, and Inland Division Chief Daniel Minor, ID 13318, who made the decision to initiate an internal investigation.

Investigator's Note: As of the completion of this Administrative Investigation, the status of Officer Adams' criminal case is still pending.

Due to her uncooperative nature during a follow-up interview with Detective Perez, her history of recanting allegations, and her compromised position of cohabitating with Officer Adams, investigators decided to postpone contact with Victim until later in this administrative investigation.

The specific allegation(s) from this investigation are:

1. Officer Adams willfully and unlawfully committed domestic battery upon his fiancée, Victim by forcibly throwing her out of the front door of their residence.

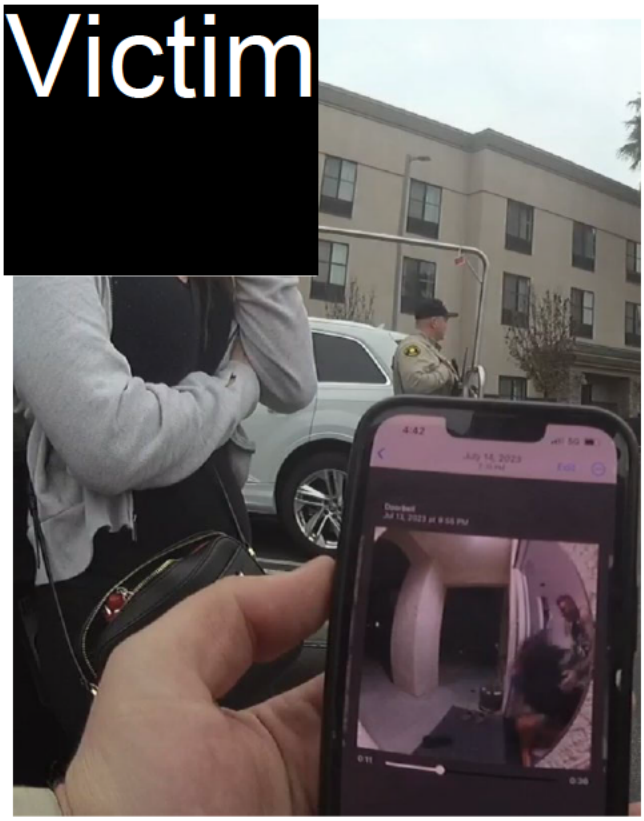
Findings

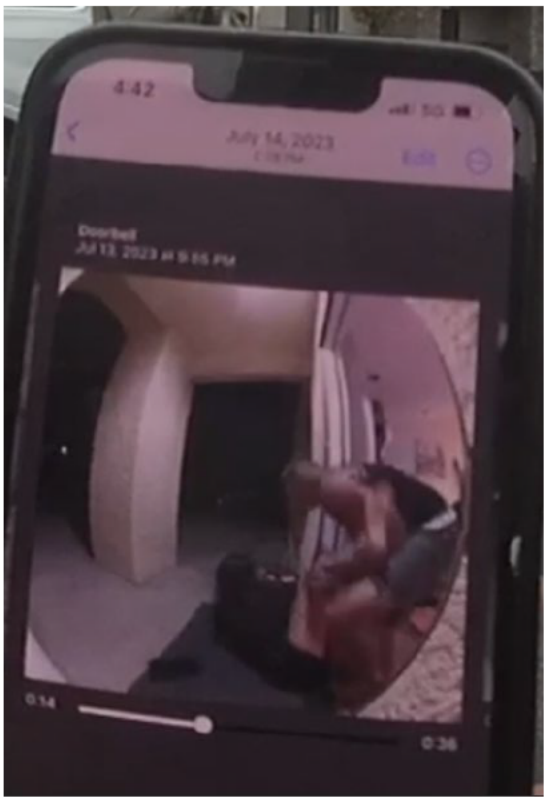
1. Officer Adams willfully and unlawfully committed domestic battery upon his fiancée, Victim, by forcibly throwing her out of the front door of their residence. -- **Founded**

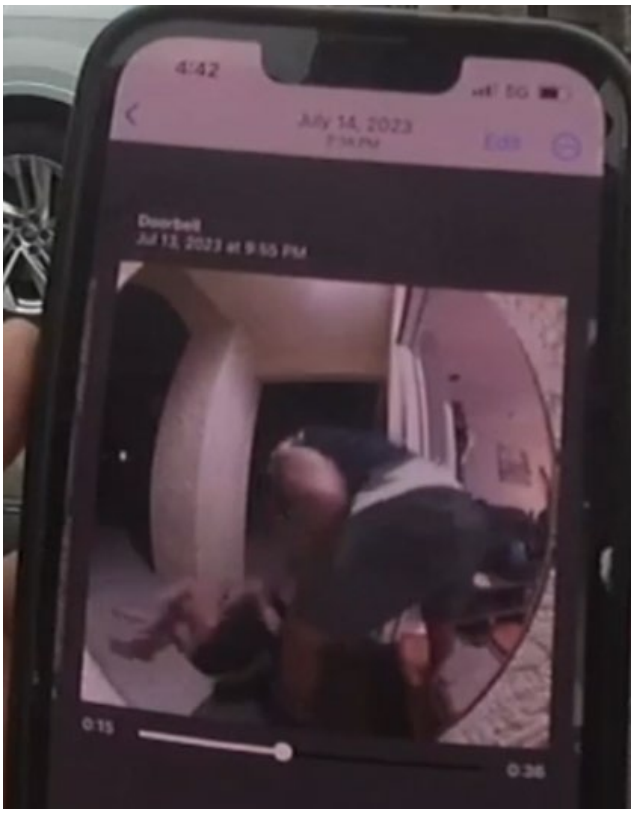
The determination that the allegation was founded was based upon the following:

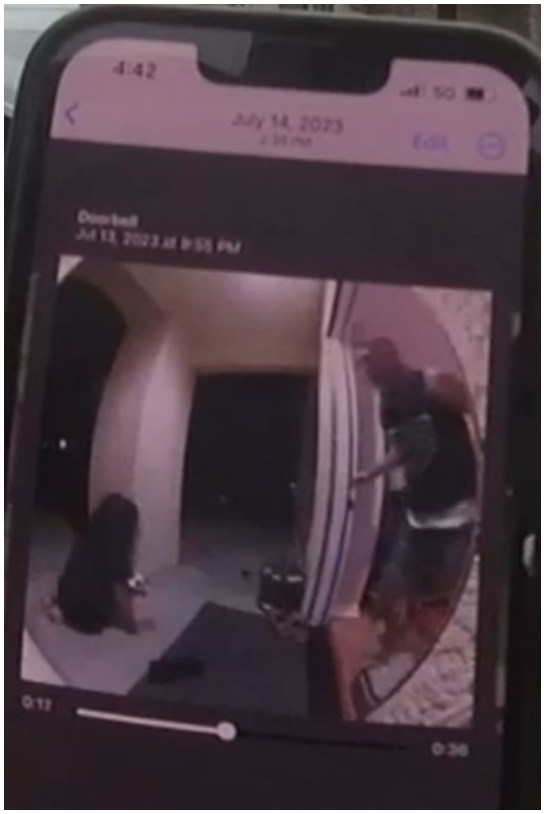
- Video footage of Officer Adams forcibly removing Victim from their house was captured via Officer Adams' ARLO doorbell camera.
  - The following are four (4) screen captures of the doorbell video footage depicting Officer Adams forcibly throwing Victim out of the front door of their residence. **(Exhibit 06.b)**

Victim









- The video depicts Officer Adams overpowering a struggling Victim in the doorway of their home. Officer Adams is clearly the dominant aggressor in the incident. There are no threats, acts of violence, or displays of aggression on the part of Victim.

  The video begins as Officer Adams is standing behind and holding Victim, who was trying to move away from the doorway, back towards the inside of the house. Both parties disappeared out of frame, into the house, and then reappeared as Officer Adams forcibly lifted and propelled Victim, who was in a seated position, out of the front door. Victim violently landed on her left side, with her head nearly striking the ground on the front porch, while her legs and lower torso remained inside the threshold of the doorway. Officer Adams then repositioned himself and used both hands to gain control of Victim's right leg as she continued to actively resist Officer Adams by attempting to free her leg and roll back inside the house. Officer Adams overpowered Victim and dragged her legs out of the front door. Officer Adams actions caused Victim to roll over and end up in a seated position on the porch. Officer Adams stepped back into the doorway facing Victim as the video clip came to an end. During the video clip, both parties can be heard audibly struggling and arguing. Officer Adams can be heard yelling, *"Are you fucking kidding me, dude?"* Victim can be heard yelling, *"Richard Stop! Stop!"* **(Exhibit 06.b – 41:53)**

- During her contact with SDSD deputies on February 25, 2024, Victim expressed a desire to pursue police action for incidents of domestic violence that had occurred in the past. Victim alluded to the video asking, *"What if I were to submit videos of these things happening? Would something be done then?"* When asked what videos she had, Victim stated, *"Videos of him assaulting people."* **(Exhibit 06.c – 22:23)**

- Victim tearfully shared the video with SDSD deputies during her contact with them on February 25, 2024. SDSD Deputy McKemy, ID 3119, played back the video from Victim's cell phone and recorded it using his BWC. **(Exhibit 06.b – 41:53)**

- Victim emotionally described the events surrounding the video to SDSD deputies stating, *"I texted an ex-boyfriend and so he picked me up and threw me on the ground then dragged me across the house by my ankles. Picked me up and threw me on the ground again, then did it front of the RING camera on the front door."* **(Exhibit 06.c – 37:13)**

- On February 28, 2024, Detective Perez contacted Victim and explained that he was investigating the incident and events she previously reported to the SDSD. Victim declined to provide a statement at that time. Despite numerous attempts to reschedule a convenient time to connect, and an offer to speak with another detective if Victim found it preferrable, Victim did not provide a statement to the SBSD for approximately three (3) weeks, which was after Detective Perez had spoken to Officer Adams.

- On March 18, 2024, Detective Perez, contacted Officer Adams at his residence in Location. Officer Adams' statement to Detective Perez lacked commitment and a specific refutation of the violence that had been reported. Additionally, his statement contradicted itself, as well as other statements Officer Adams would later make during his administrative interrogation. Officer Adams failed to provide a complete and unwavering account of what happened, and instead only provided limited answers to Detective Perez's questions. **(Exhibit 08.d)**

  - Officer Adams related his arguments with Victim never got physical, and Victim never complained to him following an argument of any physical contact.

  - Detective Perez described the video as a shoving match that occurred at the front door, between Officer Adams and Victim. Officer Adams related his relationship with Victim was *"passionate"* and denied knowledge of Victim's possession of a video like the one described.

Investigator's Note: This statement contradicts Officer Adams statement during his administrative interrogation that Victim *told him she had a video, and that she shared it with SDSD deputies on February 25, 2024. Additionally, Officer Adams stated he expected to be contacted regarding that incident, and the report* Victim *made that day.*

- When watching the video of the event, which Officer Adams recognized as a physical confrontation, Officer Adams' unprompted response was, *"Yeah, I don't. I don't know if we were arguing that night."*

Investigator's Note: This spontaneous statement demonstrating Officer Adams' association of a physical confrontation with an argument between Victim *and himself, deviates from his earlier assertion that his arguments with* Victim *never got physical.*

- Officer Adams stated, *"It was just us, hanging out, is what it looks like. And I don't know if she's saying that something happened."*

Investigator's Note: This statement is contextually contrary to Officer Adams' statements that he expected to be contacted by law enforcement regarding the situation, and Detective Perez's introduction of the conversation and video.

- Officer Adams stated, *"Sometimes we play rough, and then sometimes, it looks like you know, obviously it looks like I'm, we're fighting."*

- Officer Adams stated, *"That is the stuff we do sometimes, that is on the video. I don't know why we got outside. I don't know why that happened. Normally that's in the bedroom, but, that's kinda, that's that."*

Investigator's Note: This statement contradicts Officer Adams statements during his administrative interrogation that he and Victim *have engaged in the same type of sexual role-playing behavior throughout their house and in their backyard.* ***(Exhibit 12.d, page 189, lines 12-15; and page 212, lines 7-15)***

- On March 21, 2024, after Victim had delayed providing a statement for three (3) weeks, Victim was contacted by Detective Perez and provided a statement via telephone. During that interview, Victim was reluctant to provide a statement regarding the information she reported to the SDSD deputies. Detective Perez asked about Victim's history of alleged violence with Officer Adams and described the video Victim shared with the SDSD deputies. Victim related the video as described sounded familiar, but she did not feel comfortable

trying to speculate on the context or details of the video or other reported incidents due to the length of time that had passed since they had occurred. Victim said she did not think she still had the video as she encountered several issues with her phone. Detective Perez described a simplified version of what he saw on the video. Victim disputed Detective Perez's semantic description of the event (e.g., whether Officer Adams dragged her in the house or out of the house and whether he dragged her by her ankle or her leg), but she did not directly dispute the context of the actions captured. Victim described suffering from a lack of sleep on the weekend of February 25, 2024, but at no time did she describe the actions captured on video as consensual, pre-determined, or any form of role-playing. Prior to ending the phone interview, Victim expressed her discomfort and desire to end her participation in the investigation but did not relate that her prior report of violence was false. **(Exhibit 08.b)**

- During his administrative interrogation, Officer Adams was shown the video of the incident from July 13, 2023. Officer Adams admitted he was struggling with Victim, overpowered her, and forcibly propelled her out the front door as depicted in the video. Officer Adams claimed the incident was a consensual *"role-playing"* scenario, and a means toward sexual gratification. He and Victim have discussed the use of a *"safe word"* to communicate their desire to change the course of a scenario. The reason he did not stop in response to Victim's cries of, *"Richard, Stop! Stop!"* at the time was because, *"Stop was never a safe word."* **(Exhibit 12.d, page 196, line 16 through page 197, line 11)**. He admitted he did not act with due regard for Victim's safety and well-being, and his actions increased the risk of harm to her **(Exhibit 12.d, page 198, lines 17-25)**.

- Despite the potential ramifications of the pending criminal and administrative cases against him, the potential stifling of military advancement, and the potential discipline he faces with the Department, Officer Adams' has lacked urgency in presenting his account of the events surrounding Victim's contact with SDSD deputies and report of domestic violence, on February 25, 2024, and the investigation into the video from July 13, 2023.

    - On the date of his interrogation, Officer Adams claimed his relationship with Victim was good. She apologized to him after the incident in Poway, and they had reconciled from that dispute. He claimed they had been on vacation together recently and had woken up together in the same bed that morning after being sexually intimate the night before.

    - Officer Adams did not make any attempt to view or learn the contents of the video Victim played for the SDSD deputies on February 25, 2024, at any point after learning of its existence.

- Victim threatened Officer Adams prior to their trip to Poway on February 25, 2024, when she claimed she had a *"video from the house,"* that she would use against him later. **(Exhibit 12.d, page 176, Line 25 through page 177, line 24)**.

- On February 25, 2024, following the dispute in Poway, Officer Adams spoke to Victim on the phone about her contact with the SDSD deputies. During that conversation, Victim advised him *"she showed them everything and showed them a video."* **(Exhibit 12.d, page 96, lines 5-6)**.

- The SBSD began to do follow-up investigatory work on the information Victim reported to SDSD deputies in Poway.

    - Detective Perez attempted to contact Victim on February 28, 2024, three (3) days after the incident in Poway. At that point, Officer Adams assumed he would be contacted by law enforcement regarding the incident. **(Exhibit 12.d, page 175, line 2 through page 176, line 7)**.

    - Detective Perez contacted Officer Adams via telephone on March 18, 2024, approximately 22 days after the incident in Poway. Detective Perez requested to meet Officer Adams in person, later the same day. At the time of the contact, Officer Adams was aware that Detective Perez had not yet obtained a statement from Victim .

    - Officer Adams conveyed that he was caught off-guard when Detective Perez mentioned investigating domestic battery and showed him the video. **(Exhibit 12.d, pages 170-172)**.

- Officer Adams did not inquire with Victim what she reported to the SDSD deputies. **(Exhibit 12.d, page 102, line 4-8, and page 245, lines 6-24)**.

- After learning the contents of the July 13, 2023, video, Officer Adams did not encourage Victim to contact Detective Perez and provide a statement about the video and what she reported to the SDSD deputies. **(Exhibit 12.d, page 245, line 25, through page 249, line 15)**.
- Officer Adams claimed he wanted to give his side of the story to law enforcement, and thought his statement had value, but he neglected to try to provide a statement when he had the opportunity. **(Exhibit 12.d, page 90, line 2, through page 91 line 2; page 94, line 8, through page 95, line 8; and page 203, line 21, through page 207, line 1)**.

- Officer Adams claimed a clerk at the Hampton Inn asked him if the police were on scene for him. Officer Adams told the clerk he did not know why the police were present.

- Officer Adams did not call 9-1-1 himself to provide a statement regarding the events that occurred on February 25, 2024, or to report his concern about Victim's potential intoxication level and her driving away from the scene.

- Officer Adams claimed he went outside after two (2) or three (3) hours, hoping to find Victim, or someone he could talk to.

- SDSD Deputy Danielle Powroznik, SH0765, documented the contact between SDSD deputies and Victim on February 25, 2024, in SDSD Crime/Incident Report #2410775, **(Exhibit 07.c)**. In addition to the domestic dispute that occurred on February 25, 2024, Victim described three (3) additional separate incidents of domestic violence and one (1) incident of violence against Juvenile #1. Throughout an approximately 50-minute contact in which Victim spoke with five (5) different SDSD deputies, Victim maintained a consistent account of details associated with multiple additional incidents of domestic violence she described occurring on or about the following dates:

  <u>June 2022</u>

  - Victim alleged Officer Adams dragged her out of bed, threw her into a TV, dragged her by her ankles, and used his forearm to cut off her airway which caused blood vessels to rupture in her eye. Victim called 9-1-1, but claims she was dishonest with the deputies when they arrived on scene to keep Officer Adams out of trouble. Victim shared two (2) photographs of a sub-conjunctival hemorrhage in her left eye which were captured on SDSD BWC footage **(Exhibit 06.f)**. Victim refused to submit the photographs to the deputies for inclusion with their investigation. **(Exhibit 06.c – 24:59, 42:16)**

  - On or about May 23, 2024, during an administrative interview, Sergeant O'Brien corroborated the occurrence of a police response to Officer Adams' residence in June 2022. Sergeant O'Brien related Officer Adams called him following this incident and the contact from the SBSD. Officer Adams related nothing physical happened between he and Victim, but Victim was highly intoxicated and alleged Officer Adams dragged her out of bed by her ankles. At the request of SBSD deputies, Officer Adams stayed somewhere else for the night. **(Exhibit 10.a)**

  - On or about June 20, 2024, during his administrative interrogation, Officer Adams stated Victim lied to SDSD deputies regarding this incident. Officer Adams related he and

Victim had been drinking alcohol that day and were arguing with each other. There were accusations of infidelity between he and Victim, and he went through Victim's cell phone. During the argument, both he and Victim were angry and raised their voices toward each other, but Officer Adams denied any physical contact occurred between them. The SBSD responded to their house but did not take a report of the incident. Officer Adams voluntarily left the house that night and stayed with a friend. Officer Adams related he did not recall ever seeing Victim with a sub-conjunctival hemorrhage in her eye. **(Exhibit 12.d)**

Investigator's Note: Due to a data breach in 2023, the SBSD unable to access any reports, dispatch logs, or audio files of any events between April 23, 2019, and April 7, 2023.

May 14, 2023

- Victim alleged Officer Adams threw her to the ground and her head struck a brick fireplace. Juvenile #1 witnessed the confrontation and called 9-1-1. SBSD deputies responded to the residence, but both Victim and Juvenile #1, were dishonest with deputies upon their arrival to keep Officer Adams out of trouble and no report was taken. **(Exhibit 06.e – 17:01, Exhibit 06.c – 25:18, 34:04, 38:28)**

- The 9-1-1 audio obtained from the SBSD memorialized the distress in Juvenile #1's voice as she reported the incident. Juvenile #1 stated, *"Can somebody come because my stepdad's throwing my mom around."* At that point in the call a distinct and noticeable change in Juvenile #1's demeanor occurred. She became distracted and took long pauses before answering questions. Juvenile #1 advised Victim was not injured but stated *"he threw her off a chair."* Juvenile #1 then related she no longer wanted the police to respond and stated, *"I don't want to start a problem on Mother's Day."* **(Exhibit 09.b)**

Investigator's Note: The audio recording does not pick up any other voices, or conversation, however Juvenile #1's shift in cadence and sudden change in demeanor is indicative that Juvenile #1 was distracted by Victim or Officer Adams while she was on the phone, which coincides with Officer Adams statement that both he and Victim walked into the backyard where Juvenile #1 was already on the phone.

- On or about May 23, 2024, during his administrative interview, Sergeant O'Brien related Officer Adams called him following this incident and the contact from the SBSD and advised he and Victim got into a *"heated argument."* Officer Adams related alcohol was involved in the argument, but there was no physical altercation and no report taken the following regarding the incident. **(Exhibit 10.a)**

- On or about June 20, 2024, during his administrative interrogation, Officer Adams stated Victim lied to SDSD deputies regarding this incident. Officer Adams related that he and Victim were in an argument and raising their voices towards each other. Victim was angry at him about an interaction on one (1) of his social media posts and threw a beer stein at him, which struck and broke a mirror in their bedroom. Officer Adams claimed Juvenile #1 was outside in the backyard and could not have seen him or Victim from her vantage point. Officer Adams insisted Juvenile #1 merely heard the argument between Victim and himself, heard the glass shattering, and called 9-1-1 because she was scared. He and Victim walked outside during their argument and discovered Juvenile #1 was already on the phone with the 9-1-1 operator. Victim spoke with Juvenile #1, but Officer Adams did not hear what was said. Officer Adams went back inside the house, and Victim came in approximately 30 seconds later. He and Victim waited silently until SBSD deputies arrived at the house. Officer Adams spoke with the deputies in the front yard, and he did not see or hear Victim speak with them. Officer Adams did not show the deputies the broken glass, and said he was unaware if they saw it at all. Officer Adams stated there was no contact between himself and Victim. **(Exhibit 12.d)**

  - Officer Adams claimed he told responding deputies the truth when they arrived on May 14, 2023. This is contradictory to his statement that he did not show deputies the broken mirror and told them that the argument was verbal only. **(Exhibit 12.d, page 131, line 17, through page 132 line 7; and page 142, line 20, through page 143, line 22)**.

Investigator's Note: Officer Adams' assertion Juvenile #1 was unable to see anything from her vantage point presupposes that Juvenile #1 was in the same location where Officer Adams saw her upon walking into the backyard. By Officer Adams own account, he was only relatively aware of Juvenile #1's actions until learning of the pending response from the SBSD. Regardless of Officer Adams' claim, the sound of his argument with Victim *was severe enough, that when it was heard in conjunction with glass breaking inside the house, led Juvenile #1 to believe peril was afoot.*

February 10, 2024

- Victim alleged Officer Adams followed her around their house yelling at her and making accusations against her. Officer Adams then grabbed her wrist causing her to drop a glass, which shattered upon impact with the ground. Officer Adams yelled at her, accused her of making a mess in *"his"* house, grabbed her by the neck, threw her on the ground, punched her twice in the face with a closed fist, kicked her in the stomach, and told her she was *"trash"* and to *"stop acting like a victim."* Victim claimed she was unable to call 9-1-1 on this occasion due to Officer Adams having taken possession of her cell phone. **(Exhibit 06.c – 26:45, 35:17, Exhibit #06.e – 18:53)**

- On or about June 20, 2024, during his administrative interrogation, Officer Adams initially stated he did not have an argument with Victim on or about February 10, 2024. After viewing the recording of Victim's statement to SDSD deputies accusing him of domestic battery, Officer Adams corroborated several of Victim's accusations related to their argument that day but denied physically assaulting Victim. Officer Adams admitted Victim came home late from work, which caused an argument between them. He followed Victim around the house yelling at her, including yelling at her about making a mess, but he described it as trying to communicate with her as she was *"walking and talking."* Officer Adams stated Victim then *"comes in, confronts me, and then smashes a glass of wine in my office."* **(Exhibit 12.d, page 156, lines 2-14)**. Officer Adams denied having possession of Victim's phone at any time during the argument, and further related at times she has two (2) phones depending on what job she is working at the time. **(Exhibit 12.d)**

Investigator's Note: Upon hearing her statement to SDSD deputies, Officer Adams immediately recalled the incident, and although he maintained that he did not physically cause her to break the glass she was holding, his description of the events portrays both the minor nature of the argument, and his culpability in the perpetuation of the conflict as he followed Victim *around the house yelling at her as she was walking away.*

February 25, 2024

- Victim alleged she and Officer Adams got into an argument on the night of February 24, 2024. Officer Adams behavior scared her, and she requested he secure his firearm in the hotel lobby safe. On February 25, 2024, Victim advised Officer Adams of her desire to leave the hotel without him. Officer Adams attempted to prevent Victim from leaving the hotel by attempting to take her luggage back to her hotel room, loading his luggage in her car, and standing in and around her car preventing her from leaving. Victim called 9-1-1 and requested law enforcement respond to the scene.

- On or about June 20, 2024, during his administrative interrogation, Officer Adams admitted being upset and arguing with Victim over the fact that there were two (2) beds in the hotel room instead of one (1), and because Victim was eating and spilling popcorn while he was hungry and didn't have anything to eat. Officer Adams related Victim advised him she intended to drive home without him, and they began arguing. Officer Adams loaded their luggage on a bellman's cart, and they continued arguing as they walked to the car. Victim kicked his bags off the cart in the hotel room, and in the hotel lobby. Officer Adams expressed concern that Victim was too intoxicated to safely drive back home, however he denied doing anything physical to

prevent Victim from leaving the hotel. When Victim called 9-1-1, he walked away and sat in the lobby of the hotel for a few hours before arranging for his own ride home.

Investigator's Note: Surveillance video from the Hampton Inn is overwritten every 30 days. By the time of the investigator's inquiry, the footage from February 25, 2024, had already been overwritten.

Investigator's Note: Victim was in close contact with five (5) different SDSD deputies while in the parking lot of the Hampton Inn. During the course of their approximately 50-minute investigation none of the deputies present questioned Victim about her sobriety or her ability to safely operate her vehicle. At the conclusion of their interview, Victim got in her car and drove away in the presence of the deputies.

Investigator's Note: Officer Adams corroborated a significant amount of Victim's statements for each event, stopping before admitting any physical contact or criminal behavior on his part.

- SBSD Detective Perez's Domestic Violence Report #232400513 documented Officer Adams committed misdemeanor domestic battery, a violation of CPC 243(e)(1). The report synopsizes, "*The video captured by SDSD Body worn Cameras depicted domestic battery*." **(Exhibit 08.a)**

- Throughout her initial contact with the SDSD deputies on February 25, 2024, and during her subsequent follow-up interview with Detective Perez on March 21, 2024, Victim exhibited several common characteristics of a victim of domestic violence.

  - During his administrative interrogation, Officer Adams admitted during her contact with SDSD deputies, Victim exhibited several characteristics listed in the Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) domestic violence training curriculum including low self-esteem, fear of further violence, damaged self-image and self-respect, feelings of shame and guilt, self-blame for violence, and fear of retaliation. **(Exhibit 11.c; and Exhibit 12.d, pages 264-284)**

  - Victim has an admitted history of recanting her statements and hiding the truth in the presence of law enforcement in an effort to protect Officer Adams and prevent him from suffering the consequences of his actions.

  - During his administrative interrogation, Officer Adams' representative, Mr. Jason Ewert, provided investigators with a letter, reportedly authored and signed by Victim and submitted to the SBCDAO. In the letter Victim claimed she was angry at Officer Adams and made comments that were "*untrue at the most and exaggerated at the*

least." The letter references Officer Adams peace officer employment, military advancement, and the harmony of the family stating, *"This charge is doing more harm than good for our family now, and the future family we are planning together."* **(Exhibit 12.e)**

Investigator's Note: The tone of the letter corresponds with Victim's *reluctance to cooperate with Detective Perez and is consistent with her history of recanting her allegations of domestic violence once the situation she is in is stabilized. The ambiguous declaration that her prior statements were untrue and exaggerated lacks the specificity expected to be sincerely considered given the gravity of the accusation.*

Prior progressive discipline and training included the following:

- On May 2, 2024, Officer Adams completed California Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) Domestic Violence training. **(Exhibit 05.b)**

Chronological Summary

1. On February 26, 2024, at approximately 0734 hours, Officer Adams contacted Sergeant O'Brien by phone to report an off-duty incident that occurred on February 25, 2024, in Poway, California involving himself and Victim which resulted in a law enforcement response. Sergeant O'Brien notified Lieutenant Broyles of the incident.

2. On February 26, 2024, Lieutenant Broyles contacted the SDSD Poway Station, and spoke with SDSD Sergeant Aaron Ritt, ID 4875. Sergeant Ritt confirmed deputies from SDSD were dispatched to the Hampton Inn in Poway for a report of an altercation. The responding deputies determined no criminal act occurred at that location. Lieutenant Broyles notified Assistant Chief Clark of the incident and the preliminary follow-up conducted.

3. On February 27, 2024, Sergeant Ritt contacted Lieutenant Broyles and related a review of the incident report indicated Victim showed the responding deputies a video from her cell phone and alleged the video showed Officer Adams throwing her on the ground in front of her residence in the town of Location. Sergeant Ritt indicated SDSD was going to forward the video of the altercation to the SBSD for investigation. Lieutenant Broyles notified Assistant Chief Clark of this development.

4. On February 27, 2024, Sergeant O'Brien contacted SBSD Sergeant Omar Lastra to inquire about any criminal investigation into Officer Adams. Sergeant Lastra indicated they were waiting for SDSD's report before assigning a detective to the case and they would notify CHP when that occurred. Lieutenant Broyles was notified.

5. On February 28, 2024, Sergeant Lastra called Sergeant O'Brien to advise they had received SDSD's report and a video of a possible domestic violence incident involving Officer Adams and the case has been assigned to a detective. Sergeant Lastra sent Sergeant O'Brien an email with SDSD's report and video.

6. On February 28, 2024, Sergeant O'Brien, and Lieutenant Broyles reviewed the footage provided by Sergeant Lastra. Lieutenant Broyles notified Assistant Chief Clark of the status of the investigation being conducted by the SBSD.

7. On March 18, 2024, Lieutenant Broyles and Sergeant O'Brien were informed by Sergeant Lastra, SBSD detectives would be contacting Officer Adams for an interview related to the criminal investigation. The interview was scheduled for March 18, 2024, at 1500 hours. Lieutenant Broyles updated Assistant Chief Clark of the status of the investigation.

8. On March 18, 2024, Sergeant Lastra advised Lieutenant Broyles the SBSD had contacted and interviewed Officer Adams at his residence. Sergeant Lastra informed Officer Adams he was being investigated for a domestic violence criminal case where he was a suspect.

9. On March 19, 2024, Officer Adams contacted Sergeant O'Brien and advised he was under criminal investigation by the SBSD for domestic violence. Sergeant O'Brien advised Officer Adams of the Employee Assistance Program and Officer Adams related he was fine and fit for duty. Sergeant O'Brien then notified Lieutenant Broyles, who then notified Assistant Chief Clark.

10. On March 26, 2024, SBSO Sergeant Lastra contacted Lieutenant Broyles and advised the completed criminal report for 243(e)(1) CPC, was sent to the SBCDAO for review. Lieutenant Broyles notified Assistance Chief Clark of the case update.

11. On April 15, 2024, Officer Adams contacted Sergeant O'Brien and advised Victim had received a letter from the SBCDAO stating she was being identified as a victim of Domestic Violence.

12. On April 15, 2024, Sergeant Lowe contacted Sergeant Lastra to verify the status of the criminal case. Sergeant Lastra advised the SBCDAO filed one (1) count of 243(e)(1) CPC against Officer Adams. Sergeant Lastra confirmed Officer Adams has a mandatory court date of May 22, 2024.

    Lieutenant Broyles notified Assistant Chief Clark of the case update, and notification was made to Chief Minor, who made the decision to initiate an internal investigation.

13. On April 16, 2024, Morongo Basin Area Sergeant Lowe, served Officer Adams with a Removal of Peace Officer Powers memorandum, and took possession of Officer Adams' service weapon, ID card and badge.

14. On April 17, 2024, Office of Internal Affairs (OIA) Lieutenant Matt Massod, ID 17920, met with OIA Sergeant Scott Mason, ID 18831, to discuss the circumstances of the investigation. Sergeant Mason was assigned as the primary investigator and OIA Sergeant Jeff Carlisle, ID 17191, was assigned as the secondary investigator.

15. On April 18, 2024, Lieutenant Massod obtained the following documents from Lieutenant Broyles and shared them with Sergeant Mason:
    a. CN 24107775.1 - San Diego County Sheriff's Department (SDSD) Crime/Incident Report. **(Exhibit 07.c)**
    b. CN 25107775.2 - SDSD Follow-Up Report. **(Exhibit 07.d)**
    c. 232400513 – SBSD Criminal Report. **(Exhibit 08.a)**

d. Removal of Peace Officer Powers memorandum. **(Exhibit 14)**

16. On April 19, 2024, Sergeant Mason contacted the Hampton Inn on Stowe Dr. in Poway, CA to inquire about surveillance video of the February 25, 2024. Assistant General Manager, Ivan, confirmed that surveillance video at the property is overwritten every 30 days, and the video from February 25, 2024, had already been overwritten.

17. On April 19, 2024, Sergeant Mason contacted SDSD Detective Vernon Willis, ID SH9925, and requested all evidence and digital recordings associated with SDSO report #24107775. Detective Willis advised he would transfer the evidence to a DVD and mail it to Sergeant Mason.

18. On April 19, 2024, Sergeant Mason left a voicemail message on the Detective mailbox at SBSD, Yucca Valley Station, requesting a call back for follow up information on SBSD case 232400513.

19. On April 25, 2024, Sergeant Mason sent an email to Lieutenant Broyles requesting personnel file documents from Officer Adams' personnel file.

20. On April 26, 2024, Sergeant Mason received the requested Body Worn Camera (BWC) footage from Detective Willis. The footage came on five (5) DVDs, **(Exhibit 06)**.

21. On April 26, 2024, Sergeant Mason left a voicemail for Sergeant Lastra, requesting contact for follow up information. Sergeant Lastra contacted Sergeant Mason and agreed to provide copies of SBSD digital evidence.

22. On April 30, 2024, Officer Adams informed Sergeant Lowe he had an upcoming court date on Tuesday May 7, 2024, at Victorville Superior Court regarding the pending domestic violence criminal case.

23. From April 30, 2024, through May 12, 2024, Sergeant Mason was on vacation.

24. On May 7, 2024, Sergeant Mason received a copy of the following items:
    a. Audio recording of SBSD Detective Jose Perez's, ID G6923 contact with Officer Adams. **(Exhibit 08.c)**
    b. Copy of SBSD Call History Log for Police Event #YV231340011. **(Exhibit 09.a)**

25. On May 8, 2024, Sergeant Mason received a copy of the audio recording of Detective Perez's contact with Victim. **(Exhibit 08.b)**

26. On May 13, 2024, Sergeant Mason received the following documents from Lieutenant Broyles:

a. Three (3) CHP 118¸ *Performance Appraisal – Officer*, for Officer Adams, covering the years 2021 – 2024. **(Exhibit 03)**
b. CHP 18¸ *Annual Internal Investigation Policy Review*, signed by Officer Adams. **(Exhibit 04.b)**
c. Signed copies of General Order (G.O.) 0.8¸ *Professional Values*. **(Exhibits 04.a, 04.c)**
d. Officer Adams Domestic Violence training certificate dated May 2, 2024. **(Exhibit 05.b)**

27. On May 13, 2024, Sergeant Mason began reviewing all evidence associated with the investigation and preparing interview questions for Victim.

28. On May 14, 2024, Sergeant Mason received access to SBSD BWC footage from their contact with Officer Adams. The footage was downloaded and added to the investigative file. **(Exhibit 08.d)**

29. On May 15, 2024, Sergeant Mason with concurrence from Lieutenant Massod decided not to attempt an interview with Victim at that time, due to her uncooperative nature and compromised position cohabitating with Officer Adams.

30. On May 15, 2024, Sergeant Mason began preparing questions for the interrogation of Officer Adams.

31. On May 15, 2024, Sergeant Mason accessed the San Bernardino County Court Access Portal (SBCCAP) to check the status of the criminal case. The case was set for a pre-trial hearing on June 11, 2024. **(Exhibit 13.a)**

32. On May 16, 2024, Sergeant Mason began isolating clips from the SDSO BWC footage for possible presentation in an interrogation.

33. On May 16, 2024, OIA Sergeant Joel Holly, ID 20741, replaced Sergeant Carlisle as the secondary investigator on the case, due to Sergeant Carlisle's promotion to Lieutenant.

34. On May 20, 2024, Sergeant Mason gathered applicable policy and law exhibits and prepared them for the interrogation. **(Exhibit 01, Exhibit 02)**

35. On May 22, 2024, Sergeant Mason received an Employee Training Record System printout of Officer Adams' domestic violence training history from Sergeant O'Brien, **(Exhibit 05.a)**. Additionally, Sergeant Mason scheduled an interview with Sergeant O'Brien for May 23, 2024.

36. On May 22, 2024, Sergeant Mason contacted Border Communications Center and Barstow Communication Center, and confirmed there was no record of any incoming 9-1-1 calls from Victim's or Juvenile #1's mobile phone numbers.

37. On May 22, 2024, Sergeant Mason requested and received audio of the 9-1-1 call, as well as the dispatch log for from SDSO Detective Willis, regarding their contact on February 25, 2024. **(Exhibit 07.a, 07.b)**

38. On May 23, 2024, Sergeant Mason and Sergeant Holly conducted a telephonic interview with Sergeant O'Brien. The interview was audio recorded and summarized on a memorandum. Sergeant O'Brien subsequently provided documentation of Officer Adams' special day off requests. **(Exhibit 10)**

39. On May 23, 2024, Sergeant Mason contacted Morongo Basin Area Sergeant Jason Melvin, ID 16455, via telephone. Sergeant Melvin related he has not had much contact with Officer Adams and did not have any information to provide to the investigation.

40. On May 24, 2024, Sergeant Mason requested audio of Juvenile #1's 9-1-1 call to SBSD on May 14, 2023.

41. On May 24, 2024, Sergeant Mason unsuccessfully attempted to contact the San Bernardino County Court, Victorville District, and requested assistance from Lieutenant Broyles to make contact. Sergeant Mason and Sergeant Holly met with Lieutenant Massod to discuss the status of the investigation.

42. On May 29, 2024, Sergeant Mason left a voicemail message for San Bernardino County District Attorney (SBCDA) Justine Jung requesting a return call to discuss Officer Adams' case.

43. On May 30, 2024, Sergeant Mason spoke with Lieutenant Broyles and gave him an update on the status of the investigation.

44. On June 3, 2024, Sergeant Mason received a voicemail message from SBCDA Jung advising she was not able to talk about the case due to the case still being open.

45. On June 4, 2024, Sergeant Mason contacted Lieutenant Broyles to coordinate a location to conduct Officer Adams' interrogation.

46. On June 6, 2024, Sergeant Mason received 9-1-1 audio from the SBSD, from the incident on May 14, 2023. **(Exhibit 09.b)**

47. On June 10, 2024, Sergeant Mason prepared a *Notice of Administrative Interrogation* memorandum for Officer Adams. The notice was sent to Lieutenant Broyles for review and service.

48. On June 10, 2024, Sergeant O'Brien advised Sergeant Mason, the abandoned Joshua Tree Elementary School was available and confirmed for Officer Adams' interrogation.

49. On June 11, 2024, Sergeant Lowe served Officer Adams with the Notice of Administrative Interrogation, for June 20, 2024. **(Exhibit 12.a)**

50. On June 11, 2024, Sergeant Mason accessed the SBCCAP and noted Officer Adams' criminal case had been set for jury trial on July 22, 2024. **(Exhibit 13.b)**

51. On June 14, 2024, Sergeant Mason gathered applicable domestic violence investigation training material from POST to be used in the interrogation. **(Exhibit 11)**

52. On June 15, 2024, Sergeant Mason accessed the SBCCAP and printed Officer Adams' criminal case information. **(Exhibit 13.c)**

53. On June 20, 2024, at 0814 hours, Sergeant Mason and Sergeant Holly, began the administrative interrogation of Officer Adams. The interrogation ended at 1506 hours. Officer Adams' chosen representative, Mr. Jason Ewert, an attorney, from Mastagni-Holstedt was present for the duration of the interrogation. All parties signed the CHP 8, *Administrative Interrogation Record,* except for Mr. Ewert, who refused. **(Exhibit 12.b)**

    The audio of the interrogation was recorded by the investigators, and Mr. Ewert. The audio was transferred to a disc and booked into evidence at the OIA. **(Exhibit 12.c)**

    During the interrogation, Mr. Ewert provided a one (1) page document which appeared to be a letter written by Victim to the San Bernardino County Court to be included in the investigation file. **(Exhibit 12.e)**

54. On June 21, 2024, OIA Officer Jeffrey Wilkie, ID 16907, uploaded the audio recording from Officer Adams' administrative interrogation to Northern California Court Reporters (NCCR) for transcription.

55. On June 25, 2024, Sergeant Mason provided Lieutenant Broyles with an update on the case status.

56. On July 2, 2024, Officer Wilkie received the transcripts of the audio recordings from Officer Adams' administrative interrogation and forwarded them to Sergeant Mason.

57. On July 2, 2024, through July 3, 2024, the transcripts of the audio recordings from Officer Adams' administrative interrogation were verified by Sergeant Mason. **(Exhibit 12.d)**

58. On July 5, 2024, Lieutenant Broyles contacted Sergeant Mason to advise Officer Adams was placed on the Brady List in San Bernardino County.

59. On July 10, 2024, Sergeant Mason retrieved the criminal case information from the SBCCAP. **(Exhibit 13.c)**

60. On July 17, 2024, Sergeant Mason booked the administrative evidence into the OIA evidence locker (E2024-0022-031). **(Exhibit 15)**

61. On July 18, 2024, Sergeant Mason accessed the SBCCAP and printed Officer Adams' updated criminal case information. **(Exhibit 13.d)**

62. From July 22, 2024, to July 28, 2024, Sergeant Mason was on vacation.

63. On July 31, 2024, Sergeant Mason accessed the SBCCAP and printed Officer Adams' updated criminal case information. The case was set for trial on August 9, 2024. **(Exhibit 13.e)**

64. On July 31, 2024, at approximately 1100 hours, Sergeant Mason left a voicemail message for Victim requesting she return the call.

65. On August 2, 2024, at approximately 1335 hours, Sergeant Mason again attempted to contact Victim via telephone. Victim answered the call, and advised she was not prepared to provide a statement on the advice of her attorney.

Exhibits

1. California Highway Patrol Policy
    a. General Order (G.O.) 0.1., *Departmental Mission Statement and Organizational Values*
    b. G.O. 0.8, *Professional Values*
    c. G.O. 0.13, *Oath of Allegiance, Code of Honor, and Code of Ethics*
    d. Highway Patrol Manual 10.3, *Personnel Transactions Manual,* Chapter 14, *Inconsistent and Incompatible Activities*

2. California Legal Codes
    a. California Penal Code (CPC) 242 - *Battery*
    b. CPC 243 – *Domestic Battery*
    c. CPC 273.5 – *Domestic Battery Causing Injury*
    d. CPC 136.1 – *Dissuade a Victim from Making a Report*
    e. CPC 236 – *False Imprisonment*

3. Officer Adams' CHP 118, *Performance Appraisal – Officer*
    a. 01/05/2021 – 01/04/2022
    b. 01/05/2022 – 01/04/2023
    c. 01/05/2023 – 01/04/2024

4. Officer Adams' Personnel File Documents
    a. G.O. 0.8 – Signed by Officer Adams
    b. CHP 18, *Annual Internal Investigation Policy Review*
    c. CHP PRIDE – Signed by Officer Adams

5. Officer Adams' Training Records
    a. Employee Training Record System Domestic Violence Training History
    b. Domestic Violence Training Certificate 05/02/2024

6. San Diego County Sheriff's Department Body Worn Camera (BWC) Footage
    a. Deputy Johnson #0888
    b. Deputy McKemy #3119
    c. Deputy Powroznik #0765
    d. Deputy Marooki #0246
    e. Deputy Velarde #6578
    f. Screen captures of [redacted] reported petechiae

7. San Diego County Sheriff's Department Report, February 25, 2024
    a. 9-1-1 Audio of call from [redacted]
    b. Dispatch Log

c. Initial Crime/Incident Report 24107775.1
d. Follow up Crime/Incident Report 24107775.2

8. San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department 243(3)(1) PC Case
   a. Criminal Report 232400513
   b. Recorded Telephonic Interview with Victim
   c. Recorded In-Person Interview with Officer Adams
   d. Detective Ables BWC Footage of Interview with Officer Adams

9. Documentation of May 14, 2023, Incident
   a. San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department Call History Log
   b. Audio Recording of Juvenile #1's 9-1-1 Call to the SBSD

10. Interview with Sergeant Randy O'Brien, ID 17977
    a. Audio Recording of Interview with Sergeant O'Brien
    b. CHP 51, *Memorandum*, Summary of Interview with Sergeant O'Brien
    c. Officer Adams' Special Days Off Request Emails
    d. Sergeant O'Brien's Text Thread with Officer Adams

11. Commission On Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) Material
    a. Domestic Violence Definition
    b. Dominant Aggressor Definition
    c. Batterer and Victim Characteristics
    d. Domestic Violence Response Update Course Outline
    e. Sub-conjunctival Hemorrhage Activity Slide
    f. Petechiae Activity Slide

12. Officer Adams Interrogation
    a. Notice of Administrative Interrogation, signed by Officer Adams
    b. CHP 8, *Administrative Interrogation Record,* signed June 20, 2024
    c. Audio of Interrogation of Officer Adams
    d. Certified Transcription of Interrogation
    e. One (1) Page Letter, submitted by Mr. Ewert during the interrogation

13. San Bernardino County Superior Court Case Documents
    a. Portal Minute Order (5/7/2024)
    b. Portal Minute Order (6/11/2024)
    c. San Bernardino County case information MVI240001514
    d. Portal Minute Order (7/18/2024)
    e. Portal Minute Order (7/19/2024)

14. Removal of Peace Officer Powers Memorandum

15. CHP 36, *Property Receipt,* evidence #E2024-0022-031.

"I have used all reasonable diligence in preparing this investigation. To the best of my knowledge the information contained herein is a true and complete representation of my investigative efforts and includes all information."

S. MASON, Sergeant

8/9/24
Date