



Office of the Washington State Auditor
Pat McCarthy

Compliance Audit Report

Reviewing Investigations of Police Use of Deadly Force

Yakima Valley Special Investigations Unit – The Moises Bello-Medina Case

**Use of Deadly Force Incident on January 23, 2022, by the Yakima Police
Department**

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Office of the Washington State Auditor

Pat McCarthy

July 28, 2025

Lt. Mark Lewis
Yakima Valley Special Investigations Unit

Report on Use of Deadly Force Investigation Audit

Attached is the official report on our audit of the investigation into the use of deadly force on January 23, 2022, that resulted in injury to Moises Bello-Medina.

The audit assessed the Yakima Police Department's and the Yakima Valley Special Investigations Unit's compliance with state laws and rules regarding independent investigations of police use of deadly force as defined in WAC 139-12-030.

Our independent audits provide essential accountability and transparency regarding police use of deadly force investigations. These audits are valuable to the Legislature, law enforcement agencies and the public in assessing police accountability efforts.

If you are a member of the media and have questions about this report, please contact Assistant Director of Communications Adam Wilson at (564) 999-0799. Otherwise, please contact Use of Deadly Force Investigations Program Manager Michael Huynh at (564) 999-0831.

Pat McCarthy, State Auditor

Olympia, WA

cc: Monica Alexander, Executive Director, Criminal Justice Training Commission
Steve Strachan, Executive Director, Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs
Kevin Briggs, Assistant State Auditor

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Results in Brief

Yakima Valley Special Investigations Unit (YVSIU) investigators and officers involved in the use of force incident complied with many of the requirements to ensure the investigation of the shooting that injured Moises Bello-Medina was independent, transparent, credible and communicated to the public timely, as state laws and rules require. These actions included, but were not limited to, relinquishing control of the scene to YVSIU once investigators arrived, maintaining a perimeter around the scene, and assigning two community representatives to participate in the investigation.

We found some instances in which YVSIU did not follow state rules, and opportunities where it could improve documentation. Specifically, we found YVSIU did not:

- Require one investigator and both community representatives to complete a conflict of interest assessment. Two investigators also did not complete assessments within 72 hours of starting the investigation. YVSIU's conflict of interest assessment also did not meet or exceed the standards of the Criminal Justice Training Commission's assessment.
- Ensure the community representatives reviewed investigators' conflict of interest assessments within 72 hours of starting the investigation.

We also found that YVSIU did not maintain documentation showing that it:

- Provided public updates for two weeks in the three-week investigation
- Provided the community representatives with advance notice of the press releases
- Notified Bello-Medina's family of significant developments throughout the investigation or give them advance notice of any press releases
- Restricted access to the case file to YVSIU members involved in the investigation. The YVSIU commander said the case management system only maintains user access information for two years after a case is closed.

Recommendations

We recommend YVSIU:

- Ensure community representatives and all investigators complete a conflict of interest assessment within 72 hours of starting the investigation
- Work with the Criminal Justice Training Commission (CJTC) to develop a conflict of interest assessment that "meets or exceeds" the CJTC's standard form. In past audits, we recommended the CJTC issue guidance on how an investigation team's assessment could meet or exceed the requirements. The CJTC responded that team-developed forms need to elicit the same responses as the standard form's questions
- Maintain documentation in future case files to demonstrate compliance with all state requirements

BACKGROUND

Use of Deadly Force Incident

The following summary of events is based on the investigation's case files:

On January 23, 2022, at about 10:50 a.m., a 911 caller said a neighbor, Moises Bello-Medina, was pointing a gun at houses. A Yakima Police Department officer arrived in the neighborhood, and one of the neighbors pointed out that Bello-Medina was driving away in a car that had been parked in another neighbor's driveway. The officer shared this information over the radio with other officers, saying there was probable cause to arrest Bello-Medina for pointing the gun.

Officers found Bello-Medina driving nearby and tried to pull him over. Bello-Medina drove around at low speeds for about 10 minutes before he collided with another car while he was driving in the wrong direction. Bello-Medina got out of the car holding the gun. Officers ordered him to drop the gun. Officers said he then chambered a round and pointed the gun at Yakima Police Department officers Dylan Alte and Christopher Taylor. Alte and Taylor then fired a combined 22 rounds, striking Bello-Medina once in the left shoulder and also grazing his head.

Bello-Medina tried to run away at the same time that Yakima Police Department officer Adam Schilperoort drove his patrol SUV to the intersection. Bello-Medina ran toward Schilperoort's SUV while pointing the gun toward the SUV. Schilperoort then drove his SUV into Bello-Medina, knocking him down and causing him to drop the gun. A Yakima Police Department sergeant notified dispatch about the shooting and requested paramedics.

Taylor and other responding officers handcuffed Bello-Medina and provided first aid. Paramedics arrived and took Bello-Medina to a hospital, where he was treated for his injuries and released a couple days later. He was then booked into jail.

The Yakima Valley Special Investigations Unit (YVSIU), an independent investigation team (IIT) that investigates police use of deadly force incidents in Yakima County, responded to the shooting scene. Investigators from the Selah Police Department led the investigation with assistance from the Washington State Patrol and the Grandview, Moxee, Sunnyside and Union Gap police departments.

On February 11, 2022, YVSIU submitted the investigation to the Yakima County Prosecuting Attorney's Office. A prosecutor reviewed the case and wrote in a memo on February 12, 2025, that they would not file charges against Alte, Schilperoort or Taylor.

Independent Investigation Teams

Voters approved Initiative 940 in 2018. It ensures that one of an IIT's key functions is to investigate police use of deadly force incidents. The initiative requires investigations of police use of deadly force be conducted by an agency completely independent of the one with the involved officer(s). Regional IITs allow law enforcement agencies to respond quickly to use of deadly force incidents while keeping the involved agency out of the investigation. IITs are made up of command staff, detectives and other crime scene investigators from law enforcement agencies in a given region. An IIT also consists of volunteers, called non-law enforcement community representatives, who help give the community perspective during an investigation.

Washington has 17 IITs throughout the state. Many of these teams existed before recent police reform and accountability laws, including Initiative 940, and allowed law enforcement agencies to pool resources for major investigations. Prohibiting the involved agency from participating in these investigations was meant to improve their impartiality and independence by preventing people who are more likely to have a personal relationship with the involved officers from investigating the incident.

The initiative tasked the Washington State Criminal Justice Commission (CJTC) with adopting rules to govern these investigations. The CJTC adopted Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 139-12-030, which requires independent use of deadly force investigations to meet four key principles:

- Independence – the involved agency cannot have undue influence or the appearance of undue influence on the investigation.
- Transparency – community members are able to assess whether the investigation is conducted in a trustworthy manner and complies with the standards defined in state laws and rules.
- Communication – the IIT must communicate the investigation's progress to the public and family of the person killed or harmed by police use of deadly force.
- Credibility – use of deadly force investigations follow best practices for criminal investigations, and investigators meet necessary training requirements and demonstrate ethical behavior and impartiality.

Audit Objective

State law (RCW 43.101.460) requires the Office of the Washington State Auditor to audit all investigations into police use of deadly force resulting in death, substantial bodily harm or great bodily harm.

To determine whether the Yakima Police Department and YVSIU complied with state laws and rules in the investigation of the use of deadly force incident that occurred on January 23, 2022, we reviewed investigative files related to the case, reviewed training records held by the CJTC and member police agencies, and interviewed IIT members, including community representatives. We assessed the involved agencies and IIT's compliance with each of the requirements under the key principles in WAC 139-12-030. This included whether the IIT followed the CJTC's published best practices for conducting homicide investigations.

This report outlines the steps the investigation team took to meet each of these key principles. Appendix A contains information about our methodology.

AUDIT RESULTS

Appendix A outlines our Office's authority and methodology for this audit. In short, state law (RCW 43.101.460) requires the Office of the Washington State Auditor to audit all investigations into police use of deadly force resulting in death, substantial bodily harm or great bodily harm. Our charge is to assess whether the investigations complied with relevant rules and laws. The audit only reviewed the investigation. It did not assess the incident itself or whether the use of force was justified.

Independence

To ensure the investigation was conducted independently of the involved agency, YVSIU investigators assumed control of the scene upon arrival and excluded investigators from the Yakima Police Department. Alte and Taylor shot Bello-Medina at about 11:05 a.m. A Yakima Police Department captain called the YVSIU commander at about 11:30 a.m. YVSIU investigators removed all Yakima Police Department officers from the scene by 12:30 p.m., and took control of the investigation.

We did not find evidence that any YVSIU members shared investigative information with the Yakima Police Department or that any Yakima Police Department employees took part in the investigation.

Transparency

To help improve transparency, YVSIU included two community representatives in the investigation. WAC 139-12-030 requires IITs to include at least two community representatives in each investigation. Community representatives are volunteers, not law enforcement agency employees, who provide community perspective on key processes in use of deadly force investigations. They must complete a confidentiality agreement and have access to the completed investigation file.

The YVSIU commander called the first community representative on January 23, 2022, the day of the shooting. She agreed to participate in the investigation and went to the shooting scene, signed a confidentiality form and was briefed on the incident that day. The IIT commander called the second community representative the next day and arranged to meet him on January 28, 2022, when he then signed his confidentiality agreement.

The YVSIU confidentiality agreement states that the community representatives will have access to the completed case file. The IIT commander noted in his narrative report that he contacted both community representatives about reviewing the file before it was given to the prosecutor. We spoke to one of the community representatives, who told us he knew that he could review the case file once the investigation was completed.

Communication

YVSIU did not maintain documentation of their compliance with some of the WAC's communication requirements. The WAC requires the involved agency or IIT to notify the family of the person who was killed or injured by the use of force and provide updates on significant developments. The IIT must also post weekly public updates on the investigation's progress, even if there is no new information to report. Community representatives and the family must receive advance notice of these public updates.

The YVSIU commander said the team compiled the completed case file and delivered a physical copy to the Yakima County Prosecutor's Office. However, the Prosecutor's Office could not find the completed file when the commander requested it for the audit. The commander provided documents he was able to find digital copies of, but said the case management system that held the digital copies of relevant documents likely did not contain everything related to the investigation. He provided YVSIU's initial press release from the three-week investigation, but could not find any other press releases. We reviewed articles published online during the investigation and found several cited YVSIU as providing information. However, we could not determine if YVSIU issued press releases in the final two weeks of its investigation.

We also could not determine if YVSIU provided the family with advance notice of the press releases or significant updates in the investigation; nor could we determine if YVSIU gave the community representatives advanced notice of the press releases.

One community representative who participated in this investigation said he thinks he received advance notice of the press releases but could not be sure. A checklist that the YVSIU commander filled out also indicated YVSIU provided advance notice of the press releases to the community representatives.

The WAC prohibits IITs and involved agencies from providing the media with criminal background information about the person against whom deadly force has been used, unless it is specifically requested and the release of such information is required by law. We found no evidence that YVSIU or the involved agency provided criminal background information to the media. We reviewed the press release, several online news articles, and the social media pages for the Union Gap and Yakima police departments and found no indication that either YVSIU or the involved agency released criminal background information.

Credibility

Crime Scene Investigation

Responding officers from the Yakima Police Department and surrounding agencies secured the scene. Officers used their patrol cars and caution tape to mark inner and outer perimeters around the scene and guarded the area. Yakima Police Department officers also located and marked evidence at the scene before YVSIU investigators arrived.

YVSIU investigators photographed and mapped the scene using a 3D scanner and an aerial drone. They collected and inventoried evidence from the scene including the officers' shell casings, Bello-Medina's gun and Schilperoort's patrol SUV. Investigators photographed Alte, Taylor and Schilperoort with their equipment at the Yakima Police Department and counted their remaining rounds of ammunition. They also collected Bello-Medina's clothing from the hospital before he was released.

Investigators collected and reviewed dash camera footage from the Yakima Police Department patrol cars that responded to the scene and surveillance camera footage from surrounding businesses. They also reviewed surveillance camera footage from one of the houses Bello-Medina pointed his gun at.

Interviewing Involved Officers and Witnesses

Yakima Police Department supervisors took the necessary steps to protect the integrity of the involved officers' statements. The CJTC's best practices require involved officers to be separated and removed from the scene, and they prohibit involved and witness officers from discussing the case with any other witnesses until they provide statements to the IIT. Yakima Police Department policy also requires supervisors to separate involved officers and to direct them to not discuss the incident with other officers.

Once the scene was secure a Yakima Police Department supervisor directed Alte, Taylor and Schilperoort not to discuss the incident with anyone except legal counsel before providing a statement to YVSIU investigators. Alte, Taylor and Schilperoort stood by the supervisor at the scene until Yakima County Sheriff's deputies drove them to the Yakima Police Department separately.

On February 15, 2022, the YVSIU commander spoke with Alte, Schilperoort and Taylor's lawyer about obtaining their statements. The three officers submitted their written statements to YVSIU on February 25, 2022.

Two Yakima Police Department officers and one Yakima County Sheriff's deputy witnessed the shooting and completed their narrative reports on January 24, 2022, the day after the shooting. Other responding Yakima Police Department officers wrote their narrative reports on the day of the shooting.

YVSIU investigators interviewed eight witnesses, including members of Bello-Medina's family, the owner of the car Bello-Medina drove while involved in this incident, a driver who saw the shooting and the driver of the truck Bello-Medina collided with.

Case File Integrity

We were unable to determine if YVSIU restricted the case file to IIT members assigned to the investigation. During an active investigation, the WAC requires an IIT's case file to be restricted from everyone except for IIT members involved with the investigation. We requested YVSIU's electronic case file access log. The IIT commander said the case management system containing the case file only retains access log records for two years after the case is closed, and they could not generate a log from 2022.

We did not find evidence that any YVSIU members received prohibited information during the investigation. The WAC prohibits IIT members from remaining on an investigation if they receive compelled information that could contaminate the investigation.

Conflicts of Interest

YVSIU met some of the requirements to assess potential conflicts of interest with the involved officers. The WAC requires all IIT investigators and community representatives to complete a conflict of interest assessment within 72 hours of starting the investigation. This assessment is supposed to include questions on work and social relationships with the involved officer, as well as questions about potential biases that could affect objectivity. The WAC also requires IITs to use the CJTC's standard conflict of interest form or create one that meets or exceeds its standards.

Most of the investigators assigned to the investigation completed their assessments within the required 72-hour timeframe. However, two investigators completed their assessments after this deadline. The file did not contain conflict assessments for one participating investigator or either community representative.

The community representatives and the IIT commander reviewed the investigators' assessments when the second community representative met with them on January 28, 2022, after the 72-hour deadline. Three investigators said they had previously worked or socialized with at least one of the involved officers. The IIT commander and community representatives concluded those interactions did not present any conflicts. The IIT commander excused a Yakima County Sheriff's crime scene analyst from the investigation because a Yakima County Sheriff's deputy was involved in the pursuit.

YVSIU's conflict of interest assessment did not meet or exceed the CJTC's standards. YVSIU developed its own form that included some questions about potential biases and social and work relationships with the officer involved. In past audits, we recommended the CJTC issue guidance to clarify how an IIT's conflict of interest assessment can meet or exceed the requirements in the WAC when an IIT does not use the CJTC's standard form. The CJTC responded that IIT-developed forms need to elicit the same responses as the standard form's questions. YVSIU's conflict of interest form did not include some key aspects of the CJTC's standard form.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend YVSIU:

- Ensure community representatives and all investigators complete a conflict of interest assessment within 72 hours of starting the investigation
- Work with the Criminal Justice Training Commission (CJTC) to develop a conflict of interest assessment that “meets or exceeds” the CJTC’s standard form. In past audits, we recommended the CJTC issue guidance on how an investigation team’s assessment could meet or exceed the requirements. The CJTC responded that team-developed forms need to elicit the same responses as the standard form’s questions
- Maintain documentation in future case files to demonstrate compliance with all state requirements

INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATION TEAM RESPONSE



YAKIMA VALLEY SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS UNIT

SUBJECT Moises Bello-Medina 22SIU001 SAO Audit report YVSIU response.

July 21, 2025,

Several of the audit findings have already been corrected as the YVSIU has become more familiar with the requirements of the statutes and guidelines set forth by the Legislature and WA CJTC.

- Although we recognize that all investigators are required to complete conflict of interest forms, we learned that the community representatives also needed to complete these forms and not just the confidentiality form over the process of significant changes in YVSIU and several changes at the Command level of the team. We have corrected this practice. We have also updated the form and are now using the WA CJTC suggested form..
- At times additional investigators are brought on after the initial call out and sometimes getting on these additional forms with the community representatives can pose scheduling conflicts. We make every attempt to meet the 72-hour requirement.
- We are now assigning a Team lead supervisor to make sure that the weekly updates are being accomplished, and that they are being sent to the family and community representatives and that the updates are properly documented, prior to being released publicly.

- We are making changes to update the process of maintaining the records of these investigations. With the implementation of the Qualified Lead Investigator role, we will require the agency that the Lead Investigator works for to maintain the original investigative reports.
- We have made changes to the method of restricting access to the case through our RMS. This has at times been problematic, but we have worked with the Yakima County Information Technology department to rectify this process, and we now maintain the communications with the IT department to document the date and time the files are restricted.

Suggestions:

It would be very helpful if the WA CJTC would provide some actual training for IIT Commanders and Lead Investigators. A lot of these changes that have been implemented over the course of these statutes and guidelines, they have just been pushed out and sometimes there is some ambiguity as to how they are to be implemented or accomplished.

Prepared by:

Lieutenant Mark Lewis

YVSIU Commander

Moxee Police Department

APPENDIX A: AUTHORITY, SCOPE, OBJECTIVE AND METHODOLOGY

Authority

In 2018, Washington voters passed Initiative 940, which, in part, required investigations of police use of deadly force be conducted by an agency completely independent of one with the involved officers. It tasked the Washington State Criminal Justice Commission (CJTC) with adopting rules to govern these investigations. In 2019, the CJTC created a workgroup, including stakeholders from community groups and law enforcement agencies to adopt rules for independent investigations. The rules were outlined in Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 139-12-030 and took effect in January 2020.

The rules were designed to help ensure investigations are independent, transparent, credible and communicated timely to the public and affected people. The rules define the elements of an independent investigation, and explain the duties of the involved agency and independent investigation team (IIT) after police use deadly force that results in death, substantial bodily harm or great bodily harm. In 2021, the Legislature amended state law (RCW 43.101.460) to require our Office audit investigations into police use of deadly force to ensure compliance with the new rules.

Scope

This audit assessed whether the Yakima Police Department and the Yakima Valley Special Investigations Unit (YVSIU) complied with state laws and rules regarding the investigation of the use of deadly force that injured Moises Bello-Medina. It reviewed whether the law enforcement agencies met the criteria for independent investigations as outlined in WAC 139-12-030.

By law, the audit only reviewed the investigation. It did not review the use of deadly force incident nor assess whether the use of force was justified.

Objective

This audit examined whether the Yakima Police Department and YVSIU complied with state laws and rules regarding independent investigations of police use of deadly force.

Methodology

To determine whether the Yakima Police Department and YVSIU complied with state laws and rules regarding independent investigations of police use of deadly force, we reviewed investigative files related to the case and interviewed IIT members. We interviewed IIT members to understand their investigative process and how they documented their procedures and findings. We also spoke to the IIT's community representatives to confirm whether they were involved in required processes of the investigation. In the case files, we searched for evidence demonstrating the IIT followed the legal requirements. We also reviewed training records from the CJTC and member police agencies.

APPENDIX B: WAC 139-12-030 COMPLIANCE SUMMARY

Independence

Requirement	Compliant?
The involved agency and/or other first responders will provide or facilitate first aid at the scene if necessary.	Yes
The involved agency will relinquish control of the scene.	Yes
The involved agency will not participate in the investigation.	Yes
Any specialized equipment belonging to the involved agency will be approved by the community representatives and the independent investigation team (IIT) commander before it is used in the investigation.	Not applicable
No information about the ongoing independent investigation of police use of deadly force will be shared with any member of the involved agency.	Yes
The IIT commander will honor requests from the involved agency to release body cam video or other investigation information of urgent public interest.	Not applicable

Transparency

Requirement	Compliant?
A minimum of two non-law enforcement community representatives will be assigned to the IIT investigation.	Yes
The community representatives will:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review conflict of interest statements submitted within 72 hours of the commencement of each investigation 	No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have access to the investigation file when it is completed 	Yes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be provided a copy of all press releases and communication sent to the media prior to release 	Unable to determine
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review notification of equipment use of the involved agency 	Not applicable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The community representatives will sign a confidentiality agreement at the beginning of the investigation. 	No
The IIT will provide public updates about the investigation at a minimum of once per week, even if there is no new progress to report.	Unable to determine
When an independent investigation is complete, the information will be made available to the public in a manner consistent with applicable state law.	Yes

Communication

Requirement	Compliant?
A family member of the person against whom deadly force has been used will be notified of the incident as soon as possible.	Yes
The IIT will assign a family liaison within the first 24 hours of the investigation.	Yes
The family liaison will keep the family informed about all significant developments in the investigation.	Unable to determine
The family liaison will give the family advanced notice of all scheduled press releases.	Unable to determine
Neither the involved agency nor the IIT will provide the media with criminal background information of the person against whom deadly force has been used, unless it is specifically requested, and release of the information is required by the Public Records Act or other applicable laws.	Yes
The involved agency will notify the Governor's Office of Indian Affairs (GOIA) in accordance with RCW 10.114.021 if the person against whom deadly force is used is a member of a federally recognized tribe.	Not applicable
A member of the IIT will be assigned as a tribal liaison within the first 24 hours and keep the tribe (or a representative of the tribe's choice) informed about all significant developments of the investigation.	Not applicable

Credibility

Requirement	Compliant?
The involved agency and other first responders will secure the incident scene and maintain its integrity until the IIT arrives.	Yes
The involved agency and other first responders will locate and preserve evanescent evidence.	Yes
The independent investigation will follow these accepted best practices for homicide investigations published and annually updated by the Washington State Criminal Justice Training Center (CJTC):	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The on-scene venue agency will ensure that until all statements have been taken, involved and witness officers shall not discuss the case with any other witnesses 	Yes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The involved agency or first responders will separate involved officer(s) and remove them from the immediate scene. 	Yes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The IIT will obtain statements from subjects and witnesses. Audio and/or video recording is preferred and should be attempted. 	Yes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews of involved officers should follow the policies of their individual agency, collective bargaining agreement and case law. 	Not applicable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews with emergency medical personnel, fire department personnel, and first responding officers should address conditions at the incident scene. 	Yes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The IIT will canvass the immediate area for potential witnesses who have not come forward and obtain information or statements as available. 	Yes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the event of death, consult with the coroner or medical examiner at the scene and at, or subsequent to, the autopsy. A member of the IIT must attend the autopsy and take all appropriate investigative steps, consistent with other criminal investigations. 	Not applicable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Until the case file is delivered to the prosecutor, access to the IIT case file should be restricted to the IIT members involved. 	Unable to determine
If any member of the IIT receives prohibited information, the investigator receiving the prohibited information must immediately report it to their supervisor and the member must discontinue participation in the investigation.	Not applicable
Within 72 hours of starting the investigation, investigators and community representatives must complete a “conflict of interest” assessment tool regarding any connection to the officers being investigated.	No
The conflict of interest form should assess work and social conflicts and biases. If an IIT uses its own conflict of interest form, the standards must meet or exceed the CJTC’s standard form.	No
The IIT commander will review the conflict of interest assessment within 72 hours of the start of the investigation.	No

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