

# When politics trumps policy

[Politics](#), [President](#)



While the public demand for the criminal justice system to help ensure a safe and secure environment, there are also occasions whereby the public may feel that the criminal justice agencies are actually the one posing unnecessary threats to the society. Issues like the abuse of authority, deadly vehicle pursuits and unauthorized use of weapons are all examples of cases in which the criminal justice system is actually threatening the safety of the public.

This paper will discuss the case of Racin' Ray's Wild Day to examine the issues involved in the decisions made by Ripley as a law enforcing authority. Central Issues The central issue in the case study would be the authority of the police officers to use excessive force as well as to engage in violent pursuits. Due to a previous incident of a violent pursuit ending with the death of a 14 year old teenager, the Pineville County Sheriff's Department is currently facing a lawsuit. As such, the Department has implemented stricter rules and regulations to prevent such accidents from happening again.

However, another key issue which has cropped up would be that of the behavior of Deputy Raymond Ray Ripley who has been observed to be overstepping regulations as well as engaging in activities that are not part of his responsibilities such as to go for extra patrol as well as to engage in the violent pursuit of a vehicle that was not warranted since rules have been implemented to prohibit any pursuit which does not involve any violent felony crime or pose significant threat to the community.

In addition, he is also using weapons which he does not have the authority to use (Peak, 2010). Use-of-force policy Ripley's actions is not compliant with

the use of force policy which states that “ a supervisor [should] cancel any pursuit that does not involve a violent felony crime or other circumstances that would justify the danger and potential liability” . In addition, “ A separate policy prohibits the firing of warning shots unless “ circumstances warrant. ”” (Peak, 2010).

In the given case, Ripley had no evidence to demonstrate that the vehicle he was chasing was involved in any violent felony crime or circumstances that would pose extreme danger. In addition he used his fired warning shots even though the circumstances were not yet dangerous. As such, he was clearly violating the use-of-force policy. End Ripley’s pursuit The lieutenant should end Ripley’s pursuit. Firstly, this is because Ripley has already overstepped the policies implemented by the Department, as such there is a possibility that he would further abuse his power to bring about unnecessary harm to others.

In addition, the Department is already involved in a current legal tussle. Should any mistakes go wrong with this one, the consequence would be especially dire and people would lose confidence in the criminal justice agency. Firing warning shots The deputy should have fired the warning shot. The department has already informed officers that no warning shots should be fired unless circumstances warrant. In this case, the officer was following normal regulations of being at least 30 meters away from the vehicle.

In addition, he has proof to show that the circumstances warrant his actions since the driver was speeding towards him and thus the warning shot was

fired to save his life. Lodging a complaint In the event that the people in the vehicle lodge a complaint about Ripley and his use of the force, the dog and the taser gun, there are various departmental policies which would need to be applied. First, it is necessary to record down all the processes involved during the whole incident including when , how and why the deputy came across the vehicle, fired the warning shots and gave chase to the vehicle.

Given that there is evidence to sufficient to show that the deputy did abuse his authority such as to own a Taser gun and to use a dog, appropriate disciplinary actions would need to be taken to hold the deputy accountable for his actions. However, the head of the department will need to deliberate and take into account the factors affecting the situation and the decision-making of the deputy behind implementing the most appropriate form of punishment (Davis). Additional policies

Given that the misconduct of the deputy has been identified, it is important that the department implement policies to ensure that similar acts do not occur again. Hence, this would involve programs like training as well as frequent audits to ensure that officers do not engage in behaviors that involve the abuse of their authority. In addition, the department should also set up a program to monitor the progress of those who have previously engaged in misconduct before to ensure that they are competent enough for their work. Conclusion

In conclusion, the case of Ripley demonstrates the serious consequences of the abuse of authority by law enforcing officials. Therefore, it is necessary for

criminal justice agencies to implement the appropriate strategies and programs to ensure that similar incidents do not occur again. ? Reference Davis, J. (n. d. ). Police Misconduct and Civil Rights Law. Retrieved from <http://library.findlaw.com/1999/Nov/1/126320.html> • Peak, K. (2010). Justice administration: police, courts, and corrections management (6th ed. ). Upper Saddle River, NJ. Pearson/Prentice Hall.