

State police wrap up police-involved shooting - Danville Register & Bee (VA) - June 7, 2018

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The Virginia State Police has completed its part of the investigation into the officer-involved fatal shooting of an unarmed **Juan Markee Jones** early April in Danville.

Danville Commonwealth's Attorney Michael Newman said he received the report late Tuesday and will determine whether the use of lethal force by police was legally justified.

"I was provided three volumes of documents, videos, reports," Newman said via email Thursday. "It will take some time to review it all."

He said he hopes to finish his review by the end of the month and has not decided whether he will create a full report of his own.

Corinne Geller, public relations director with the Virginia State Police, would not provide a copy of the report to the Danville Register & Bee, citing an exemption under the Freedom of Information Act that offers law enforcement agencies discretion when it comes to certain investigative material.

"Criminal investigative files, and their contents, are excluded from the provisions of FOIA," Geller said via email Thursday.

She said it was up to the commonwealth's attorney whether to release the report on Jones's shooting.

"I try not to release information or reports on ongoing investigations before charging decisions are made," Newman said. "That is to protect all involved. If charges were sought, I wouldn't want released information/reports to taint a person's right to a fair trial."

Police shot an unarmed Jones, 25, shortly after 1 a.m. April 8 at a wooded area along Sunset Drive following a call from a woman complaining of a domestic assault at a North Main Street business. Police body-camera video shows officers firing at Jones as he abruptly whirls toward them with arms outstretched by his chest.

The officers identified by the department as firing the shots are Christopher S. Simpkins, with five years on the force, and David J. Branch, with two years on the force. Both officers will remain on administrative leave until the investigation is completed.