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1. [Man shot and killed by police on I-89 said he wanted to 'end it'](#)

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## ***Man shot and killed by police on I-89 said he wanted to 'end it'***

VT Digger

February 12, 2018 Monday 10:13 PM EST

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**Length:** 1479 words

**Byline:** Alan J. Keays

### **Body**

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Feb 12, 2018( VT Digger: <http://vtdigger.org> Delivered by Newstex) Col. Matthew Birmingham, director of the Vermont State Police, addresses a press conference Monday at the state police barracks in Williston about a officer-involved shooting on Interstate 89 in Bolton that left a Sheldon man dead. Photo by Alan J. Keays/VTDiggerVermont State Police say the man shot and killed by police Sunday afternoon on Interstate 89 was pointing a gun to his own head and walking toward the officers, refusing their orders to put down the firearm. Trooper Charles Brown and Richmond Police Cpl.

Richard Greenough were identified Monday as the law enforcement officers who fired a total of 12 shots. **Benjamin Gregware**, 42, of Sheldon, who was described by police as suicidal and who had told a trooper earlier that he wanted to 'end it,' was hit by three of the shots, in the head, torso and shoulder, according to Maj. Glenn Hall, head of the state police's criminal division. It was the third fatal shooting involving Vermont State Police in the past six months. State Police Director Col. Matthew Birmingham said Monday the agency is contracting with an outside consultant to review its policies and procedures in such cases. 'Certainly, there is great cause for concern when you have multiple officer-involved shootings in a short period of time,' Birmingham told a press conference Monday at the state police barracks in Williston. 'One fatal shooting is too many in my opinion. These are very challenging, complicated and tragic events,' Birmingham said. 'As the director, I don't want any fatal shootings to happen, but that's not realistic.' Birmingham said the decision to order the review does not 'insinuate' the agency has done anything wrong, but is to ensure police are following best practices. Brown was involved in all three of the fatal shootings in the past six months. His involvement in the first two, in Poultney in September[1] and Montpelier last month[2], was as a member of the police tactical team. Brown, who joined the state police in 2012, also was involved in a non-fatal shooting in Fayston in 2015. In the Poultney and Fayston shootings Brown was cleared by prosecutors of any wrongdoing. The Montpelier shooting remains under review by the Vermont Attorney General's Office and the Washington County State's Attorney Office. The Bolton shooting will be reviewed by the Vermont Attorney General's Office and the Chittenden County State's Attorney's Office. Birmingham said Monday that in accordance with a new process Brown has been placed on paid administrative leave and will not return to duty until a legal review of the shooting in Bolton is complete, a process that could several months. 'I worry about Trooper Brown and the impact that this is having on him,' Birmingham said. 'These individual incidents are looked at independently of each other, not collectively, because lethal force is a justification point that occurs in a split second of time.' In past cases, state police policy had allowed troopers involved in shootings to return to duty after at least three days on paid administrative leave. 'This decision is not an indication of any wrongdoing by Trooper Brown, but merely a change in the way the state police will now manage our response to officer involved shootings as it relates to the health and well-being of our members,' Birmingham said Brown was taken off the tactical team two weeks ago. Birmingham said Monday he could not comment on the decision to take Brown off the team, calling it a personnel matter. The circumstances that led to the shooting in Bolton started with a call to state police from Gregware's ex-wife. Police said she told them that she had 'concerns' about her ex-husband, and that he had been struggling with alcohol addiction. She told police that Gregware had driven away from his home in a red Honda, and appeared to be intoxicated, according to a statement issued by police. She also told police that after her ex-

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husband left he phoned her and told her he had just bought ammunition. She said her ex-husband never specifically said he was going to commit suicide, but that he was going to 'take care of some stuff,' the statement said. She also said that Gregware had been recently laid-off from work, and she was concerned that, with all of the factors combined, he would try to harm himself, according to the statement. Trooper Jay Riggen was able to call Gregware on his cellphone and Gregware told him he was 'not OK,' according to police, and that he was worried he would lose his children. Gregware's speech, Riggen reported, was 'slurred, mumbled, confused, and at time unintelligible.' Gregware also told Riggen that he had a 9mm handgun with him and that he had just bought ammunition at Walmart in St. Albans, according to the statement. Gregware also told Riggen that he was going to continue driving south on I-89 and that when he ran out of gas he was going to 'end it,' police said. Riggen said he continued to try to persuade Gregware to pull off the interstate, so troopers could get him help, but he refused to stop. Gregware told Riggen that he had just passed exit 11 on I-89. He said something to the effect of 'You can bring all of the guns you want ' The call, which lasted about 20 minutes, then disconnected, police said. Both Brown and Greenough were driving south on the interstate trying to find Gregware and at about 3:50 p.m they spotted his vehicle, with Brown initiating a 'high-risk' traffic stop. Gregware pulled into the breakdown lane and stopped near mile marker 69 heading south. Brown yelled at Gregware to get out of the car, and the trooper can also be heard yelling 'put the gun down' several times, police said. 'Gregware is then seen opening his door and stepping out of his vehicle holding a handgun which he immediately points at his own head,' according to the statement from police. Gregware started walking toward the officers with the gun still pointed at his head, refusing orders to put the gun down, according to police. Both Brown and Greenough then opened fire. Only about two minutes passed from the time Gregware pulled to a stop in the breakdown lane and the point when police opened fire, according to police, with motorists driving by in the passing lane. Police said Gregware never pointed the firearm at the officers, but kept it directed at his own head. The officers 'secured' Gregware's firearm after he was shot, and began to provide medical aid until rescue personnel arrived at the scene, police said. Gregware was taken by ambulance to University of Vermont Medical Center in Burlington where he later died, according to police. An autopsy was expected Monday afternoon at the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner in Burlington. The investigation showed that Brown fired his patrol rifle, a Rock River Arms Model LAR14 .223-caliber and is believed to have fired seven rounds, according to police. Greenough fired his handgun, a Smith ...sson M...0 caliber and is believed to have fired five shot, police. The firearm Gregware was holding, which was recovered at the scene, was identified as a Masterpiece Arms, 9mm tactical pistol, more commonly known as a Mac 10, with an extended magazine, according to police. The magazine contained 14, 9mm rounds, and there was one in the chamber, police said. In the Montpelier shooting, Brown was one of nine officers, including eight state police troopers, who shot and killed Nathan Giffin, 32, of Essex, on the grounds of Montpelier High School on Jan. 16. Police say Giffin was fleeing after robbing the nearby Vermont State Employees Credit Union. Police said that during a standoff on the school field Giffin issued threats and made suicidal statements, and he displayed a handgun. The weapon was later identified as a BB gun. Brown was also one of five troopers who fired shots in Poultney in September that left Michael Battles dead. Battles also was wielding a BB gun. Birmingham said Monday that cameras in the Brown and Greenough's cruisers recorded the traffic stop, and that Greenough also was wearing a body camera. Birmingham said he anticipated that following the legal review by the prosecutors, the video captured on those cameras would be released to the public. Greenough has been placed on administrative leave for six days, according Richmond Police Chief Alan Buck, who said it was the first time in the department's 50-year history that one of its officers was involved in a shooting. Read the story on VTDigger here: Man shot and killed by police on I-89 said he wanted to 'end it'[3]. [ 1]: <https://vtdigger.org/2017/09/01/state-police-kill-poultney-man-standoff/> [ 2]: <https://vtdigger.org/2018/01/17/police-robbery-suspect-killed-montpelier-standoff-armed-bb-gun/> [ 3]: <https://vtdigger.org/2018/02/12/man-shot-killed-police-89-said-wanted-end/>

## Classification

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Man shot and killed by police on I-89 said he wanted to 'end it'

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