

Police gunshots confirmed in I-89 death

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FULL TEXT

Benjamin P. Gregware, 42, died Sunday from gunshots to the head and torso fired by police, the Vermont Office of the Chief Medical Examiner reported Thursday.

State and Richmond police shot Gregware, who investigators say was armed and suicidal, during a traffic stop at 3:51 p.m. along Interstate 89 near Bolton.

The victim, a resident of St. Albans, was pronounced dead about an hour later at University of Vermont Medical Center, according to the report.

Gregware was born in Plattsburgh, New York; and was divorced at the time of his death, the document added.

Gregware struggled with alcohol addiction and had recently been laid off from his job as a laborer at S.D. Ireland, according to Vermont State Police. He had been scheduled to visit with his children later in the day Sunday.

Vermont State Police Trooper Trooper Chris Brown and Richmond Police Cpl. Rick Greenough were identified by investigators as the officers who fired 12 rounds at Gregware.

Both men were placed on administrative leave, as is standard practice after officer-involved shootings.

Brown had previously been involved in three suspect shootings, two of which investigators later determined were justified.

Richmond police Chief Alan Buck said this was the first officer-involved shooting for the town's department in its 50 years.

Gregware's handgun was identified as a Masterpiece Arms 9 mm tactical pistol, known as a Mac 10. Police said the handgun had 14 rounds in the magazine and one round in the chamber.

Gregware did not aim the weapon at the officers at any point during the traffic stop but refused to put the firearm down, and started walking toward the officers, Vermont State Police Col. Matthew Birmingham said Monday.

Birmingham added that he would be taking a "hard look" at all policies, procedures and non-lethal options to address similar situations in the future.

CAPTION:

Col. Matthew Birmingham of the Vermont State Police discusses Sunday's fatal shooting of Benjamin Gregware in Bolton during a news conference in Williston on Monday. Gregware was shot by a Vermont state trooper and a Richmond police officer after a car stop on I-89.

GLENN RUSSELL/FREE PRESS

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