



## NAPA COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

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### PRESS RELEASE

#### **NO CRIMINAL CHARGES IN SOUTH NAPA MARKETPLACE OFFICER INVOLVED SHOOTING**

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Napa County District Attorney Allison Haley announced today:

The Napa County District Attorney's Office has completed a full review of the officer involved shooting that took place on March 13, 2017 in the area of the South Napa Marketplace in the City and County of Napa. This review followed the investigation by the Napa County Sheriff's Department and invocation of the Napa County Major Crimes Investigation Team Protocol. The sole purpose of our examination was to determine if there is any criminal liability on behalf of any members of law enforcement. We find no criminal liability in these circumstances.

On March 13, 2017, Noel Aaron Russell used a large quantity of methamphetamine and consumed alcohol before setting upon patrons at the South Napa Marketplace. He threatened people with a knife and vandalized vehicles. Many 911 calls prompted dispatch to send Napa Police Department officers to the scene to protect the public. Dispatch noted reports such as "male with knife going after another male", "male walking around attacking people", and "still making threats with the knife." Sergeant Ryan Cole and Officer Jack Thomson arrived within minutes and attempted to defuse the situation. Mr. Russell refused to follow instructions, pulled out a knife, took a bladed stance and moved towards Sergeant Cole who was a short distance away. Both officers believed that Mr. Russell intended to use deadly force, feared for their lives, each other and surrounding members of the public. Both officers discharged their weapons, using deadly force on Mr. Russell.

The use of deadly force by Sergeant Cole and Officer Thomson was a reasonable and lawful response under the totality of the circumstances. Therefore, the actions were legally justified and criminal charges against them are neither warranted nor supported by the evidence. This decision is complete and final.

The review by the District Attorney's Office is summarized in a comprehensive report being released today and is available on our website at [www.countyofnapa.org/DA/News/](http://www.countyofnapa.org/DA/News/). The public deserves full transparency as how and why our office reaches a decision in an officer involved shooting.

Any questions regarding this case may be directed to Assistant District Attorney Paul Gero.