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Denver 911 Apologizes for Deadly Instructions



Denver 9-1-1 Admits Blame in Shooting Death

AUTO START: ON OFF



By COLLEEN CURRY
April 4, 2012

A Denver man who called 911 to report a threatening road-rage encounter reluctantly followed a 911 dispatcher's order to return to the scene of the crime, where he was fatally shot while waiting for police.

Jimma Reat, a 26-year-old immigrant from Sudan, was traveling with his brother, cousin, and other passengers early Sunday morning, when a road-rage incident occurred at around 4 a.m., according to ABC affiliate KMGH.

Reat's cousin, Ran Pal, called 911 and reported that the occupants of a red Jeep had thrown bottles at their car, breaking the windows and threatening the people in the car, according to the report. Denver police confirmed the report but have not publicly released the name of the caller.

Reat, Pal and the others in the car had left Denver and were traveling home when they were instructed by the 911 dispatcher to return to within Denver's borders in order to receive police assistance, according to Denver police.

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The group traveled back to Denver to wait for police assistance, but were fired upon by the occupants of the Jeep, which had arrived at the same part of the city, police said.

According to the Denver Post, the 911 dispatcher and Reat argued about the instruction to return to the scene of the altercation, with the dispatcher threatening to withhold police assistance unless Reat drove back to Denver.



Jimma Reat is seen in this undated file... [View Full Size](#)



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"The call transpired very quickly," Carl Simpson, executive director of Denver 911, told ABC affiliate KMGH. "It got sideways very quickly. I am deeply saddened by the events that transpired. This call left me very saddened for the family."

Of the dispatcher, Simpson said, "I do know he didn't follow procedures."

Simpson told the Post that the dispatcher followed "lower level policies," in which he would typically advise a motorist to return to the scene of a minor accident for police assistance. But, he said, the dispatcher should have been aware that this was a "higher-level" event.

The dispatcher has been placed on leave while authorities investigate the 911 call.

The Jeep was found abandoned in Denver Sunday, and was later reported stolen by its owner, according to ABC affiliate KMGH. Police are still searching for suspects in the shooting.

The victim was not believed to have been involved in any gang activity, police told KMGH.

Ernie Franssen, the Denver 911 operations manager, apologized for the incident during a news conference Monday.

"We're absolutely apologetic for the circumstances of the call," Franssen told KMGH. "We want to give due diligence to the employee and make sure that we did or didn't follow the policies as they are written, and we want to take a look and listen to it ourselves and be able to speak to the employee."

Franssen told ABC News today that the department would be looking at its own policies for 911 calls like Pal's.

"We have policies that say we could have responded outside of Denver or could have involved another jurisdiction," Franssen said. "Some policies were not followed. There were a number of policies that were followed."

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"But we are deeply saddened by events," he said, "and sorry for family and community and sorry for the outcome, absolutely."

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DKBrothers218 Can he dispatcher be charged with manslaughter?

2:26 PM EDT
Apr 05, 2012

Wind_569 If you read other articles about this, especially the one from the Denver Post you get a clearer picture of things. The 911 operator did not tell them to return to the scene of the road rage incident. He told them to return to Denver, to a "safe spot" so police could take a report. The victims went back to Denver (from Wheatridge, a suburb of Denver right next to the scene) to a spot a mile away from the original road rage incident, to wait for police. Then the assailants in the jeep just happened by them again, pulled in and fired.

billy boyed
8:23 AM EDT
Apr 05, 2012

First and for most my deepest sympathy to the families who lost their beloved young brother (family member). May god give you the strength and wisdom to come through it quickly. Coming to the incident it almost looks like a set up by the 911 dispatcher to tell them to go back to the same spot or area where the incident happened. It is even more painfull and agonizing to do the right thing but become a victim of doing the right thing. In this case they called the police and the police failed them, not only failed them but they put them in dangerouse situation. I really find it hard to believe of all the police who followed the entire episode unfoled on their redio and on their computer none of them stepped in to say going back to the incident area was wrong and dangerous. It is just commonsense to keep away from a danger zone until the danger is removed or contented. I guess commonsense is not common anymore.If someone told you they were attacked by a dog would you tell them to go back to the same area for whatever a reason. Not to be judgemental but that was what the dispatcher did knowingly or unknowingly. Therefore in my openion the dispatcher and the police who were aware of the dispatchers instructions to the victoms are guilty at some level.

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