



Sacramento County District Attorney's Office

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Captain Thomas Andris, Commander
Sacramento County Sheriff's Department
Correctional Services Unit
651 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: In-Custody Death of Edward Richard Larson (DOB 3/22/60)
SSD Report No. 14-284831

Dear Captain Andris:

The above case was referred to this office for review of the circumstances surrounding the death of inmate Edward Larson on December 14, 2014.

On December 5, 2014, Larson was housed in cell 305 of the Sacramento County Main Jail. He and his cellmate argued about Larson's hygiene, masturbating, and lewd comments. As a result, Larson was moved by the jail staff to cell 306 with inmate Ernest Salmons, who did not express any problems with this arrangement.

On December 13, 2014, at approximately 5:00 p.m., Salmons pressed the cell emergency button and complained about Larson defecating on himself and sitting on Salmons' blankets. Sacramento Sheriff Deputy Marcilina Martinez instructed a pod worker to bring a new set of clothes to Larson. The worker did so and noticed red bruises on Larson's head. Salmons told the worker and other inmates that Larson fell and hit his head on the table. The worker did not report these injuries to the jail control officer because they were not too alarming and Larson's demeanor was normal with no apparent distress.

Deputy Martinez told Salmons to come to the control window to exchange his dirty blankets for clean ones. After doing so, Salmons returned to his cell.

At approximately 7:00 p.m., Deputy Joel Fowler conducted a security count of the inmates in their cells. As he approached cell 306, Deputy Fowler observed Salmons and Larson inside the cell and did not notice anything unusual. The cell lights were on. Jail staff conducted hourly cell checks throughout the evening using a flashlight and no one observed any signs of distress, trauma, or suspicious behavior in cell 306. Larson appeared to be sleeping on his mattress on the floor during most of the cell checks. This was common behavior for Larson. Salmons was more active and occasionally stood at the cell door, which was customary for him.

On December 14, 2014, at approximately 2:09 a.m., Deputy Diane Jordan-Tucker was conducting cell checks in the 300 pod when she left the area to respond to another medical emergency call. She returned to the 300 pod to complete her cell check at approximately 2:30 a.m. As she observed cell 306, she saw Larson sleeping on the floor and did not notice anything unusual.

At approximately 3:10 a.m., Deputy Jordan-Tucker returned and looked inside cell 306. Salmons stated that something was wrong with Larson. Larson was lying on his back with his eyes closed on a mattress on the floor. Deputy Jordan-Tucker observed Larson's left side of his head and face and did not notice anything unusual. Larson's body was covered up to his neck with a blanket. The deputy instructed Salmons to nudge Larson and Salmons pushed his foot on the edge of Larson's mattress. Larson did not respond. The deputy then instructed Salmons to touch Larson's nose. Salmons did so and stated that Larson's skin was cool. Larson did not respond. Deputy Jordan-Tucker went to the nursing station at approximately 3:22 a.m. and returned to the cell a couple minutes later with jail medical staff. The deputy instructed Salmons to sit in the indoor recreation area, while a nurse assessed Larson. The nurse stated that Larson was cold and not breathing and told Deputy Jordan-Tucker to call 911.

The nurse started CPR chest compressions, while another nurse used a bag valve mask for rescue breathing on Larson. Additional jail staff arrived and assisted with chest compressions on Larson. An automated external defibrillator was placed on Larson, but the unit indicated "no shock advised." Chest compressions were continued. Sacramento City Fire Department personnel, including a paramedic, arrived on scene at approximately 3:34 a.m. They relieved the deputies and moved Larson out of the cell. The paramedic resumed CPR, examined Larson, felt rigor mortis, and did not administer any lifesaving measures. Larson was pronounced deceased at approximately 3:37 a.m.

Salmons was eventually moved from the recreation area to a visiting booth and then to another cell for an interview with deputies. He had redness to his hands, chest, abdomen, back, and neck. Salmons also had an abrasion to his right elbow. He admitted to detectives that he slapped and kicked Larson because he was angry that Larson defecated on himself and sat on Salmons' bed. Previously, Salmons had told one of the jail nurses that Larson was unsanitary and he urinated in saved milk containers because he was too lazy to get up in the middle of the night to use the bathroom. Salmons also told the nurse that he was unhappy living with Larson.

Investigators interviewed inmates in nearby cells about what they saw or heard regarding the incident. Some inmates reported hearing Larson say, "Stop hitting me" or "Quit hitting me" while he was in his cell with Salmons.

An autopsy was conducted. Larson had dark blue and black bruising around his right eye, a large patch of dark redness on the inside of his right forearm, and other contusions on his body. He also had a laceration to his forehead, cut to his left ring finger, and multiple rib fractures. The coroner's report indicated that Larson was assaulted by another person and died from blunt force injuries.

Salmons has been charged with the murder of Larson in Sacramento County Superior Court case number 14F08237. The matter is set for jury trial on September 10, 2015.

There is no evidence of criminal misconduct by the Sheriff's Department personnel presented in any of the supporting reports. The District Attorney's Office will not take any further action regarding the Sheriff's Department's role in this matter.