

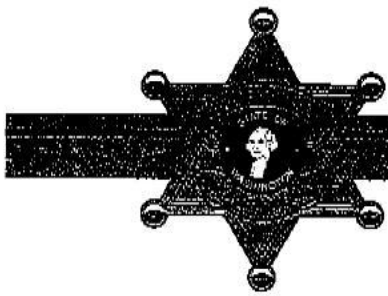


**SURVIVAL FACTORS GROUP**  
**CHAIRMAN FACTUAL REPORT**  
**ATTACHMENT 8**  
**SKAGIT COUNTY SHERIFF INCIDENT REPORT**

**Redacted**

**Bridge Collapse**  
**Mount Vernon, WA; 05/23/2013**

**HWY-13-MH-012**  
**(18 Pages)**



# WILL REICHARDT, SHERIFF SKAGIT COUNTY

Public Safety Building - 600 South Third - Mount Vernon, WA 98273  
Phone: (360) 336-9450 Fax: (360) 336-9455 sheriff@co.skagit.wa.us

[Redacted]  
Undersheriff

[Redacted]  
Chief Criminal Deputy

[Redacted]  
Chief of Field Services

[Redacted]  
Chief Corrections Deputy

[Redacted]  
Chief Administrative Services

Via Fax - [Redacted]

June 14, 2013

National Transportation Safety Board

Attn: [Redacted]

Survival Factors Investigator

[Redacted]

Dear [Redacted]

This letter is in response to the records request received by our office on May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2013 for a copy of SCSO case 13-06720. Please find the stated records enclosed.

Please contact me with any questions.

Respectfully,

[Redacted] Sheriff

By: [Redacted]

17 pgs total



# National Transportation Safety Board

Office of Highway Safety  
490 L'Enfant Plaza East, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20594

May 28, 2013

Chief [REDACTED]  
Skagit County Sheriff's Office  
[REDACTED]

13 MAY 28 PM 4:27  
RECEIVED

## REQUEST FOR CASE REPORTS and DISPATCH LOG

NTSB Case Number: HWY-13-MH-012  
Accident Date: May 23, 2013  
Location: Interstate 5, Skagit River Bridge, number 5/712 Mt Vernon, Skagit County, WA

Pursuant to the Independent Safety Board Act of 1974, amended and recodified at 49 U.S.C. § 1131 et seq., the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is responsible for the investigation and the determination of the probable cause of accidents involving all transportation modes and for issuing safety recommendations designed to prevent future accidents. Title 49 Code of Federal Regulations, §831.9 authorizes the release of requested information related to an accident investigation.

The NTSB possesses the statutory authority, under the Independent Safety Board Act, to "inspect, at reasonable times, records, files, papers, processes, controls, and facilities relevant to investigation of such accident[s]." Further, the NTSB may "require by subpoena or otherwise the attendance and testimony of such witnesses and the production of such evidence as the Board or such officer or employee deems advisable, and attendance of witnesses and production of evidence may be required from any place in the United States to any designated place of such hearing in the United States".

On May 23, 2013, an accident occurred involving the collision of a tractor semi-trailer with the I-5 Bridge over the Skagit River. Pursuant to the above statutory authority, I am requesting a copy of the following information:

- Case Reports for the incident, Case No. 13-08720
- Dispatch Logs.

Please forward the requested information to:

[REDACTED]  
Survival Factors Investigator  
National Transportation Safety Board  
[REDACTED]

Preferred method: Fax [REDACTED] or email to [REDACTED]

Thank you for your assistance. If you have any questions, I can be reached at [REDACTED]  
Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Accident Investigator  
NTSB - Office of Highway Safety



# SKAGIT COUNTY SHERIFF

## Incident Report

Incident #: 13-06720

Incident: AGENCY ASSISTANCE

Area: SCSO AREA- MOUNT VERNON

Location: ; 15 - BRIDGE COLLAPSE

When Reported: 19:06:54 05/23/13

Occurred Between: 19:05:57 05/23/13

And: 19:05:57 05/23/13

### DRIVERS:

1) Name: [REDACTED] Race/Sex: W/M  
 DOB: [REDACTED]  
 Address: [REDACTED]  
 Home Phone: [REDACTED] Work Phone: ( ) -  
 Employer: [REDACTED]

### VICTIMS:

1) Name: [REDACTED] Race/Sex: W/M  
 DOB: [REDACTED]  
 Address: [REDACTED]  
 Home Phone: ( ) - Work Phone: ( ) -  
 Employer: [REDACTED]

2) Name: [REDACTED] Race/Sex: W/M  
 DOB: [REDACTED]  
 Address: [REDACTED]  
 Home Phone: ( ) - Work Phone: ( ) -  
 Employer: [REDACTED]

3) Name: [REDACTED] Race/Sex: A/F  
 DOB: [REDACTED]  
 Address: [REDACTED]  
 Home Phone: ( ) - Work Phone: ( ) -  
 Employer: [REDACTED]

This copy was prepared by the Skagit County Sheriff on  
 (date) 6-14-13 for the official use of  
 (name) [REDACTED]  
 (agency) NTSB for the purpose  
 of \_\_\_\_\_ and may not be  
 revealed to any other individual and/or agency or used  
 for any other purpose than stated without the consent  
 of the Skagit County Sheriff's Office.

### WITNESSES:

1) Name: [REDACTED] Race/Sex: U/M  
 DOB: [REDACTED]

Address: [REDACTED]

Home Phone: [REDACTED]

Work Phone: ( ) -

Employer:

PROPERTY INFORMATION:

1) Status: EVIDENCE 1-40 Item Type: PICTURE  
 Item/Brand: CD 1-40 Model:  
 Serial Number: Color: /  
 Quantity: 1 Total Value: \$  
 Description:

2) Status: EVIDENCE 1-17 Item Type: CAMP EQUIP  
 Item/Brand: SLEEPING BAG Model: 1-17  
 Serial Number: Color: BLK/RED  
 Quantity: 1 Total Value: \$  
 Description:

VEHICLE INFORMATION:

1) Status: INVOLVED License: [REDACTED] State: AB  
 VIN: [REDACTED] Expires: [REDACTED] Year: 2010  
 Make: KENW Model: Type: CTK  
 Color: BLK/ Doors: 2 Value: \$  
 Description:

2) Status: INVOLVED License: [REDACTED] State: AB  
 VIN: [REDACTED] Expires: \*\*/\*\*/\*\* Year: 1997  
 Make: Model: Type: TLR  
 Color: RED/ Doors: 0 Value: \$  
 Description: 1997 ASPEN FLATBED TRAILER

NARRATIVE:

Name: [REDACTED]  
CORRECT NATURE: AGENCY ASSIST

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SUPPLEMENTAL NARRATIVE:

Name: [REDACTED]  
 Date: 08:18:21 05/24/13  
 SGT [REDACTED]/CP, Transcribed May 24, 2013

On 05/23/13 at approximately 1906 hours Dispatch advised of a possible bridge collapse. They first reported maybe the Burlington Boulevard Bridge that crosses the Skagit River, and then the information was changed to the I-5 Bridge across the Skagit River.

I responded from Cook Road near Gardner Road and approached the scene down Pulver Road at Whitmarsh Road. As I was arriving, the information was coming out

## Incident Report

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that there may be a vehicle floating down the river, downstream from the bridge. I parked my vehicle near the intersection of Whitmarsh and Bennett Roads and walked up on top of the dike. I did not see any debris in the river downstream from the bridge and ran up to the bridge scene.

While en route to the scene DEPUTY [REDACTED] was responding to the County Shop to pick up our river boat. DEPUTY [REDACTED] was en route to be the second man on the boat. Dispatch was advised to contact the [REDACTED] Water Rescue from Conway, as we had no other Sheriff's boats to go into the river. They arrived at the bridge at about 2010 hours. SERGEANT [REDACTED] requested SAR DEPUTY [REDACTED] to come west from the east part of the county to organize the Search and Rescue portion of the call.

When I arrived at the bridge I saw that the northern-most span of the bridge had fallen into the river. I could see two vehicles in the river, a small orange vehicle and a tan-colored pickup, along with a camp trailer. I could see one man sitting on top of the orange vehicle and a man standing on top of the tan colored truck. There were people up on the I-5 bridge, talking down to the subjects. The information I had was that there was one more person inside the truck and that they were the only two vehicles that had entered the water and all the people were accounted for. It appeared from my vantage point on the shore that the bridge frame itself had acted as a cage and contained the vehicles at that spot and it did not appear that any vehicles could have floated away from the accident scene.

DEPUTY [REDACTED] brought the river boat to the Gardner Road access to launch the boat and come down stream to the accident scene and arrived at about 1940 hours. Support was also requested from Snohomish County and from the Coast Guard and the Navy at NAS Whidbey. I requested our Skagit County Swiftwater Rescue Unit be deployed. I also requested Mountain Rescue, as it appeared rescue may have to be done from above, down the bridge pillar to the accident scene where the vehicles were at in the water.

DEPUTY [REDACTED] had also requested Snohomish County's Swiftwater Rescue and also Whatcom County's Swiftwater Rescue to respond.

While I was at the scene, the Mount Vernon Fire Department Battalion Chief [REDACTED] contacted me there and we coordinated Skagit County Search and Rescue units and fire and aid personnel from that location. DEPUTY [REDACTED] arrived, along with SERGEANT [REDACTED] who took over command of the Search and Rescue Units.

I was also made aware that OFFICER [REDACTED] from the Mount Vernon Police Department may have spoken to a witness who saw someone in the water downstream from the accident scene. I did contact OFFICER [REDACTED] on the scene and he pointed to an area of the river approximately 100 yards downstream from the accident scene. He said that when he first arrived on the dike, an unknown citizen pointed into the water and said that someone was in the water and had just gone under the water and had not come back up. There was some debris in the water near that location. OFFICER [REDACTED] said that they checked along the riverbank downstream there and did not see anyone.

At that time helicopters had arrived on scene. Navy personnel were landed on shore and put into the boats to help with the rescue of the subjects in the water who were sitting on top of the cars. Other helicopters were used to search the river downstream from the accident scene in case anyone else was in the water. There were also boats in the water. I was contacted by the Tribal Police

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Department Boat who picked up a backpack and a sleeping bag in the water that appeared to have come from the vehicles involved. Inside the backpack was a laptop, however there was no identification. I later picked up the sleeping bag and placed it in my car, however the backpack was no longer on the scene. I requested that the Tribal boat and other boats in the area check downstream from the location for any possible victims in the water.

A short time later information came from the helicopters that there was someone on the shore near the river downstream approximately a mile to mile and a half, waving their arms as if they needed to be rescued. These subjects were contacted and they were just waving about some debris that had floated down the river and no one was seen in the river downstream from the accident scene.

All of the subjects in the water that we knew about were rescued by our river boat and transported to the hospital. From eyewitnesses of the accident, including the subjects who were in the water, there were only two vehicles that ever went into the water and only three individuals. Both vehicles and subjects were accounted for.

Divers looked at the scene and it did not feel safe for them to enter the water if there was no indication that there were any more victims in the water; no divers were deployed.

SERGEANT [redacted] stayed on the scene. I cleared and went to the Emergency Operations Center for a briefing about the incident.

Before I left the scene I was given a black gym bag and the gray sleeping bag which I later placed into found property in the drying room.

05/24/13, 0415 hours, SERGEANT [redacted]

CP

**SUPPLEMENTAL NARRATIVE:**

Name: [redacted]

Date: 11:06:42 05/24/13

DEP [redacted] CP, Transcribed May 24, 2013

On 05/23/13 at approximately 1900 hours I was on a traffic stop on College Way at I-5. Dispatch advised that they were receiving reports that a bridge had collapsed between Mount Vernon and Burlington, possibly the Riverside and Burlington Boulevard Bridge. I looked north from my location and observed vehicles slamming on their brakes and starting to back up on northbound I-5 at the Skagit River Bridge. I also noticed that there was no traffic traveling southbound on I-5 from the Skagit River Bridge. I did notice a pickup truck and a semi-truck and trailer stopped on the shoulder of I-5 heading southbound, just south of the Skagit River Bridge.

I cleared my traffic stop and activated my emergency lights on my patrol motorcycle, traveling northbound up the southbound I-5 off-ramp and onto southbound I-5. As I reached the edge of the southern-most part of the bridge I observed people out on the bridge looking down at something and people getting out of their cars that were stopped on the bridge on northbound I-5. As I ran

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06/14/13

up onto the bridge deck towards the scene, I was contacted by TROOPER SERGEANT [REDACTED]. We ran up to the scene and were contacted by a third trooper. As we approached the area where the bridge had collapsed a subject in an orange flagger's vest contacted me and stated he was the driver of the semi-truck that was parked alongside I-5. Along with him was a pilot car driver. They were later identified as [REDACTED] (the semi-truck driver) and [REDACTED] (the pilot car driver). They stated that there were two or three vehicles in the water and that there were subjects sitting on top of them, waiting to be rescued.

At this point SERGEANT [REDACTED] and I determined that the bridge may be unstable and that all of the vehicles stopped in the northbound lane of the bridge needed to be evacuated immediately in case further collapse of the bridge occurred. SERGEANT [REDACTED] and I quickly organized an evacuation plan for the vehicles. Because I was on a patrol motorcycle I was able to maneuver through the backed up traffic and contact Mount Vernon Police OFFICER [REDACTED] who was at the intersection of College Way and I-5. I advised him that he needed to stop College Way traffic and that we would be evacuating northbound I-5 via the northbound on-ramp. I made my way northbound up the on-ramp to the edge of the bridge deck where I directed over my loud speaker for all parties to get back in their vehicles and to start turning around and exiting I-5 via the northbound on-ramp at College Way. There was an off-duty trooper that I had assisting, holding northbound traffic at College Way, to not further compound the problem. SERGEANT [REDACTED] and I were able to get all of the traffic turned around and evacuated off the bridge and northbound I-5 from College Way.

Once the scene on the bridge was secure, I contacted the driver of the semi-truck. He provided me with his Alberta driver's license. I also contacted the driver of the pilot car who provided me with her Washington State driver's license. I was also contacted by a third party, identified by his Washington State driver's license, as [REDACTED] stated that he was directly behind the semi-truck at the time of the bridge collapse. I asked [REDACTED] what he observed, he stated he was southbound on I-5, just getting on the Skagit River Bridge behind the semi-truck and trailer, when he suddenly observed debris coming off the back of the trailer, the trailer and load suddenly started bouncing up and down in the air and pounding on the bridge deck. [REDACTED] stated that he slowed down to get away from the flying debris and the trailer. He said suddenly he felt his vehicle starting to fall and hit the roadway, as if the road was giving out underneath him. He rapidly accelerated as the bridge deck collapsed behind him. [REDACTED] was driving a black BMW which was parked just ahead of the pilot car. He stated he may have sustained some damage to the bottom of his car. I advised him to contact the Washington State Patrol the next day to obtain a case number for insurance purposes. I also collected [REDACTED] telephone number for contact by the Washington State Patrol at a later time.

I then contacted the driver of the semi-truck who told me he believed his load may have struck the side of the bridge. I asked him what had happened and he stated that he was southbound on I-5, approaching the Skagit River Bridge. He had all of his proper permits and a pilot car with a pole. As he entered the bridge a white semi came up next to him in the fast lane, forcing him to stay in the slow lane. At this point he felt several large jolts to his truck and he heard a loud noise behind him. He stated he continued off the bridge and then pulled off to the right as soon as possible. It was then when he looked back he noticed the bridge collapsing.

I also spoke with the pilot car driver, [REDACTED]. She stated she also saw

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06/14/13



## Incident Report

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the bridge collapse as they pulled over and stopped on the south side of the Skagit River Bridge.

I examined the load on [REDACTED] trailer which was a large steel framed box with open sides. There was damage to the passenger front corner of the structure and all the way down the passenger side to the rear of the structure. There was paint from the bridge and debris on the deck of the trailer and structure. I also noticed a tie-down strap from the trailer lying in the slow lane on the bridge deck.

I collected contact phone numbers for both the semi-truck driver and the pilot car driver. I advised them to stand by in their vehicles for further contact by the Washington State Patrol. I took both of their driver's licenses and turned them over to the Washington State Patrol for follow up. The witness had left the scene at this time.

I responded to the north end of the bridge deck where it had broken and stood by with fire personnel as rescue boats from the Skagit County Sheriff's Office worked to remove the occupants of the vehicles from the scene. I used my portable radio to keep in contact between the bridge deck and the rescue workers. I observed a tan colored crew cab pickup down in the water with a male subject standing on the driver's running board. I was told that there was also a female subject in the vehicle. There was an orange colored passenger car just to the west of the truck. An occupant was on the roof of that vehicle and had been removed by rescue workers. There was also a large trailer just in front of the orange car which had been towed by the truck. This trailer was upside down and submerged underwater. The information I received was that all parties were accounted for and were waiting to be picked up by rescue workers.

I photographed the scene from the south side of the bridge deck with my digital camera. The photos were later placed into evidence under item #1-40.

At 2144 hours all three parties had been rescued from the scene. Washington State Patrol had scene security and DOT had the roadway secured. I responded to the north side of the bridge in Burlington where I contacted SERGEANT [REDACTED]

At 2221 hours I cleared the call. No further action taken.

05/24/13, 0953 hours, DEPUTY [REDACTED]

CP

---

**SUPPLEMENTAL NARRATIVE:**

Name: [REDACTED]

Date: 08:16:06 05/26/13

DEP [REDACTED] CP, Transcribed May 26, 2013

On 05/23/13 at approximately 1906 hours I was working in the area of Cook Road and Old 99 when I heard Dispatch advise of a possible bridge collapse in the northbound lanes of I-5 on the north end of the Skagit River Bridge. I responded to the Skagit County Road Shop and assisted DEPUTY [REDACTED] in preparing the river boat for deployment and responded to the Gardner Road access where we launched with SERGEANT [REDACTED] to head to the scene. Once we arrived on

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Incident Report

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scene I observed a white male subject sitting on top of his vehicle. He stated he was okay and I observed another white male subject who stated that his wife was in shock in the Dodge Ram pickup truck and he was standing on the running board. He stated he was okay as well.

We devised a plan to secure the first subject who was by himself on the top of his car and we got him into our boat and transferred him to the shore. Once at the shore we picked up DEPUTY [REDACTED] and responded back out to the scene where we stood by with the subject and his wife until a Navy diver arrived on scene. We then devised a plan to remove the subject's wife as well as the other male subject and return them to shore.

We then checked the river for debris and any other subjects with negative results. After getting permission to clear the river we returned the river boat back to the shop.

No further action taken by me at this time.

05/25/13, 2020 hours, DEPUTY [REDACTED]  
CP

#### SUPPLEMENTAL NARRATIVE:

Name: [REDACTED]

Date: 05:09:30 05/28/13

DEP [REDACTED]/GMCD, Transcribed May 28, 2013

On 05/23/13, at approximately 1906 hours, I was working a traffic emphasis and was just clearing a traffic stop on Fairhaven Avenue and Spruce Street. I overheard Dispatch advise that the Interstate 5 bridge had collapsed into the river. There were an unknown amount of subjects in the river. SERGEANT [REDACTED] then requested that I get the boat from the County Shop.

I responded to the County Shop, at which time I was assisted in getting the boat and loading it by DEPUTY [REDACTED] and DEPUTY [REDACTED]. Initially the plan was to launch from the Gardner Road Access, although we had information that we might not be able to get the boat from the upriver side to the downriver side. There was also information that some people were floating down the river.

While enroute to Edgewater Park, SERGEANT [REDACTED] advised that we would be able to get the river boat underneath the bridge in order to access the subjects who needed to be rescued. At that time we were advised that there appeared to be three vehicles in the water and there were subjects on top of their vehicles.

DEPUTY [REDACTED] DEPUTY [REDACTED] SERGEANT [REDACTED] and I responded to the Gardner Road Access. At that time we launched the river boat. DEPUTY [REDACTED] SERGEANT [REDACTED] and I then responded to the bridge collapsed site.

When we arrived I could see that there was one subject sitting on top of his car and another subject had his body outside of his truck. It appeared that he either might be standing or sitting on the window. The subjects advised that they were fine. I could see some visible abrasions on the male subject who was in the truck. He stated that his wife was inside the truck, she was in shock, and she could not swim. He stated that she believed she was fine, other than

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## Incident Report

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going into shock.

We then maneuvered the boat up to the bridge site. We were able to get a PFD to the male subject sitting on the car. After he got his PFD on, we did give him a rope for him to hold onto just in case he fell. He was then able to stand on a piece of the bridge and access our boat. We stayed in communication with the male subject in the truck. At that time we were trying to assess how safe it was in order for us to get him out of the truck. There was quite a bit of water going around on both sides of him. There was a large portion of the bridge on the south side of his vehicle, although there was quite a bit of current and a deep hole between that roadway and his vehicle. We did not feel it would be safe at that time to try and get him and his wife out of the vehicle. We were going to assess if the helicopter would be able to lift him from that site or wait for Swift Water Rescue to set up a safe rescue to get him and his wife out of that location.

We then transported the male subject we had rescued off of the car back to the shore. He appeared to be in fine condition. He was turned over to medics.

While we were doing this, we noticed a boat with several subjects in it, later determined to be the Dike District, was maneuvering their boat up to the bridge and was trying to access the subjects that were in the truck. They were told to leave due to the fact they were not rescue personnel and we were concerned about how safe it would be to get those subjects out of the truck.

We then went back to the location where we stayed in contact with the male subject to make sure that the situation with his wife did not change. He kept us updated on how she was doing. He stated she was in water up to her knees. At that time DEPUTY [REDACTED] was also onboard with us. DEPUTY [REDACTED] and SERGEANT [REDACTED] were able to get PFD'S for both the male subject and his wife.

A short time later NAS Whidbey had landed their helicopter. Also, [REDACTED] Water Rescue was on the scene with us, next to the bridge. They did go get the NAS Whidbey diver, brought him to us, where DEPUTY [REDACTED] SERGEANT [REDACTED] and the diver were able to rescue the male and the female from the truck. The female was loaded onto a backboard. She was then placed onto the boat. Her husband got on the boat and we were able to take them safely to shore.

We also received some information that a subject was seen floating down the river and was last seen going under the water approximately a hundred yards downstream from our location.

A Snohomish County helicopter, along with one of their boats, were searching the area. We also requested [REDACTED] Water Rescue search that area as well. Everybody had been accounted for the two vehicles. The third vehicle was actually a trailer that had been towed by a pickup truck. At that point we didn't know if there was another vehicle in the water that had possibly floated down or if there was a motorcycle or if there was anybody else in the water.

Snohomish County Dive Rescue assessed the situation. They did determine not to dive at that time. Also in looking at the way the bridge collapsed, we did not believe that there were any subjects underneath the bridge. We did feel pretty confident that there was no one else in the river. We then secured.

05/26/13, 2010 Mrs., DEPUTY [REDACTED]

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Incident Report

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gmcd

**SUPPLEMENTAL NARRATIVE:**

Name: [REDACTED]

Date: 07:55:26 05/28/13

SGT [REDACTED]/GMCD, Transcribed May 28, 2013

On 05/27/13, at approximately 1800 hours, when I returned to work, I learned the identities of the subjects involved in this accident.

The owner of the gym bag was [REDACTED] who lives on Bulson Road. I did contact him and return the gym bag. I believe the owner of the sleeping bag would be [REDACTED] who lives in Oak Harbor; however, I was not able to locate a phone number and get a hold of him. The sleeping bag is still in found property and can be returned if the owner is contacted.

05/28/13, 0100 Hrs., SERGEANT [REDACTED]

gmcd

**SUPPLEMENTAL NARRATIVE:**

Name: [REDACTED]

Date: 11:26:42 05/28/13

SGT [REDACTED]/GMCD, Transcribed May 26, 2013

On 05/23/13, at approximately 1910 hours, members of the Skagit County High Risk Team were training when they received information that the Skagit River Bridge had collapsed.

We immediately secured from training and responded towards the scene. I responded to the County Shop in anticipation of picking up the river boat; however, DEPUTY [REDACTED] had already retrieved the boat and was launching. I then responded from the County Shop down Burlington Boulevard to the Whitmarsh Road scene.

Once on the scene I contacted DEPUTY [REDACTED] and SERGEANT [REDACTED]. I observed that a section of the I-5 bridge had fallen into the river. This section appeared to have folded and dropped into the river. I saw 2 vehicles on the collapsed section of roadway. A smaller orange car was on the westside of the structure and facing northbound. There was a male subject seated on the roof of that car. I also observed a brown pickup truck facing southbound and a male subject standing near the drivers door. There was a camping trailer laying upside down near the orange car.

The Skagit County river boat was in the river on the west side of the collapsed section of bridge. I observed that it was being piloted by DEPUTY [REDACTED] and I could see that SERGEANT [REDACTED] and DEPUTY [REDACTED] were also onboard. I conferred with DEPUTY [REDACTED] about what resources were on scene, what resources he needed, and our operational period.

I spoke with Washington State Patrol LIEUTENANT [REDACTED] and received updated, and ongoing information. It appeared at that time that only two vehicles had entered the water. One was the brown Dodge pickup truck that was southbound, pulling a camp trailer, and the other was a small orange car that was northbound. It appeared that the single occupant of the orange car, a

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## Incident Report

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younger white male, was seated on the roof of the car. I observed a male subject standing on the driver's side of the brown Dodge pickup truck, and he indicated to members of the boat crew that his wife was a passenger in the pickup truck and she was slightly injured. DEPUTY [REDACTED] advised me that the boat crew had a plan to remove the subject in the orange car first, as he appeared to be the least injured.

Once that subject was removed and brought to shore, he was turned over to fire department personnel. At that time DEPUTY [REDACTED] boarded the river boat and they returned out to maintain contact with the subjects in the brown Dodge truck. I observed that there was a large piece of concrete roadway positioned against the bridge structure, just forward of the pickup truck. This concrete slab afforded some landing area for responders to get close to the truck.

At that time the boat was in a good position to do an immediate rescue if anyone was to fall in or be swept away in the current. DEPUTY [REDACTED] advised that he wanted to maintain his position there until we could have the Navy arrive and decide if they wanted to remove the female via helicopter or if she was stable enough to be transported by boat.

After a short time a helicopter from NAS Whidbey Island did arrive and I contacted the flight crew. I escorted a flight crew member down to the landing area, where the river boat picked them up and drove back out to the scene. Once on the scene the flight crew EMT determined that the female patient was stable enough to be moved from the vehicle by boat rather than helicopter. Several rescue personnel then did remove the female from the boat.

While this rescue was taking place, I was coordinating efforts to get additional helicopters to the area. I requested dispatch contact the Custom and Border Protection (CBP) crew in Blaine to respond to the scene. I know they have FLIR capability and we were quickly losing daylight. The Snohomish County Sheriff's Office helicopter, Sno Hawk, was already on the scene, along with Snohomish County's Dive Rescue boat and several divers.

While the rescue of the couple was taking place in the brown Dodge truck, we received information that someone may have been swept downstream. I made contact with members of the Dike District #12 boat crew and asked them to contact other boats downstream and do a sweep of the downstream area for any possible victims. From the timeline I told them it was likely that a victim could be swept as far as Conway, and requested they begin searching from the scene southbound, which they did.

After a short time the Sno Hawk helicopter advised they had a female on the beach waving her arms frantically, trying to get attention. I directed SERGEANT [REDACTED] to make contact with that female, which she did. She indicated that the female wanted to point out debris floating by, consisting of a cooler and the truck bed liner from the Dodge truck. It did not appear that the female had seen any human victims.

I overheard members of the Tribal boat, specifically SERGEANT [REDACTED] advise that they had launched from the Edgewater area and were patrolling in that area. I requested them to remain there as we had plenty of boats up at the actual scene, and by this time any debris would likely be down by Edgewater Park area or farther south.

We continued the search efforts until I spoke with LIEUTENANT [REDACTED]

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Incident Report

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of the Washington State Patrol. He advised me that based on the interviews that his Sergeants and Troopers had conducted, it appeared that there were only two vehicles in the water and only three victims. There was no indication to believe that there were other cars in the water or any other victims at this time.

While this was taking place, members of Skagit Dive Rescue had been assembled at my vehicle for a possible rescue. I contacted senior members of Dive Rescue and with our updated information we did not feel it was appropriate to launch divers at this time. We had no specific information that other persons were in the water, and I did not feel it appropriate to risk on a vehicle recovery.

A short time after that, members of the media and governmental officials arrived. I briefed members of the Mount Vernon and Burlington city officials on the information we had up to date at that time. A short time later SHERIFF [REDACTED] and GOVERNOR [REDACTED] arrived. I briefed GOVERNOR [REDACTED] on the status of the search and rescue operation.

The Skagit County Sheriff's Office Search and Rescue Dive Team stood down, the Sheriff's Office boat was secured, and personnel responded back to their appropriate activities.

I then responded to the Emergency Operations Center and contacted SERGEANT [REDACTED]. At that time there was early conversation about rerouting traffic and other post collapse events; however, we did not feel there was any other search and rescue assistance needed at that time. I secured.

05/27/13, 1800 Hrs., SERGEANT [REDACTED]

gmc

#### SUPPLEMENTAL NARRATIVE:

Name: [REDACTED]

Date: 10:39:20 05/29/13

DEP [REDACTED] GMCD, Transcribed May 29, 2013

On 05/23/13, at approximately 1905 hours, I overheard Dispatch advising of a possible bridge collapse over the Skagit River. The initial report was that the bridge was the one located on Burlington Boulevard, then that was changed to the I-5 bridge across the Skagit River. I overheard on my scanner that there were several cars in the water, along with subjects in the water. I immediately responded from Burlington Boulevard and Fairhaven Avenue. I approached the scene from Whitmarsh Road, off of Burlington Boulevard.

Upon arrival there were other fire and police personnel on the scene. Once I walked over the top of the dike I saw that the northern section of the bridge had collapsed into the river and there were two vehicles tangled within the metal structure, in the water. I also saw there was at least one subject on top of an orange vehicle and there was also a subject standing on top of a gray pickup truck.

I relayed this information to DEPUTY [REDACTED] who was enroute to pick up the river boat, and would be responding to the scene, along with DEPUTY [REDACTED]

While waiting for the Sheriff's boat to arrive, I assisted with some crowd

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control.

Additional units were requested to respond, such as a swift water rescue unit and helicopters from the Coast Guard and NAS Whidbey. Also, in talking with other personnel on the scene it did not appear that there were any other subjects still in the water, and the only two vehicles involved were contained within the collapsed structure.

DEPUTY [redacted] did arrive on the scene in the Sheriff's boat and completed the rescue of the subjects from their vehicles.

By now there was a helicopter from NAS Whidbey on the scene and a short time later a helicopter from the Snohomish County Sheriff's Office also was flying overhead, and was checking downstream from the incident.

I stayed on the scene for a while longer and then cleared the scene to secure for the evening.

05/25/13, 0930 Hrs., DEPUTY [redacted]

gmcd

**SUPPLEMENTAL NARRATIVE:**

Name: [redacted]

Date: 08:24:56 05/30/13

SGT [redacted] GMCD, Transcribed May 30, 2013

On 05/29/13 I spoke with members of the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife about their response to the bridge incident.

I spoke with Wildlife Agent [redacted]. He advised me that there were a total of three Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife Agents utilized that day. OFFICER [redacted] told me that the three Game Agents launched from the Gardner Road Boat Launch area at approximately 2030 hours. The three subjects in the boat were Wildlife Agent [redacted] Wildlife [redacted] Wildlife Agent [redacted] Wildlife [redacted] from Whatcom County; and Wildlife Agent [redacted] Wildlife [redacted]

OFFICER [redacted] told me that they launched at approximately 2045 hours and ran the river down to the scene. He said they worked their way approximately 1-1/2 miles south of the bridge collapse and worked most of the beach area southbound downstream from the same, approximately 1-1/2 miles. They were in the water for approximately two hours and then secured.

I then contacted the Swinomish Tribal Police Department and spoke with OFFICER [redacted] IDA [redacted]. He advised me that four personnel went out in their Tribal river boat. He said the boat was piloted by SERGEANT [redacted] IDA [redacted] OFFICER [redacted] IDA [redacted] and Reserve Officer [redacted] IDA [redacted]. The four of them launched from Edgewater Park and went upstream. OFFICER [redacted] advised that they were in the water for approximately three to four hours. He said they did gather one piece of evidence, which was picked up by a civilian boat. He believed it was a piece of medical equipment. It was later determined to be a C-PAP machine that belonged to the female passenger in the Dodge pickup truck. OFFICER [redacted] also advised that three additional persons from Tribal PD,

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06/14/13

Incident Report

DETECTIVE [REDACTED] IDA [REDACTED] OFFICER [REDACTED] IDA [REDACTED] and OFFICER [REDACTED] all assisted the Washington State Patrol with road blocks and traffic.

The investigation continues.

SERGEANT [REDACTED]

gmcd

Printed: 10:05:16 06/14/13

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# Found Property

## Skagit County Sheriff's Office

### MASTER PROPERTY SHEET

Case # 13-03920 Unit # U-17 Date 5/24/13 Time 0400

Item # 177 Item Name Sleeping bag  
 Brand \_\_\_\_\_ Model/Desc \_\_\_\_\_  
 Ser # \_\_\_\_\_ Color Blue/Red/Gray  
 Value \_\_\_\_\_ Evidence/Safekeep/FoundProp/Other \_\_\_\_\_  
 Owner Unknown Name #/DOB \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 Notes I-5 Bridge Collapse

Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Brand \_\_\_\_\_ Model/Desc \_\_\_\_\_  
 Ser # \_\_\_\_\_ Color \_\_\_\_\_  
 Value \_\_\_\_\_ Evidence/Safekeep/FoundProp/Other \_\_\_\_\_  
 Owner \_\_\_\_\_ Name #/DOB \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 Notes \_\_\_\_\_

Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Brand \_\_\_\_\_ Model/Desc \_\_\_\_\_  
 Ser # \_\_\_\_\_ Color \_\_\_\_\_  
 Value \_\_\_\_\_ Evidence/Safekeep/FoundProp/Other \_\_\_\_\_  
 Owner \_\_\_\_\_ Name #/DOB \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 Notes \_\_\_\_\_

Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Name \_\_\_\_\_  
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 Ser # \_\_\_\_\_ Color \_\_\_\_\_  
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### Skagit County Sheriff's Office MASTER PROPERTY SHEET

Case # 13-06770 Unit # U-40 Date 5-24-13 Time 0815

Item # 1-40 Item Name DIGITAL PICTURE CD

Brand \_\_\_\_\_ Model/Desc \_\_\_\_\_

Ser # \_\_\_\_\_ Color \_\_\_\_\_

Value \_\_\_\_\_ Evidence/Safe/FoundProp/Other \_\_\_\_\_

Owner SCSO Name #/DOB \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Notes I-5 BRIDGE COLLAPSE

Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Name \_\_\_\_\_

Brand \_\_\_\_\_ Model/Desc \_\_\_\_\_

Ser # \_\_\_\_\_ Color \_\_\_\_\_

Value \_\_\_\_\_ Evidence/Safe/FoundProp/Other \_\_\_\_\_

Owner \_\_\_\_\_ Name #/DOB \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Notes \_\_\_\_\_

Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Name \_\_\_\_\_

Brand \_\_\_\_\_ Model/Desc \_\_\_\_\_

Ser # \_\_\_\_\_ Color \_\_\_\_\_

Value \_\_\_\_\_ Evidence/Safe/FoundProp/Other \_\_\_\_\_

Owner \_\_\_\_\_ Name #/DOB \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Notes \_\_\_\_\_

Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Name \_\_\_\_\_

Brand \_\_\_\_\_ Model/Desc \_\_\_\_\_

Ser # \_\_\_\_\_ Color \_\_\_\_\_

Value \_\_\_\_\_ Evidence/Safe/FoundProp/Other \_\_\_\_\_

Owner \_\_\_\_\_ Name #/DOB \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Notes \_\_\_\_\_

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