

Summary of interview with laonnis Paschali on 14 September 2017 at Lunar House.

Present

laonnis (Yan) Paschali

Claire Mangan, ISU

Julie Galvin, PSU

Duration 1 hour

Julie Galvin explained the interview process and that she will compile the facts and report to Dan Twynam to make a decision

Julie Galvin - What is your current role?

Yan Paschali - I am an Immigration Officer. I have only been in the position for a short period of time. I am an arrest officer for the Home Office, Immigration Enforcement.

Julie Galvin - How long for?

Yan Paschali - I was live for 2 - 2 half weeks

Julie Galvin - Who do you arrest?

Yan Paschali - I go out on visits looking for subjects, ask questions and if they are who we are looking for I arrest them.

Julie Galvin - Have you done any arrests?

Yan Paschali - I've made six arrests.

Julie Galvin - Are you required to use force in your current role?

Yan Paschali - Yes if needed.

Julie Galvin - What part of your role might you be required to use force?

Yan Paschali - If the subject became violent or aggressive.

Julie Galvin - Who, immigration offenders?

Yan Paschali - Yes.

CM- In an arrest team use of force can be as simple as putting someone in an escort position by holding someone's arm, which would be a use of force on our database, so it's a wide range of use of force. Use of force could be leading to a vehicle, handcuffing, very rarely does anyone become violent. Most of our use of force will be handcuffing and escort position.

Julie Galvin - But there is the potential?

Claire Mangan –Potential.

Julie Galvin- In your current role are you dealing with vulnerable or children?

Yan Paschali – I haven't done as yet but its possible.

Julie Galvin - What is your response to allegations made in Panorama?

Yan Paschali -The programme only shows a very small part of what happened, you haven't heard my side of the story and no one has asked me what I was doing. Everyone has only seen what the narrator said I was doing. The detainee tried to hurt himself and take his life quite a few times that day. On this particular occasion I believed whole heartedly that he was attempting to swallow something which could potentially kill him, or harm him. That wasn't shown on the TV at all. The reason my hands were in the position they were was because I didn't want him to swallow. I didn't want to put my fingers in his mouth as they could get bitten off. I did what I thought was best at the time to stop him swallowing what was in his mouth that could kill him, or harm him.

From what was on TV and my experience in custodial care, I went in, it's not shown but my recollection was there was a fight going on between an officer and the detainee, so we took him to the ground. I know the words I used at the beginning were shocking to anyone watching but my reason for being that way was to gain control; I wanted to shock him into compliance; to stop his aggressive behaviour and bring him down. Which in my opinion is what happened. He had something in his mouth which was why he was in the position he was in. We are taught that you have their head between your legs and brace one hand on the forehead and another on the chin. My hands weren't on his forehead or below his chin because I didn't want him to swallow the article, which I think was a phone battery, but I wasn't sure at the time if it was razor blades as he had done this quite a few times that day. I believe I did stop him from swallowing it and I believe I saved his life. I know the reporter was saying I was strangling him to death but if I was doing that the guy wouldn't have been able to scream and shout as he was doing. I remained quite calm in my opinion after the initial verbal commands, shock tactics. I wanted him to freeze, to stop moving so we could calm the situation down. After that I am completely calm. At one point my hand is resting on my thigh, how am I throttling him if its resting on my thigh? What you don't see is the undercover reporter saying, "Yan Yan Yan" He overreacted in my opinion, he was behaving weird. I said to him "Callum, will you calm down, calm down everything is under control." That is why my hand came away as I was gesturing to Callum to calm down, waving my hand and it went to my thigh, but I think they have cut it out so you don't see anything, which shows I'm composed and in control of the situation. My justification for my hands being where they were is that I thought it was necessary at the time and justified as I didn't want him to swallow what is in his mouth. If I had not done that and this guy had does with

me sitting on top of him what position would I be in because I didn't do anything to try and help.

Julie Galvin -So prior to the filming you have to go in and said things to shock him...

Yan Paschali - I didn't say that prior to filming, you don't have to do anything. The idea is to shock him to not carry on with the behaviour he was doing at the time. If you watch the footage he stops. The shocking words I said were "don't move you fucking piece of shit". If you hear the sounds only I said "don't move you fucking piece of shit I don't want to put you to sleep". But they said I said "I'm going to put you to sleep". I know the words sound terrible but it achieved what I wanted it to achieve and he stopped.

Julie Galvin -When you said that was he not lying on his back?

Yan Paschali – He was but those words had just taken him down and its important that you see that.

Julie Galvin – So those words were said to shock him and get his compliance and then your hands are in the position they are to stop him swallowing?

Yan Paschali- Swallowing, I didn't stop him breathing. The reporter said my hands were digging into his throat- they were not, they were supporting his neck. My arms weren't pumping. If you are throttling someone your arms pump/move, mine were still. How is that throttling him? Why did the detainee not make a complaint when I released him and slowly left the room, at no time did he complain, or say why did you do that, or swear at me? I sat down with the detainee the same day after he calmed down . I went to chat with him and I believe there is footage on the G4S CCTV landing cameras which will show the detainee shaking my hand as we spoke and I explained it wasn't right he tried to kill himself on more than one occasion and if he wanted help with his immigration issues we would be happy to help and why not deal with those issues instead of all this other stuff. He thanked me for it.

Julie Galvin – Why didn't you do any report?

Yan Paschali- Why said I didn't? The BBC programme, I did write an incident report which was left on the desk, which is common practice there.

Julie Galvin -G4S have no record of any report.

Yan Paschali -That's not a surprise to me at all.

Julie Galvin -What time did you write the incident report?

Yan Paschali- On that day, I can't remember it was a few months ago, at the time of an incident if I was to write any report the procedure is for the manager to relieve the staff from where they are working and supply other staff so whoever can go and sit down and write the report, if you have been involved in any incident. You should be

given half an hour forty five minutes to write the report. I had no breaks that day. Its common practice you don't get breaks so finding the time is difficult. There were a number of issues on the wing that day so you are running around dealing with other things, the first thing you will deal with are live situations, I cant walk off the unit. I wrote the report later that day and left it on the desk. I believe Callum Talley got rid of the report. And said there was no report. He came up to me afterwards saying are we doing a report? As if I'm covering and saying there isn't going to be a report. I said to him as it stands hold fire

Julie Galvin -Why?

Yan Paschali- If you are in charge of 20 people on a wing, there are still 19 people needing you for whatever reason.

Julie Galvin -You could have said "yes, hold on" It sounds like you are saying hold fire, encouraging him not to write one.

Yan Paschali - I was saying can you give me 5 minutes. Also he's talking to me as if I was in charge of that unit. He had been there much longer than me, I'd been there a matter of months, he'd been there 2 years and should of known the procedure about writing a report. I come from a prison service background, detention centres are different and you have a guy who has been there 2 years asking me what he should do. That is not because he didn't know what to do, he was trying to paint a picture of me and G4S.

Julie Galvin - I appreciate he has his own motive, but you could have responded, "yes, but I need to do it later" rather than hold fire, don't do it now.

Yan Paschali- I wouldn't have been able to do it now as I was still working.

Julie Galvin - When start at BH?

Yan Paschali- I can't actually remember. The middle of last year. I hadn't been there a year.

Julie Galvin -When did you leave the Prison Service?

Yan Paschali - Some point in 2016, I'm not sure. There was an ongoing situation in the Prison Service, I had resigned, there was an investigation and I was accused of a few things I didn't do. Then I'd left and I got called back in to speak to the governor and I resigned again. I basically left as I was given a final written warning for leaving the toilet door open. No one has ever had a warning, verbal or otherwise, in the Prison Service for that. I thought it was out of order that I received a final written warning.

Julie Galvin -So you left and went to G4S?