

**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC PROTECTION
INTERNAL AFFAIRS**

**John Texter, Witness Interview
IA 2013-07-318**

July 19, 2013

Present:

John Texter, Officer, Beach Safety

David Vanis, Captain

Lynea Baker, Transcribing Secretary

Vanis: This is Captain Vanis with Volusia County Department of Public Protection, Internal Affairs Unit. Today's date is July 19th, 2013, time is now 1212 hours. I'm at Volusia County Beach Safety Headquarters, 515 S. Atlantic Ave, Daytona Beach. Sir for the record could you state your name & position?

Texter: Officer John Texter

Vanis: Alright, I'm interviewing Officer Texter today in regards to internal affairs case # 2013-07-318. Sir you understand you're going to providing a sworn statement today?

Texter: I do.

Vanis: Alright, will you raise your right hand for me? Do you swear & affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth & nothing but the truth?

Texter: I do.

Vanis: Ok, & you're hereby advised that you're being interviewed as part of an official administrative investigation being conducted by the Volusia County Dept of Public Protection Internal Affairs Unit. You'll be asked questions specifically directed & narrowly related to the performance of your official duties, and/or fitness for continued employment. You're entitled to all the rights & privileges guaranteed by the laws and the constitution of this state & the constitution of the United States, including the right to not be compelled to incriminate yourself. I am further advising you that if you refuse to testify or answer questions relating to the

performance of your official duties, or fitness for continued employment it will be considered an act of insubordination & a violation of the direct order given by a superior. If you do answer neither your statements, nor any information or evidence that is gained by reason of said statements can be used against you in any subsequent criminal proceeding. These statements however may be used against you in relation to division disciplinary action. Do you understand?

Texter: I do.

Vanis: Can you describe your relationship with Captain Todd Snipes?

Texter: We start at the same time, we started out as lifeguards for beach patrol officers, beach safety officers, um, I talk to him randomly on the job & basically that's it.

Vanis: Ok, & you socialize outside of work with him?

Texter: Once in a while, I mean, here & there, it's been 2 or 3 months, ya know.

Vanis: Alright, within the division are you, are you one of his direct reports, do you work for him, or have you worked for him in the past?

Texter: I have. Actually he works in a different district than I am so no, I am not underneath him, but if he moves into my zone then I am, ya know, he is a superior officer for me, to me. I mean, I'm not right now, he's not my superior officer.

Vanis: Do you & Captain Snipes frequently exchanged text messages or do you exchange text messages?

Texter: Once in a while, he's sent me a text message, I've sent him twice something back, but

Vanis: And what was, what kind of content

Texter: It was just, you know, um, are you at, are you down on the beach, or can you, can you meet me up at Seabreeze, do you got a unit near Seabreeze, cuz we couldn't get them on the radio, or what have you, I mean just

Vanis: Alright, on July 14th, last Sunday, did you receive a text or picture message from Captain Snipes?

Texter: I did.

Vanis: Alright, and were you on duty at the time you received that?

Texter: No I wasn't.

Vanis: Ok. What, do you remember what the content of the text, of the picture message was?

Texter: I think it was in reference to the Trayvon Martin case.

Vanis: Ok, can you describe it in any detail, I mean was it, what was it, pictures? Text?

Texter: Pictures, there was a couple pictures, & there was a couple, um, responses that were in, er, type written

Vanis: Was this only sent to you or was it a group message?

Texter: It was a group message

Vanis: Do you know any of the other parties involved?

Texter: I know a couple people that are contacts with me from being further lifeguard employees or beach officers & the only ones that I knew of were Rich Gardner, Jakoa Simmons & Eric Holton.

Vanis: Ok.

Texter: Yeah, the other numbers that were on there, I don't even know who they are, I mean they don't come up as a contact of

Vanis: So you pretty much just see a phone number & you don't

Texter: That's it.

Vanis: You don't, you don't recognize them because you don't know them?

Texter: Exactly.

Vanis: Did you reply to this text at all?

Texter: No I did not.

Vanis: Did you forward this text to anybody?

Texter: No I did not.

Vanis: Did you forward any of the pictures to anybody?

Texter: No I did not.

Vanis: Did you report this to a supervisor at all?

Texter: No I did not.

Vanis: Do you ever use your phone for work related purposes? To call a supervisor, scheduling...

Texter: Well yeah, I mean I call a supervisor, I mean, I've used it for car breaks, trying to get photos of people from 7-Elevens, photo crops, but just to pull that picture out & send it by email to you or whatever.

Vanis: Alright, well can you show me the message on your phone?

Texter: Yes I can.

Vanis: While you're doing that, did you, did you request this content by any way, did you ever ask him, ask to receive this from him?

Texter: No I did not. I was, actually I was with my daughter on Sunday having dinner with her when they popped up & I opened them & shut them down.

Vanis: Are you, do you know if you're able to email this? Like, do you know if you'd be able to email the entire thread? Would you know how to do that?

Texter: Like to...

Vanis: To me.

Texter: Uh yeah, I probably could. All I have to do is share, but then I'd be forwarding it to you.

Vanis: Yeah, we don't have to do that. I don't want to put it on my phone.

....pause....

Vanis: And do you have a Facebook account.

Texter: I do.

Vanis: Are you Facebook friends with Captain Snipes?

Texter: I was.

Vanis: Did you see any, in the same time frame, 14th 15th did you ever see any Facebook postings?

Texter: I saw some, some feed. I thought it was his brother Troy.

Vanis: Do you remember what that was?

Texter: Uh very vaguely, something about the Trayvon Martin case, about um, I can't remember, it was something to do with the context of rest in peace you got what you wanted, or you deserve what you got, or

Vanis: Ok

Texter: Or pull your pants up, or respect, something to that nature.

Vanis: Ok. Have you read the recent article in the paper about this?

Texter: Mmm Hmm

Vanis: That's a yes?

Texter: Yes yes

Vanis: Ok. Have you talked to the media about this?

Texter: No I have not.

Vanis: Ok. Have you, prior, prior to yesterday had you discussed this text message with anybody else?

Texter: No.

Vanis: Has anybody contacted you about this text message?

Texter: No.

Vanis: So any of the people that you knew in there never contacted you?

Texter: No.

Vanis: Ok, did Captain Snipes ever try to contact you about this text message?

Texter: No.

Vanis: Ok. Well Officer Texter I think that's all I've got, unless you've got anything else you wanna add.

Texter: No I'm good.

Vanis: Alright. The time is now 1220 hours & we'll be off the record. Thank you.