PROBABLE CAUSE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL
Investigations Division

		Officer Status:	File Review Required
Case Number:	009-660-06-24	Officer Name:	Bertsch, Matthew David
Is the Officer on POST Probation?	○ YES ◉ NO	Officer Certification:	Multi-Certified
If Yes, Case Number:		Is the Probation History Included?	○ YES ○ NO
Is there a companion case?		○ YES	◉ NO
If Yes, Case Number(s):			
Did Parent Agency Complete Internal Investigation?		◉ YES	○ NO
Was there a Criminal Investigation?		○ YES	◉ NO
If Yes, agency responsible for criminal case:			
Is criminal case included?		○ YES	○ NO
Is criminal case concluded?		○ YES	○ NO
Is Officer Currently Employed?		○ YES	◉ NO
If Yes, Current Agency:			
Did Officer submit a response to POST?		○ YES	◉ NO
If arrested: Did Officer self-report?		○ YES	○ NO
Polygraph/Voice Stress Administered?		○ YES	◉ NO
Results of Polygraph/Voice Stress:		Please select:	
Is a juvenile involved?		○ YES	◉ NO

OATH OF SHAME

Executive Summary

On 06/24/2024, a POST investigation was initiated on Communications Officer Matthew D. Bertsch after he resigned on 05/30/24 in lieu of termination. Bertsch was also the department's GCIC Coordinator, responsible to ensure department staff were in compliance with GCIC Training.

The Formal Investigation (#: 2024-006) sustained 2 policy violations: truthfulness and prompt performance of duty / neglect of duty. This case involved Bertsch telling Director Potrzebowski that only one staff member was not in compliance with GCIC training, when in fact it was many staff members who were not in compliance. The case also involved Bertsch failing to give suitable attention to the performance of his duties for an upcoming GBI audit by withholding information from the Director for over a week that he was "hopelessly behind" in preparation for the GCIC audit. Bertsch said he withheld the information because he was afraid he would be fired on the spot.

I was unable to speak with Officer Bertsch, but did leave him 3 voicemails. I was not able to email him because there was no personal email address listed in the Gateway.

Officer Bertsch did not submit a response letter to POST. This summary is based on the details in the narrative summary.

PROBABLE CAUSE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL
Investigations Division
CASE NO. 009-660-06-24

Communications Officer Matthew David Bertsch
Administrative
Roswell Police Department

The following is a summary of the information provided to this POST investigator.

Communications Officer Matthew D. Bertsch began his law enforcement *(LE)* career when he was hired on 05/25/04 by Roswell PD for a Jailor position. He transferred to a Communications Officer position on 05/08/17. On 05/30/24, he resigned in lieu of termination. In total, he had 20 years of LE experience.

In addition to being a Communications Officer for the City of Roswell, Officer Bertsch was also the GCIC Coordinator, responsible for department staff were in compliance with GCIC Training.

Per the Formal Investigation – FI# 2024-006

On 03/04/2024, Ms. Melanie Harris *(GBI CJIS Compliance Specialist)* emailed Officer Bertsch, following up on their conversation earlier that day. She was asking Bertsch if 04/25/24, beginning at 0900 am will work the department's audit date. Bertsch notified Director Potrzebowski of the audit date. The Director then scheduled weekly meetings to stay updated for the upcoming GCIC audit. A few weeks into the meetings, Bertsch confirmed that there was only one staff member that was not in compliance with the GCIC training.

On 04/23/2024, Officer Bertsch admitted to Director Potrzebowski that there were many more employees out of compliance and not just the one individual as previously discussed. The Director asked Bertsch why he did not report the truth, Bertsch stated, *"Yes, I know I lead you to believe that but I lied to you."* When asked when he became aware that the department was behind on preparation for the audit and would most likely not be in position to pass, Bertsch stated he became aware of the significance for the deficiencies during the week of April 15th. He further stated that he did not say anything at that time because he did not want to lose his job. Bertsch continued by saying that he was so far behind on his duties because he was so overwhelmed from his increased daily tasks.

Audio Recording of Officer Bertsch's Formal Investigation Interview

During the formal investigation interview of Officer Bertsch, he was asked why he did not tell Director Potrzebowski the moment he realized that he was *"hopelessly behind"* in preparing for the GBI GCIC audit. Bertsch said, "I knew I should have told him, but honestly I was afraid I would be fired on the spot. I just…apologize. I just felt that I……. I was making very bad decisions and didn't want to be fired at that point, so I withheld the information."

Officer Bertsch later admitted to lying to Director Potrzebowski when he initially told him that there was only one employee who had not completed the required GCIC training. There were many more employees who had not completed the training. Officer Bertsch said, *"I did*

SHIELDS OF SHAME

Communications Officer Matthew David Bertsch
Administrative
Roswell Police Department

tell the Director that I had lied to him. There are no excuses, but I was behind due to my daily tasks."

On 07/03/2024, I called Officer Bertsch three times and left him a voicemail each time. I explained that I was assigned to his POST case, concerning his certification only, due to his resignation in lieu of termination from Roswell PD. I said that I wanted to speak with him to explain the POST process and answer any questions that he might have. I also commended him for his honesty with the investigators in his IA interview where he admitted to his mistakes and did not make excuses. I was not able to email him due to him not having a personal email address listed in the Gateway.

The formal investigation, various emails, SOPs/policies/general orders/procedures/etc. relevant to this case, audio recordings of formal investigation interviews, and other agency documents are located in the case file.

DISCIPLINARY HISTORY
Noted above.

CRIMINAL HISTORY
None.

VIOLATION

It is hereby asserted this individual is in violation of the following sections of O.C.G.A. 35-8-7.1 (a)(6),(7) as attached:

In accordance with O.C.G.A. 35-8-7.1 (b) (1), the Probable Cause Committee makes the following recommendation to the Council:

_____	_____
_____	_____
Chairman, Probable Cause Committee	Chairman, POST Council
Date:	Date:

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