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Six US cops fired 3 years after shooting 137 bullets during car chase

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Six [US police](#) officers who fired 137 bullets into a car carrying two unarmed African Americans lost their jobs, three years after the deadly [car chase](#) in Cleveland, Ohio.

City officials said yesterday they hoped the disciplinary actions would bring "closure" to a city struggling to rebuild community trust following a series of high-profile police shootings.

[Cleveland](#) police also faced criticism after Tamir Rice, a 12-year-old black boy carrying a toy gun, was fatally shot by a white officer at a playground in 2014. A grand jury declined last month to issue charges in that case.

Cleveland pledged to overhaul its police force and aspire to "bias-free" law enforcement under an agreement reached with the US Justice Department in May.

The "consent decree" was announced two days after protesters filled Cleveland streets following the acquittal of a white police officer charged in the deadly 2012 chase.

Patrolman Michael Brelo, 31, was one of 13 officers involved in the 22-mile (35 kilometre) high-speed chase that ended in the deaths of Timothy Russell and Malissa Williams.

The couple's car had backfired as it drove past Cleveland police headquarters, and police thought the sound was a gunshot.

A total of 137 rounds were fired at the car, including 49 by Brelo. He shot the final 15 from the hood of Russell's Chevrolet Malibu.

Six of the other officers involved in the chase were suspended and one has retired.

"The politics in this city is absolutely appalling, and those fired will get their jobs back," police union president Steve Loomis told reporters.

"How many people have to tell us this was a justified shooting? It's tragic that it went down this way, but at the end of the day, two people high on crack cocaine, high on marijuana, one of them intoxicated, made the decisions that they made and we responded."

City officials said the officers crossed the line and endangered their fellow officers when they unleashed 137 bullets in just 20 seconds.

Mayor Frank Jackson defended the amount of time it took to discipline the officers.

"What we've talked about from the beginning is conducting a process that has due-process at its core and is fair," he told reporters.

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