

Alabama child hostage-taker shot multiple times, body removed from bunker Wednesday night



By **The Associated Press**

on February 07, 2013 at 2:19 PM, updated February 07, 2013 at 3:32 PM

BIRMINGHAM, Alabama — A man who held a 5-year-old boy hostage in an underground bunker for nearly a week before dying in a shootout with the FBI received multiple gunshot wounds, a county coroner said today.

Dale County Coroner Woodrow Hilboldt said he was allowed into the bunker in the southeastern Alabama community of Midland City on Wednesday evening. The raid of the bunker occurred Monday afternoon.

He pronounced 65-year-old Jimmy Lee Dykes dead at 8:58 p.m. Wednesday.

"He had multiple gunshot wounds," Hilboldt told The Associated Press. The coroner declined to say how many times Dykes had been shot or where the wounds were on his body. He said the body was taken to a state forensics laboratory in Montgomery for an autopsy.

The body was removed from the bunker on Wednesday night, FBI agent Jason Pack said Thursday, **hours after the FBI announced that it had found no more explosives** on the property besides those that were discovered in a PVC pipe leading into the bunker and inside the bunker itself.

FBI Special Agent Paul Bresson said in an email late Wednesday that the technicians who scoured the 100-acre property in the days after the standoff ended had "completed their work and cleared the crime scene."

"No additional devices were found," he added.

Bresson said evidence-review teams are now sifting through the crime scene, a process that could take two to three more days. A shooting-review team from Washington also is reviewing the hostage-taking episode, which began Jan. 29 and ended Monday when Dykes was killed in a gunfight with the FBI's Hostage Rescue Team.

The team, which is the agency's full-time counterterrorism unit, raided the bunker and rescued the 5-year-old boy, FBI spokesman Jason Pack said. Trained in military tactics and outfitted with combat-style gear and weapons, the group was formed 30 years ago in preparation for the 1984 Olympics in Los Angeles.

According to a U.S. official, about a dozen Navy Seabees, who specialize in naval construction, helped authorities build a mock-up of the bunker to plan the FBI assault. The official, who was not authorized to discuss the rescue effort, spoke Wednesday on condition of anonymity.

Hilboldt, who got a close look at the bunker Wednesday night, described it as being about 6 feet-by-8 feet with an 8-foot-high plywood ceiling. The ceiling contained a 2-foot-by-2-foot hatch for a door and a ladder extending to the floor from the opening, Hilboldt said. The interior was lined with concrete blocks and the bunker contained only "makeshift" furniture, he said.

"There wasn't much room," Hilboldt said, adding that the officers who stormed the bunker "did good with what they had to work with."

Hilboldt said the FBI already had removed many items from the bunker and conducted an inventory. He wouldn't go into details about what was still there, such as toys that had been delivered to the child or electronic equipment.

Authorities said the **standoff began a week ago Tuesday** when Dykes boarded a bus full of children and gunned down driver Charles Albert Poland Jr. as Poland sought to protect the 21 children on board. According to officials, the gunman then seized the boy, whom law enforcement authorities have identified only by his first name, Ethan, and fled with his hostage to the nearby bunker, setting up the standoff that captured national attention.

On Wednesday, Ethan's sixth birthday, Midland City residents sought to resume a normal life in their tight-knit rural community nestled amid peanut and cotton farms.

The boy, who has Asperger's syndrome and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, was said to be acting like a normal kid despite his ordeal.

Officials hope to eventually throw a party to celebrate Ethan's birthday. They also plan to honor Poland's memory.

Jay Reeves of The Associated Press wrote this article.

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