

# Border Forensics and the Independent Commission of Inquiry on the death of Roger Nzoy Wilhelm reveal new findings in the death of Nzoy.



3D reconstruction of the moment the third and final shot is fired at Nzoy. Border Forensics, 2025

**Roger Nzoy Wilhelm was killed by the police on 30 August 2021.** Four years later, and after two failed attempts by the public prosecutor to close the criminal investigation, light has still not been shed on the exact circumstances that led to Nzoy's death.

At the request of Nzoy's family, Border Forensics (BF), in collaboration with the Independent Commission of Inquiry on the Death of Roger Nzoy Wilhelm (the Independent Commission), **has conducted a two-year counter-investigation that reveals new evidence on the case and locates Nzoy's killing in relation to other cases of police-related deaths in Switzerland** to analyse the structural conditions that have enabled them.

Our video analysis combined with 3D-reconstruction leads us to refute the criminal investigation's findings and narrative according to which Nzoy aimed to attack with a knife the police officer who shot him. Instead we demonstrate that Nzoy's hands were open just before the first two shots were fired at him. It was thus highly unlikely that he was holding a knife at that moment.

Elio Panese, lead researcher, Border Forensics: *"What emerges from our research is that the police officers' inaccurate and biased perception of Nzoy as a threat led them to prioritise the use of lethal force over assistance and care."*

We further highlight the lack of independence in the conduct of in the conduct of criminal investigations on police officers.

Carmela Schaller, lawyer, member of the Independent Commission: *"The structural entanglement of the public prosecutor's office and the police in the Canton of Vaud impedes the independence and impartiality of criminal investigations on cases of police-related death. This contributes to a lack of accountability."*

This collaborative investigation also highlights that the quest for justice comes at a tremendous cost for the families who are confronted with double violence: the killing of a loved one, and the long and re-traumatizing legal processes which often deny their rights and misrepresent or criminalise the victim.

Our analysis further locates Nzoy's killing in relation to other cases of police-related deaths in Switzerland and analyse the structural conditions that have enabled them. We demonstrate that the 'othering' of Nzoy, including his racialisation as a 'man of colour', shaped the response of the police that led to his death.

Stanislas Michel, geostatistical analyst, Border Forensics: *"While the circumstances of Nzoy's death are unique, it is not an isolated incident. People perceived as 'others' as a result of their racialisation, gender, socio-legal status, psychopathology or drug use are disproportionately exposed to lethal police practices in Switzerland."*

Getou, Collectif Afro-Swiss, member of the Independent Commission: *"The death of Nzoy is not just an individual tragedy, but a lens through which to examine how structures, historical narratives, and unspoken hierarchies converge to produce lethal consequences for a portion of the population and further the perpetuation of police violence."*

## **Press contact**

The Independent Commission of Inquiry on the Death of Roger Nzoy Wilhelm

[contact@nzoycommission.org](mailto:contact@nzoycommission.org) / +41 78 346 929

## Background Information

*On 30 August 2021, Roger Nzoy Wilhelm, a 37-year-old Black Swiss and South African man, was shot by a police officer at Morges train station, Switzerland, and left unassisted for over six minutes. He died at the scene. Over the past years, Nzoy's case has become a symbol for a social movement against racist police violence in Switzerland. Civil society tirelessly joins forces to honour the memory of many victims who died at the hands of police in Switzerland, support their families, and call – or act – for justice.*

*A broad variety of news outlets have since extensively reported on Nzoy's death, underscoring the case's importance for public interest in Switzerland, for example Republik, 22.2.2025, ["17 Uhr 59 und 10 Sekunden"](#).*

*In [May 2025](#), the Criminal Appeals Chamber of the Cantonal Tribunal cancelled a no-proceedings order of the public prosecutor's office and instructed to open a proceeding against for failure to offer aid duringin an emergency in addition to the ongoing proceeding for homicide.*

## Border Forensics

*Border Forensics ([Website](#)) is a non-profit association based in Geneva. BF produces human rights reports, maps, multimedia reconstructions that ground demands of accountability for the violation of human rights. BF's findings have notably been presented in national and international courts and people's tribunals, discussed in parliaments and political assemblies of various kinds, widely published internationally and featured in exhibitions and public events.*

## The Independent Commission of Inquiry on the Death of Roger Nzoy Wilhelm

*The Commission ([Website](#)) was founded in May 2023 to investigate the circumstances of Nzoy's death. The Independent Commission of Inquiry on the Death of Roger Nzoy Wilhelm is a group of experts constituted by Nzoy's family. It is composed of lawyers, psychologists, physicians, sociologists, political scientists, anthropologists, historians and cultural scientists. They work closely with Nzoy's family and their lawyer and conduct research and provide expertise on the case to support their demand for truth and justice.*