

Part-time Ambridge police officer accused of buying drugs while on duty, informing dealers of investigations

[2013 Bought Drugs/Andrew Wanto/Police Officer Ambridge PA](#)

A part-time Ambridge police officer bought drugs while on duty and unmasked confidential informants to local drug dealers, the State Attorney General's Office said on Wednesday.

Andrew Wanto, 29, of Leet is charged with attempted drug possession, obstructing administration of law and hindering apprehension or prosecution. He remained free on \$25,000 unsecured bond.

“He compromised undercover investigations and divulged information,” said Ambridge police Chief James Mann, who said he doesn’t believe that anyone was injured as a result but that “several” investigations are compromised.

Wanto, while on duty and in an Ambridge police car on Tuesday, obtained an Oxycontin pill from a confidential informant working for the attorney general's office, according to a criminal complaint filed by Robert Gift, a special agent for the office.

Mann said information about Wanto's alleged drug activity first surfaced during an unrelated drug investigation nearly a month ago by police in Ambridge, Leetsdale and Harmony in Butler County.

Information was turned over to the Attorney General's Office, Mann said.

According to the complaint, confidential informants told investigators that Wanto had been buying drugs, including cocaine and pills, for several months, sometimes while in an Ambridge police cruiser.

Wanto admitted on Tuesday to making drug purchases and revealing information about investigations, Gift wrote. Mann said Wanto resigned before he was arrested at the Ambridge police station.

Mann said Wanto had an earlier back injury, “acknowledged he has a problem” and said he would go to drug rehabilitation.

He said Wanto had been working in Ambridge since December 2009. Mann said Wanto also worked full-time for the Leet road department and part time for Leet police, of which his father, Bill Wanto, is chief.

Bill Wanto could not be reached on Wednesday.