



Ohio Attorney General's Office Bureau of Criminal Investigation Investigative Report



2025-3488

Officer Involved Critical Incident - 371 SR 180, Chillicothe,
OH 45601 (L)

Investigative Activity: Scene Processing
Involves: Ross County Sheriff's Office
Activity Date: 10/26/2025
Activity Location: 371 SR 180, Chillicothe, Ohio 45601
Authoring Agent: Special Agent Brittney VanBibber #186

On October 26, 2025, the Ross County Sheriff's Office (RCSO) requested assistance from the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) reference an officer involved critical incident (OICI). It was reported that the RCSO responded to a disorderly conduct call for service. During their investigation, deputies reportedly attempted to contact an involved party, later identified as Bryan Rothe (Rothe). Rothe ran from deputies in the direction of his residence. Deputies deployed tasers, however Rothe was able to retreat into his home. Allegedly, Rothe returned to the front door area of the home armed with a rifle and fired at the two deputies. The deputies returned fire striking Rothe. Rothe was medically transported to Adena Medical Center where he was pronounced deceased. No deputies were injured. Special Agent (SA) Brittney VanBibber and SA Mathew Austin, along with members of the BCI Major Case Response Team, responded to assist.

SA VanBibber arrived at 371 SR 180, Chillicothe, OH at approximately 1751 hours. The scene was secured with crime scene tape, marked police cruisers, and RCSO personnel. RCSO obtained a signed search warrant for the property and agents began processing at approximately 1817 hours. SA VanBibber utilized a crime scene log to record access into the scene. The scene was documented through photography, aerial photography with a drone, and the use of a Leica 3D scanner.



Image 1. Drone photograph of 371 SR 180

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Ohio Attorney General's Office Bureau of Criminal Investigation Investigative Report



2025-3488

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The scene was described as a single-story white and gray home with a fenced front yard, detached garage, and multiple outbuildings. The front of the home had a small, covered stoop leading to the front door. Near the front door were multiple pieces of furniture including what appeared to be a set of wooden bunk bed stairs and there was a utility trailer in the front yard.

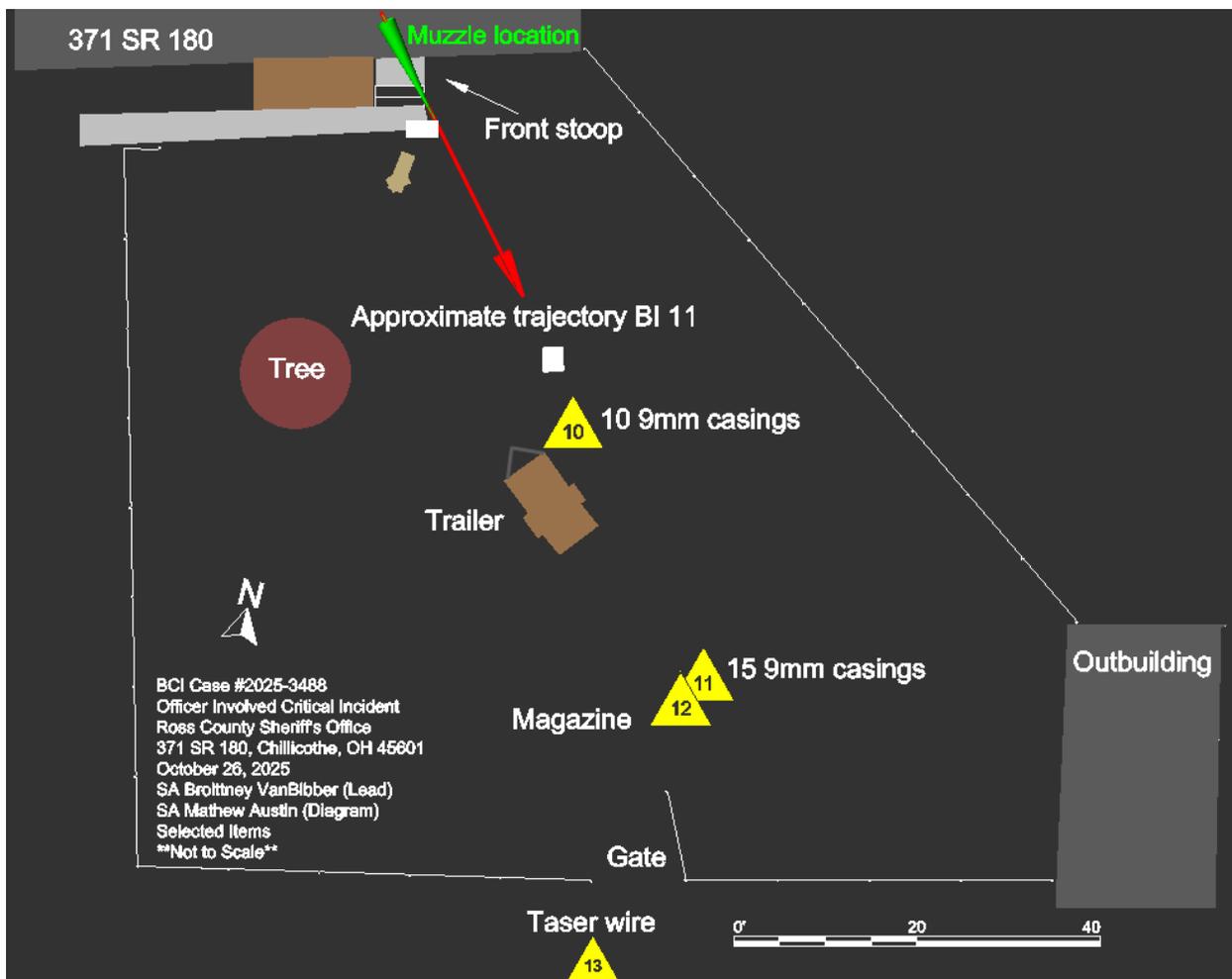


Image 2. Diagram of yard including selected items

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Bureau of Criminal Investigation
Investigative Report**



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The interior of the home consisted of a living room, office area, kitchen, 2 bedrooms (one unfinished), one master suite, secondary bathroom and laundry room. The main entry door had multiple signs affixed to it that related to firearms, the military, and politics. Multiple firearms were observed throughout the house including two gun cabinets in the living room with a rifle hung on the wall above them. A second rifle was observed hanging on a rack on the living room wall near a couch with another empty rack underneath. Firearms were observed in the master bedroom, including a handgun sitting next to the head of the bed.



Image 3. Main entry door



Image 4. Rifle on wall with empty rack below it

SA VanBibber and SA Dave Weiging escorted Taryn Rothe (Taryn) into the scene to remove three canines from the home that were placed in an outbuilding on the property. In consultation with Special Agent Supervisor (SAS) Kevin Barbeau, Taryn's phone (Item 1) was retrieved from inside the home and released to her. The phone was documented through photography, and a handwritten inventory was completed. At the direction of SA Weiging, SA VanBibber retrieved a second phone from the home that allegedly belonged to Taryn's mother. Taryn was allowed to access the home surveillance system from the second phone. Attempts to access the system were unsuccessful. Taryn's mother's phone was collected as Item 16.

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Bureau of Criminal Investigation
Investigative Report**



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A purple and black short-barreled rifle with no visible brand name or serial number and attached optic was located in the yard just in front of the stoop. The rifle was found with one cartridge in the chamber (green tipped 5.56 AP 20) and 21 additional (16 green tipped 5.56 AP 20, five LC 223 REM) cartridges in the magazine. The rifle was initially jammed but was able to be cleared by agents. The rifle sustained damage from a suspected ricochet defect. The leading edge¹ of the impact was present on the handguard of the rifle near the muzzle. Striations in the metal and the location of lead splash² indicated a general shot direction almost directly opposite the firearm's own point of aim. Suspected blood was observed on several parts of the rifle including, but not limited to the grip, stock, and magazine. The rifle, magazine and cartridges were collected together as Item 2.



Image 5. Item 2- Purple/black rifle

¹ That portion of a defect produced by the initial contact between the bullet and target surface which produces a shoulder and/or impression. *Basic Shooting Analysis and Reconstruction*, by Highlands Forensic Investigations and Consulting.

² The production and dispersal of vaporized and fine particles of lead as a result of impact. *Basic Shooting Analysis and Reconstruction*, by Highlands Forensic Investigations and Consulting.

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Bureau of Criminal Investigation
Investigative Report



2025-3488

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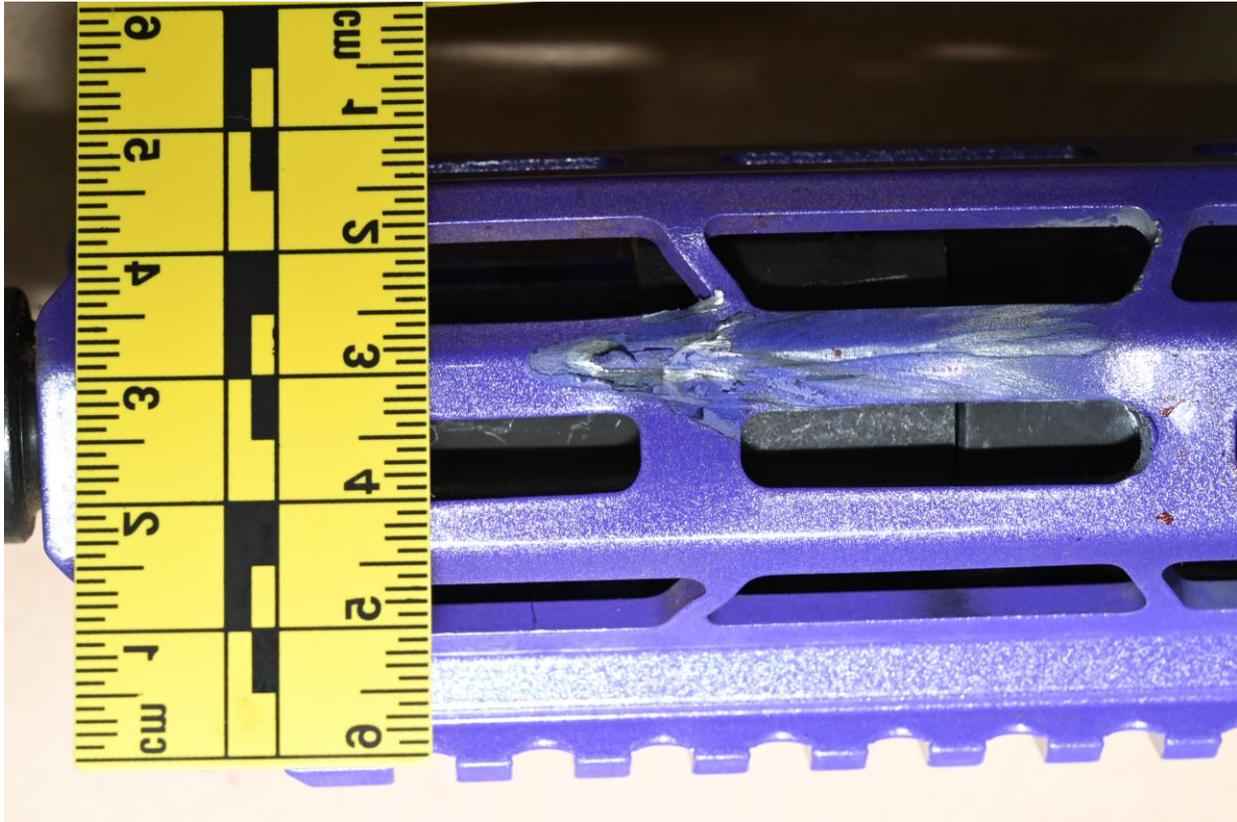


Image 6. Ballistic Impact on Item 2 (Muzzle to the left, shot direction left to right)

A total of four 5.56 fired cartridge casings were located inside the residence, near the front door. Two were located on the floor by the desk near front door (Items 8-9), one was located on the desk (Item 14), and one was under a shelf by the front door hallway (Item 15).

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Bureau of Criminal Investigation
Investigative Report**



2025-3488
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The following items were collected from areas surrounding the front door:

Item #	Description	Location
3	Projectile	On floor of front stoop
4	Projectile	On floor of residence near front door
5	Copper Jacketing	On floor of residence near front door
6	T-Shirt	On floor of residence near front door
7	Projectile	On floor of residence in living room

Agents were informed by SAS Barbeau that deputies appeared to be near the gate into the yard when they deployed their Tasers and then further into the yard when the shooting occurred. A taser wire was collected from the yard outside of the south gate (Item 13). Ten 9mm WIN cartridge casings (Item 10) were found in the front yard near the utility trailer. Fifteen 9mm WIN cartridge casings (Item 11) were found inside of the fenced front yard near the south gate. An empty 9mm SIG pistol magazine (Item 12) was located in the front yard near Item 11.

Numerous ballistic impacts (BIs) were observed on the front of house and on the set of bunk bed stairs in the front yard. 27 suspected initial impacts were labeled for documentation purposes, indicated by the existence of bullet wipe³, inward beveling, or leading edges. BIs 1.0-8.0,10.0 and BI 27.0 were perforating entrance holes located in the side of the bunk bed stairs. BIs 12.0-13.0, 18.0-26.0, and 28.0 were located on the front of the residence around the front door. BIs 14.0-17.0 were located on the exterior of the screened front door. The damage to the screen door was indicative of the door being open at the time it was struck. All of these BI’s were consistent with a general shot direction of south to north or from the yard towards the front door/stoop.

Various BI’s perforated the front of the residence. BIs were observed on the interior of the home, including a number of perforating BI’s in windows to the rear of the residence. The rear exterior of the home and a shed were visually inspected and

³ The discolored area on the immediate periphery of a bullet hole cause by the transference of residues from the bearing surface of the bullet. *Basic Shooting Analysis and Reconstruction*, by Highlands Forensic Investigations and Consulting.

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**Ohio Attorney General's Office
Bureau of Criminal Investigation
Investigative Report**



2025-3488

Officer Involved Critical Incident - 371 SR 180, Chillicothe,
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contained additional BIs. A projectile (Item 18) was collected from the ground separating the residence and the rear shed.

BI 11.0 was a perforating irregularly shaped entrance hole on the side of the bunk bed stairs facing north, or towards the home. Bullet wipe lined the right side of the hole that had an inward bevel. A green residue was present on the wood particles within BI 11.0. The bullet associated with BI 11.0 exited at BI 11.1 on the side of the bunk bed stairs that faced south, or in the direction of the yard. BI 11.1 had an outward bevel in splintered wood. BI 11.2 was a ricochet defect that corresponded with BIs 11.0 and 11.1. BI 11.2 was an elongated elliptical defect on the east side of the stairs. A green residue was present on the wood particles within BI 11.2. A larger area of damage and splintered wood indicated the bullet left the stairs on the side facing south. The overall flight path of the bullet that caused BIs 11.0-11.2 was north to south or in the direction of stoop to yard. A trajectory rod was inserted into BI 11.0 and that was scanned using a Leica 3D scanner.



Image 7. BI 11.0

Image 8. BI 11.1

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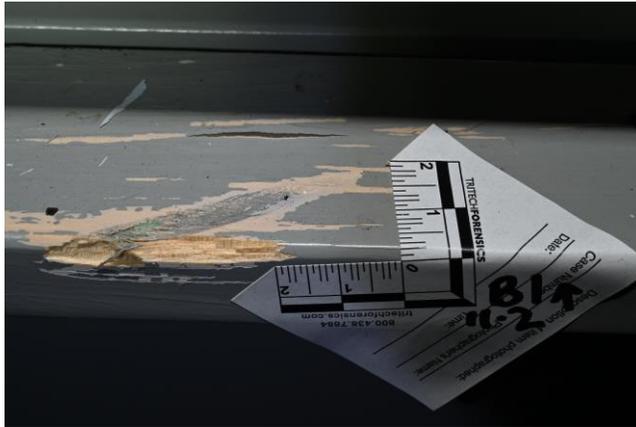


Image 9. BI 11.2

BI 9.0 was erroneously labeled as an initial impact. Upon further examination of scene photographs, BI 9.0 appeared to be an irregularly shaped exit hole evidenced by pushed out splintered wood with green residue located on the side of the bunk bed stairs that faced south, or towards the yard.

A shallow linear disturbance in the grass consistent with a low-angle impact was observed in the yard just to the north of Item 11. A trajectory rod was placed in the furrow and documented through photography. The furrow appeared deeper to the south, and the overall position of the rod was consistent with a general shot direction from the front of the home towards the yard. The area was visually inspected, and a metal detector was utilized. Excavation of the area did not reveal any projectiles.

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Image 10. Flight path rod in yard

While on scene, RCSI Detective Heather Crosier (Det. Crosier) provided SA VanBibber with a cell phone that had already been placed in airplane mode (Item 17) and a set of keys (Item 17.1). Det. Crosier stated she collected these items from the pants pockets of Rothe. Additionally, SA Carrie Ryan transferred Scene 2 Items 1-4 to SA VanBibber at approximately 2211 hours. See SA Ryan's *Processing of* [REDACTED] and *Processing of* [REDACTED] reports for more information.

A copy of the search warrant and an inventory of all items collected were left inside the residence. Agents cleared the scene at approximately 0122 hours on October 27, 2025. SA VanBibber transported all evidence from Scenes 1-2 to the Athens BCI office and placed it in temporary evidence at approximately 1221 hours.

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