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

2026-2566
Officer Involved Critical Incident - State Route 67 and Township Road 8, Republic, OH 44867, Seneca County (L)

Investigative Activity:	Witness Officer Interview
Involves:	[redacted] (W)
Activity Date:	07/22/2026
Activity Location:	Seneca County Sheriff's Office – 3040 OH-100, Tiffin, Ohio
Authoring Agent:	**SA David Hammond #120**

Narrative:

On Wednesday, July 22, 2026, at 1028 hours, Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) Special Agent (SA) David Hammond (SA Hammond) and SA Ryan Emahiser (SA Emahiser) interviewed Seneca County Sheriff's Office (SCSO) [redacted], who was accompanied by his attorney, Yvonne Wojtas, from the Ohio Patrolmen's Benevolent Association (OPBA). The interview took place at the Seneca County Sheriff's Office located at 3040 OH-100, Tiffin, Ohio. The interview was audio recorded.

[redacted] was identified as being a police officer who witnessed and/or had some level of involvement in the July 7, 2026 officer-involved shooting which occurred in the area of State Route 67 and Township Road 8, Republic, Ohio. Reportedly, [redacted] did not discharge a firearm during the course of the incident. The purpose of the interview was to obtain all relevant information about the incident known or observed by this officer.

The following is a summary of the information deemed by the author to be of the most relevance to the investigation and does not purport to contain all questions and answers from the interview. The information was placed in a chronology to aid the reader's overall understanding of the information elicited during the interview and may not be reflective of the actual sequencing of questions. In some instances, answers have been compressed to aid in ease of reading. It is suggested that the full recording be reviewed to clarify any content or contextual questions regarding the information from the interview.

It should be noted that during the interview, law enforcement officials were shown a drone photograph/diagram of the overall scene and final vehicle locations, taken by the Crime Scene Unit. This photograph/diagram (2026-2566 diagram without placards) was used to reference locations and movements of persons and vehicles during the incident. A copy of this photograph/diagram has been attached to this report.

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[redacted] stated his radio call sign on July 7, 2026, was [redacted]. He has been employed by the SCSO for [redacted]. He has been a deputy for a total [redacted]. During the incident, [redacted] wore his standard Sheriff's Deputy uniform with a metal police badge affixed to it. He also wore a concealed ballistic vest and duty belt. He drove a marked cruiser, unit #[redacted], marked with SCSO emblems and emergency lights. He considered himself to be well-represented as a sheriff's deputy during the incident. He stated was not under the influence of any substance that would impair his memory or judgment during the incident or during the interview with BCI. [redacted] stated that he was wearing his body-worn camera during the incident and the unit was recording. His cruiser was not equipped with a dash camera.

[redacted] related that he had watched his body-worn-camera video once, a day prior to the interview. He stated that the video recording was different from his memory. The most significant area of difference was that [redacted] believed that Jeffrey Sergent's (Sergent) truck had moved forward, impacting the sheriff's cruiser, before backing into the guardrail. After watching the video, he realized that Sergent's first movement was backwards.

[redacted] was encouraged to rely on his memory of the event, and to recount what he saw, felt and heard to the best of his memory.

[redacted] was asked about any previous encounters that he may have had with Jeffrey Sergent.

> At the 05:11 mark, "*I don't remember the details from a pursuit that he was involved in with our office several years back. I may have been working in the jail at that time, I can't remember. But if I remember correctly, uh, that pursuit, he struck a, struck a cruiser. Um, I was also familiar with in the past that, uh, uh, he had ran from deputies on a call and, uh, tried to remove a, a firearm from one of the deputies and he was charged with that.*"

[redacted] then related what he knew about the domestic violence call that occurred on or about July 1st, 2026. He stated that he reviewed the domestic violence report on July 6th, and prepared charges for Jeffrey Sergent with investigating deputies.

> At the 06:10 mark, "*So, I believe, uh, the Sgt.'s over the week, over that weekend were off and I came in on Monday to proofread reports from over the weekend. And I, I found, uh, the report, uh, was able to view the, um, the photographs that were provided by the victim. Uh, then I came to the conclusion that, uh, charges should be pressed for that case. Um, I've made contact with the, uh, investigating deputies and, uh, had them come in and then type up a charge.*"

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[redacted] stated that on July 7th, he contacted Officer Kevin Scherley (Ofc. Scherley) of the Village of Bloomville Police Department. He told Ofc. Scherley about the charge and encouraged him not to approach Sergent alone due to his violent history.

[redacted] advised that he was contacted by Ofc. Scherley about Sergent's location.

> At the 08:45 mark, "*Officer Scherley contacted me. I was here at the office, uh, um, let me know that he was following behind a vehicle that that is known to be driven by Jeffrey Sergent, registered to Jeffrey Sergent, um, Officer Scherley let me know their location, let me know where there were, and through our phone, phone conversation, um, he, he positively identified Jeffrey Sergent as the operator of the vehicle. Um, I checked in our GPS and our CAD system, uh, and had, uh,* [redacted] *who had* [redacted] *riding with him start to head towards his direction.*"

[redacted] described conducting the traffic stop with Officer Scherley.

> *At the 09:38 mark, "They were approaching the intersection of Township Road 8 and, uh, State Route 67. I was coming from the south, northbound on State Route 67. Uh, so I, I kind of timed it up to be at the same, at that stop sign of the intersection at the same time as Officer Scherley. Uh, once we got to the, once we got close to the stop sign, I came over the radio and I let Officer Scherley know to pull him over. Scherley parked behind him with his, his lights on, uh, and, and I pulled in front of him in the intersection.*"

[redacted] recalled what he did during the early portions of the traffic stop.

> At the 11:07 mark, "*I positioned myself in a, a safe position with my driver's side door open and I began, uh, giving commands for Jeffrey to, uh, turn the ignition off, show us his hands, take, take the keys out of the ignition. I was using my PA system at the beginning. Um, he was, uh, communicating with, uh, Officer Scherley at the same time. Uh, from what I recall, one of the, one of his, uh, kind of immediate, um, concerns was his vehicle. You know, he didn't want his vehicle towed there, so I, I kind of tried to let him know, Hey, we're not, we can work with you, we can, can we can get somebody to come get your car. Things like that. Uh, he was yelling back and forth. He seemed pretty agitated. Uh, I quit, uh, talking to him through, utilizing the PA. I started just, uh, shouting commands by voice and, and talking back and forth with him.*"

[redacted] described what Sergent was saying to him and having to repeat commands.

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At the 12:15 mark, "*He said things like, 'you guys will shoot me' or 'you guys are going to kill me', or things like that. Um, you could tell that he, he was, uh, he was pretty amped up, you know, and I basically, I, I think at that point I said, look, I realize that, I realize that your anxiety's up. Uh, we're going to, we're going to, we'll discuss everything. Try, try to get him to calm down. Uh, he would, he would put his, both of his hands out the window at times. Uh, he'd at times bring one hand into the car. I kept having to repeat myself to tell him to, uh, show us both of his hands. Kept repeating myself to, uh, have him shut the ignition off. I think I asked him to take the keys out of the ignition.*"

[redacted] provided additional details about the conversation with Sergent.

At the 12:59 mark, "*He asked me my name. I told him my name. You know, we've made him aware. I think we told him that there was a warrant. Um, so, um, he, he asked me my name and then he, he told me he was talking to Kendrick, asked me if I talked to Kendrick when he said Kendricks. I assumed that it was Jake Kendricks that I've dealt with in the past, and, uh, that who knows me through law enforcement. Um, and, and I agreed I would, I would talk to him over the phone.*"

[redacted] was asked if he had ever communicated with Sergent before. He related that he thought that he had some contact with Sergent when he was housed in the Seneca County Jail. He stated that he remembered talking with Sergent over the phone when he called SCSO for a domestic related problem. [redacted] stated that based on his limited interactions with Sergent, *"I've never seen him this amped up."*

[redacted] described approaching the vehicle.

At the 15:18 mark, "I didn't approach until [redacted] *and* [redacted] *arrived on scene and, and at, so at that point I realized that, um, I, the situation wasn't deescalating. So, I made a decision at that point that we were going to approach his vehicle. Uh, so now we, we've got four people there. And, and, uh, I had asked him at one point if he had any weapons. He said no, but I had no way to know that other than he said he had two pocketknives. Um, so I had* [redacted] *and* [redacted] *went over to the driver's side. I think* [redacted] *was more towards the rear of the truck. And I tried, attempted to communicate with Jeffrey through the passenger side window, which was rolled up. Um, at one point I checked, I tried to open the door by the handle, the door was locked."*

[redacted] advised that during this interaction, the vehicle's engine continued to run.

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At the 16:28 mark, *"I continued to try to reason with him, tried to try to get him to shut the ignition off. Um, I offered to, uh, I, I tried to get him to roll my window down. Apparently, he had crank up windows and he had a lot of, a lot of stuff sitting on the passenger seat. Um, so I assumed he, he didn't want to try to reach over there. And, um, so, uh, I offered also, to talk to Jacob again on the phone. You know, try to tell him he, you know, as, as Jacob, will I lie to you, you know, you know, Jacob knows me, knows that I'm pretty straight shooter, whatever. Um, and he, the, the more officer presence, the more agitated he got. Uh, he kept telling him not to surround, you know, stop surrounding him. I believe at one point I remember, uh, [redacted] uh, put gloves on, and I remember that agitated him and, you know, and, and I continued to try to de-escalate him."*

[redacted] describes telling Sergent that he would have to break the window if he doesn't come out.

At the 17:28 mark, "*I told him we were going to have to break, break the window. We're going to have, we need him to get out. I remember asking him a couple times, can you meet me in the middle? And at least, at least shut the car off, you know, meet me in the middle here, you know, and, uh, then weren't getting anywhere. He wasn't calming down. Uh, [redacted] arrived on scene. Um, uh, I told [redacted] to get back in his cruiser and moved it beside mine to keep him from going out on State Route 67, because I knew he had history of running. Um, and he was getting more agitated. It was at that point that I realized that, that he's, he's looking for a way out. So that's why I had [redacted] move his cruiser in front. I didn't want him going out, you know, fleeing the scene and going out, causing an accident,"*

[redacted] recalled [redacted] giving Sergent additional warnings before breaking the driver's door glass.

At the 18:16 mark, "*[redacted] gave, you know, uh, you know, gave him warnings that he's going to have to break the window out. I kind of basically told him, hey, at this, this point, you know, if you don't comply, you know, I was asking him to comply. Um, we are going to have to break the window out. And then I can't remember if I gave [redacted] the signal to, um, to go ahead and break the window out or not. I don't remember. But, uh, when he did break the window out, I attempted to break out the, um, passenger side window with the, uh, I had a, a folding knife. I had one of the window punches. Uh, which is junk because every time I use it, I cut my hand. So, I do remember that*

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I, I at least made a couple strikes on to the window. Um, but I, I, I didn't break it."

[redacted] described what he remembered happening next.

At the 19:20 mark, "As soon as [redacted] breaking the window out, I thought for sure he put it in drive, went forward, and then went back. Um, so then, then at that point, um, that's when, um, I was kind of checking around to see where my guys were. And he, uh, I remember seeing him slamming into the guardrail. I remember seeing his tire spinning and coming forward, I remember seeing [redacted]. He was positioned in front of the truck.

I remember seeing him shooting into the front window of the truck in that area, pointing in that direction. I remember seeing [redacted] fire, multiple shots. I, I remember seeing, uh, [redacted] uh, fire shots. I believe he was, uh, I believe he was standing to my left and he looked as if he was shooting in the direction of the, um, passenger side door window. Okay. Uh, I remember then the, you know, looking to see if I had a clear shot. I knew I didn't have a clear shot at all with, uh, with all the other, the deputies in, in the area. Uh, I remember seeing the car slamming to [redacted] cruiser. I remember hearing the high revs of the motor. Uh, I don't, I don't remember how or who shot the car off or shut the car off, I'm sorry."

[redacted] described checking Sergent for signs of life after the shooting.

At the 20:49 mark, "*I approached the passenger side again and I just saw a large amount of blood on, looked like, like his right shoulder area. Um, I, it appeared to be lifeless was not moving. I saw, uh, items that were in the car, like on his lap. Um, I, I remember walking over and, uh, [redacted] telling me, I've got nothing. I remember seeing Officer Scherley check for a pulse. I remember checking for a pulse. Um, I remember, um, uh, I, I'll, I'll back up. As soon as, as soon as the shots were fired, I called over the radio. I just said, uh, shots fired contact EMS. Um, after I checked for a pulse and everything, um, uh, I determined, I mean, it, uh, it seemed clear to me that he's obviously deceased.*"

[redacted] was asked if he was concerned for his safety and that of the other deputies during the incident. He described what he felt during the incident. He described the incident as happening very quickly.

At the 23:20 mark, "*Yeah. I mean, I didn't think, you know, I, I don't know. I mean, it's, it's just weird for me to explain. I don't remember feeling, I mean, I guess my first thought was, oh shit, you know, and then my second thought*

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was, where is everybody at? And I tried to, tried to see where everybody was at, and then seemed like, just like that it was over."

[redacted] stated that he believed that a vehicle could be used as a deadly weapon. He stated that to the best of his memory, he was unable to remember how many rounds had been fired. He recalled being afraid for his deputies on the side of the vehicle and motorists traveling by.

The interview concluded at approximately 1054 hours.

The audio recording of this interview was uploaded to Axon Evidence.com - Reference Item M – Witness Officer Interviews – Axon Capture Audio 7-22 [redacted]

References:

Reference Item M – Witness Officer Interviews – Axon Capture Audio 7-22 [redacted]

Attachments:

1. 2026-2566 Diagram without placards

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BCI Case Number:	Location:	Date of Occurrence:
2026-2566	E Township Rd. 8 & SR 67, Republic, OH	Jult 7, 2026
Offense:	**Involved Agency:**	**Lead Investigator:**
Officer Involved Critical Incident	Seneca County Sheriff's Office	Special Agent Hammond

Drawn By:
Emily Miller, Crime Scene Technician - Overhead Diagram w/o Placards