



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



2023-1835  
Officer Involved Critical Incident – 114 North Ninth St, Byesville,  
OH (L)

**Investigative Activity:** Interview with Officer  
**Involves:** ██████████ (S)  
**Date of Activity:** 07/11/2023  
**Activity Location:** Guernsey County Sheriff's Office – Business – 601 Southgate  
Parkway, Cambridge, OH 43725, Guernsey County  
**Author:** SA Craig Call

**Narrative:**

On July 11, 2023, the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) Special Investigations and Crime Scene Units were requested by the Guernsey County Sheriff's Office (GCSO) to investigate an Officer-Involved Critical Incident (shooting) involving members of the Byesville Police Department (BPD), GCSO, and Jeremiah Wise (Wise). It was reported to BCI the incident occurred at Wise's residence, 114 North 9th Street, Byesville, Ohio, and resulted in Wise being shot by officers and transported to a nearby hospital where he ultimately succumbed to his injuries. BCI Special Agent Craig Call (SA Call) was designated as the lead investigator.

BCI was informed BPD ██████████ ██████████ ██████████, BPD Auxiliary Officer ██████████ ██████████ (Officer ██████████, and GCSO Deputy ██████████ Deputy ██████████ were the officers that fired weapons during the incident. SA Call was informed Attorney Bob Sauter (Attorney Sauter) would be counsel for the above officers. SA Call and Attorney Sauter spoke on the phone and were able to schedule interviews for the above officers for July 20, 2023. Attorney Sauter indicated the officers would be providing SA Call with written statements.

On July 20, 2023, SA Call met with Attorney Sauter and ██████████ at the GCSO in order for SA Call to obtain ██████████'s witness statement. Prior to the interview, SA Call provided ██████████ ██████████ and Attorney Sauter with BCI's Criminal Investigation Notification (CIN) form in order for there to be no confusion with the purpose of BCI's role in the investigation. ██████████ signed the CIN and indicated he had no questions or concerns prior to beginning the interview.

The audio recording began at approximately 1155 hours.

██████████'s signed written witness statement is approximately seven pages in length with two lines continuing onto an eighth page. Specific quoted text from ██████████'s statement will be used during this report in reference to certain parts of the incident, however the statement

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in its entirety will be attached for reference. [REDACTED] signed the witness statement in front of SA Call and Attorney Sauter.

Prior to describing his involvement in the incident, [REDACTED] statement contains background information about his law enforcement career, current position, use of force history, weapons carried and used during the incident, and activities prior to the incident. [REDACTED] s statement noted he has never received any discipline related to use of force, never before used deadly force, and the instances he has used force have been found to be within department policy.

In reference to the events occurring just prior to and during the shooting, [REDACTED] wrote the following:

“Officer [REDACTED] was making the move as Sergeant Rogers was coming into my position, Mr. Wise came out of his home. He had no shirt on and wore basketball shorts. Mr. Wise was yelling at us out front, cursing and giving us the finger. I could see no firearm at this time in Mr. Wise’s hand or on his person. Sergeant Rogers and I started giving verbal commands for Mr. Wise to walk to us so that we could talk. Mr. Wise continued to yell at us at this time. Sergeant Rogers walked out from cover and gave more commands for Mr. Wise to come to our position away from the home. While Sergeant Rogers continued to give commands to Mr. Wise, I remained behind cover at the driver’s side of my Ford Explorer. Mr. Wise then turned around and walked back into his home and slammed the door. I relayed all this information over the radio so command and Dispatch knew what happened.

Once Mr. Wise went back into his home, I observed Officer [REDACTED] on North 9th now positioned near his patrol vehicle. Sergeant Rogers came back to cover at the Ford Explorer. A short time passed before Sergeant Rogers went to move his patrol vehicle. I also entered the driver’s seat of my Ford Explorer to move my vehicle so Sergeant Rogers could just take my post. It was at this time that I observed the front door of Mr. Wise’s home open and Mr. Wise exit the home. He was screaming and hollering again. This time it was clear he had a firearm in his hand. I then exited my Ford Explorer, with my patrol rifle pointed at Mr. Wise. I knew Sergeant Rogers was directly behind me.

I observed Mr. Wise with a black full-sized handgun in his hand. I yelled, “Gun!” several times and began to repeat, “Drop the Gun!” It was at this time that Mr. Wise advanced his firearm from his own chest area towards my direction and that of Sgt. Rogers. Mr. Wise was yelling at this time. I believed my life was in direct and immediate danger, as well as the life of Sergeant. Rogers. I believed our lives were in deadly harm from Mr. Wise’s advancing his firearm at our positions. I also was in immediate fear for the lives of other law enforcement officers in the area as well as for any civilians in nearby residences.

I then discharged my patrol rifle to the center mass of Mr. Wise while Mr. Wise had his firearm pointed at me. After I shot my round, Mr. Wise, still in the possession of his firearm, fell back into the entryway of his home with his front door open. I recall after shooting my first round that I continued to yell to him, “Drop the gun!” I believed I fired 2 to 3 rounds.

I, Sergeant Rogers, Officer [REDACTED] and Deputy [REDACTED] moved in the street to a position where we were facing the front door of his home. We were in front of Mr. Wise’s home where

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his vehicles were parked and took cover behind his vehicles. From where I was standing, just west of the doorway, I could see his feet inside the doorway and he was laying on his stomach. I could not see anything more than his feet. I could not locate his firearm. As other law enforcement converged to our position outside of the front of the home. I yelled at Mr. Wise to show us his hands. I was then relieved from the front of the house, retreating north behind a truck with other officers.”

SA Call asked [REDACTED] if he thought rounds he fired impacted Wise and [REDACTED] indicated Wise made a flinching action after the first round but he could not tell if it was due to being shot or the noise of the gunshot.

In reference to the events occurring immediately after the shooting, [REDACTED] wrote the following:

“I observed SRT make entry and detain Mr. Wise. EMS was immediately called to render assistance to him. At this time I moved my Ford Explorer a couple of feet forward so the ambulance could go through to Mr. Wise. At this time, Officer Stewart came to secure my patrol weapon rifle in another vehicle. I dropped the magazine from the rifle prior to handing it to Officer Stewart. I placed the last live round from the rifle into the magazine. I placed the magazine in the pocket of my patrol pants. I was then asked to remove myself from the scene and was escorted from the scene by GCSO Deputy Kovalchik who I remained with before going to OhioHealth Southeastern Medical Center for drug and alcohol screening per Byesville PD policy.”

In reference to any previous contacts or knowledge of Wise, [REDACTED] wrote the following:

“I had no personal prior contact with Mr. Wise. Earlier this year, I left a door tag at his residence cautioning him about high grass in his yard. At that time I did not personally come in contact with him. I’m aware that within the last year one Officer at the Byesville PD served a warrant on him for assault, but I am not aware of the outcome of that case.”

SA Call provided [REDACTED] with an overhead map view of the area of the incident with a red arrow indicating the 114 North 9th Street residence. SA Call asked [REDACTED] to mark with a pen his location and the location of other officers present during the time of the shooting. [REDACTED] noted he and Sgt. Rogers were near each other in a position on North 9th to the Southwest of the residence. [REDACTED] noted Deputy [REDACTED] was positioned near the intersection of North 9th and Pearl Street and Officer [REDACTED] was positioned further down North 9th Street Northeast of Deputy [REDACTED]’s position. [REDACTED] confirmed his position at the time he fired his rifle as positioned near the driver’s side door of his cruiser firing over the hood of the vehicle. The map has been added to the case file.

[REDACTED] said he was wearing a body worn camera during the initial part of the incident, however when he believed the situation had escalated he switched to a heavier body armor set up that was not equipped with a body worn camera.

[REDACTED] did answer some additional follow up questions, however the answers were consistent with his signed written witness statement.

The audio recording ended at approximately 1214 hours.

**Attachments:**

Attachment # 01: BPD [REDACTED] Interview

Attachment # 02: [REDACTED] CIN

Attachment # 03: [REDACTED] Overhead View

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# Ohio Attorney General's Office Bureau of Criminal Investigation

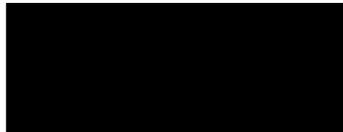


## Criminal Investigation Notification

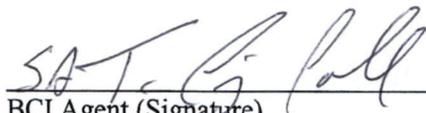
1. This investigation is being conducted in order to determine whether any criminal laws have been violated on the part of those involved in this incident. Specifically, to collect facts and information to be provided to the prosecutor and/or grand jury in order for them to determine whether the conduct involved is authorized or prohibited by criminal statutes.
2. Your participation in this interview is voluntary and you may decline to answer or cease the interview at any time. You are entitled to have an attorney present if you wish.
3. The criminal investigation is separate from any internal, administrative investigation which your employer may or may not be independently conducting. You are not being compelled to give any statement or answer any questions. This is **not** a "Garrity" interview (where you could be required to answer).

  
 Printed Name of Interviewee

7-20-23 9:56<sup>AM</sup>  
 Date / Time DJD

  
 Signature of Interviewee

SA. T. Craig Call  
 BCI Agent (Printed)

  
 BCI Agent (Signature)



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