

Ohio State Highway Patrol

Media Release

General Headquarters — Columbus, Ohio



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Patrol reports additional details of Gallia County triple-fatality crash investigation

COLUMBUS – Ohio State Highway Patrol investigators said today they have determined additional details involving the triple-fatality crash in Gallia County at approximately 5:50 a.m. on Sept. 28, which claimed the lives of two Patrol officers, and a Gallia County woman.



Investigators have determined the **2005 Ford Crown Victoria** Police Interceptor patrol car, being driven by Tpr. Joshua P. Risner, with Sgt. Dale R. Holcomb riding as a passenger, was traveling between 60 and 71 mph eastbound on Jackson Pike, with its emergency lights and siren activated. The vehicle lost control, spun into the westbound lane, and struck the 2004 Chevrolet Silverado, being driven by Lori Smith. Ms. Smith was traveling between 10 to 20 mph and moving to the right at the approach of the Patrol car.

A blood test conducted as part of the autopsy of Tpr. Risner, drawn from the body's deep cavity area, indicates a blood alcohol concentration of .08 (BAC). **An earlier sample drawn from the jugular vein area tested .000 BAC.** Ms. Smith's toxicology showed no alcohol was present. However, Ms. Smith's blood test did show marijuana metabolites present, below the per se limit in Ohio. Sgt. Holcomb's blood test was negative. **The Patrol has launched a separate but related investigation to determine when and where Risner could have ingested alcohol.**



The collision occurred in the westbound lane of Jackson Pike, just west of Mitchell Road. Tpr. Risner had just picked up Sgt. Holcomb at his residence. Tpr. Risner was approaching the end of his shift and Sgt. Holcomb was beginning his shift. Investigators said while radio traffic from Tpr. Risner or Sgt. Holcomb does not indicate why or where the officers were heading, timelines of radio traffic from other officers, including an off-duty trooper who was transporting his un-responsive infant son to the hospital in a cruiser, lead them to believe Tpr. Risner and/or Sgt. Holcomb overheard the radio traffic and were enroute toward the hospital or toward the route that the off-duty trooper would have taken to the hospital.

The impact and damage to both vehicles was described by investigators as massive. A resulting fire from the crash significantly burned both vehicles. Reports from the State Fire Marshall and National Highway Traffic Safety Administration regarding the cause of the fire are pending. No information has been able to be retrieved from either vehicle black box to this point because of the damage from

the fire and impact.

Sgt. Holcomb, 45, was a 21-year Patrol veteran, and Tpr. Risner, 29, was a seven-year Patrol veteran; both were assigned to the Gallipolis Patrol Post. Lori Smith, 32, was from Vinton.

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