



## CHIEF CORONER

### **GUIDANCE No.10: WARNINGS TO JURIES**

*These or similar warnings must be given to every jury at the beginning of the inquest, after they are sworn in. The warnings may be repeated, usually in shorter form, at the end of each day, if required, and particularly towards the close of a long inquest.*

1. Members of the jury, you will decide this inquest on the evidence which you see and hear in court, and on nothing else.
2. Do not discuss the evidence except amongst yourselves when you are all together in private. Do not discuss the inquest with family or friends when you go home, tempting though that may be, because it will be you and not they who hear the evidence in court.
3. Do not communicate with anyone about the inquest in any way at any time; that includes by phone or text, chat lines, twitter or blogs.
4. Do not be tempted to do your own research; just listen to the evidence. Do not go to the scene or make your own inquiries. Do not look anything up on the internet or on social networking sites such as Facebook. None of that is evidence.
5. These are important directions, given by me the coroner, and you must follow them. If you disobey them, any of them, it may amount to contempt of court or even a criminal offence, both of which can be punished by a fine or imprisonment.
6. That is why I must warn you about these things. And if any of it does happen it may bring the inquest grinding to a halt. That might mean having to start all over again with another jury, which would not be good.
7. Do not let anybody talk to you about the inquest. If anyone tries to, tell the coroner's officer who will tell me.
8. If you have any serious concerns about anything which takes place outside the jury room, or even inside it, do not hesitate to tell the coroner's officer straightaway, so that I get to know about it.
9. [In an inquest likely to attract publicity. - There is likely to be some publicity about this inquest. Just ignore it. Publicity in the press or media is not evidence. It may refer to evidence but it will be selective, whereas you will come to your decisions on the whole of the evidence.]

**HH JUDGE PETER THORNTON QC  
CHIEF CORONER**

**23 October 2013  
28 April 2015 revised**