

29 JUL 2014



SURREY
POLICE

[REDACTED]
Force Solicitor

25 July 2014

HM Coroner for Surrey, Mr Wickens
HM Coroner's Court
Station Approach
Woking
GU22 7AP

Dear Mr Wickens

Thank you for your letter dated 9 June 2014 enclosing your Report to Prevent Future Deaths following the inquest into the death of Ryan Boyle. In your report you raised three matters of concern and suggested that action should be taken in relation to those matters of concern as follows:

- Action is required to ensure that all force control operators and those likely to deal with a police pursuit are sufficiently trained and/or re-trained so that they understand their responsibilities, powers and obligations under force policy when dealing with a pursuit.
- Action is required to ensure that there is an efficient and effective notification system (beyond the current practice of shouting) for controllers to notify supervisors and/or other members of Force Control Room ("FCR") staff that a pursuit has commenced.
- Action is required to ensure that a minimum of two persons are monitoring the Force Desk at all times so as to allow effective dealing with any pursuits that might arise.

I can report that the following steps have been taken to address the concerns which you have raised.

Training

Since the tragic case of Ryan Boyle Surrey Police have entered into collaborative working arrangements with Sussex Police which is now formalised through a s.22A Police Act 1996 agreement in pursuance of s.23 Police Act 1996. This effectively requires the lead Force to set future policy on behalf of both. In the case of pursuits this is the responsibility of Sussex as the Lead Force Operations and Road Policing.

The Surrey Police Guidance on Pursuit Management has therefore been reviewed to ensure that it is fully consistent with the Association of Chief Police Officers Guidance on the Management of Police Pursuits, as well as Sussex Police Pursuit Policy. Where necessary, minor amendments have been made to ensure complete consistency, with one exception regarding the authorisation of pursuits that I outline below.

Following consultation with Superintendent [REDACTED] Road Policing Operational Command, Chief Inspector [REDACTED] Surrey Police Communications Department and Chief Inspector [REDACTED] Sussex Police Communications Department regarding Tactical Pursuit and Containment ("TPAC") policy and training it has been agreed that in Surrey only Ops 1 and Ops 2 will authorise a pursuit. Whilst this is inconsistent with national (ACPO) policy which permits control room operators to "authorise a pursuit where a supervisor is not immediately available" it is the considered view of Superintendent [REDACTED] Chief Inspector [REDACTED] and Chief Inspector [REDACTED] that permitting and/or requiring control room operators to authorise pursuits would not be operationally desirable because expanding the number of people who can authorise a pursuit increases the risk of inconsistency to an unacceptable degree. The Surrey Police policy on TPAC therefore remains that only Ops 1 and Ops 2 can authorise pursuits (though operators can discontinue pursuits). The risk of there being neither an Ops 1 nor an Ops 2 available has been examined and assessed to be very low and so I am satisfied that this is the safest and most operationally effective system for Surrey.

The FCR Pursuit and TPAC Refresher 2014 have been fully revised and updated (June 2014) to ensure that the Force's training materials are up-to-date and clear on

the responsibilities, powers and obligations of FCR staff at all levels (operators, Ops 1, and Ops 2).

All FCR staff undertake training days annually and the results are recorded.

When addressing staffing shortfalls in the FCR, the Force uses police constables who have previous FCR experience. All constables who are in the pool of officers which can be drawn upon as an FCR staffing resource will be required to complete the FCR training days along with full-time members of FCR staff. Action has been taken to schedule training for these individuals in the next training cycle in September/October 2014 and thereafter on an annual basis.

In the meantime all members of the pool:

- have been provided with a copy of the most recent training materials and have been required to acknowledge receipt and confirm that they understand the contents of the training materials;
- will, on their next shift in the FCR, be given a one-to-one session by the Ops 2 on duty who will take them through the training materials and check their understanding of the contents of the training materials. Records will be kept to note that this has been completed.

The FCR supervisors will ensure that officers in the pool will not be routinely deployed to the Force Desk. This role will be undertaken by FCR operators wherever possible.

Notification system

A "Call Supervisor" button has been installed at the top of radio channel management screen on all FCR operator terminals. If the operator presses this button then a corresponding alert button flashes up on the Ops 1 and Ops 2 terminals. This alerts Ops 1 and Ops 2 that there is an incident occurring within the FCR (such as pursuits/firearms) that requires their immediate attention and intervention.

The Force has consulted with the FCR Inspectors/Chief Inspectors in Hampshire, Cambridgeshire, Dorset, Thames Valley, Sussex and Kent Constabularies, as well as the Metropolitan Police to investigate best practice in the FCRs of other forces. After detailed consideration Surrey Police remains of the view that the single most effective means of alerting Ops 1 and Ops 2 to an incident requiring their attention (e.g. firearms/pursuits) is by shouting to them. Clearly, this method is effective even when the OPS 1 is not in physical sight of their terminal and acts as an additional safeguard over and above the alert button that has now been installed. Therefore all FCR staff have been instructed that if/when they need to alert Ops 1 or 2 to an incident they should always shout to them, but that that they should also press the 'Call Supervisor' button as well as a means of attracting attention. The importance of making sure that they have been acknowledged by their supervisors is also emphasised.

The functioning of this system will be monitored and kept under review and the review recorded.

Staffing of Force Desk

All FCR staff and supervisors have been briefed that two people must physically monitor the Force Channel at all times. The practical arrangements for putting this into effect have been notified to all staff, including that if necessary Ops 2 must step in to monitor the Force Channel.

A standing operating procedure has been drafted setting out the responsibilities of Ops 2 for providing cover for the Force Channel where one of the operators has temporarily left the Force Desk.

This system is being monitored and will be reviewed, and the review recorded, to ensure that it is functioning properly.

I am grateful to you for having brought these matters to my attention and I hope that this response is helpful.

Yours sincerely



Force Solicitor