



HM Prison & Probation Service

Derek Winter DL,
Deputy Chief Coroner of England and
Wales and Her Majesty's
Senior Coroner for the City of Sunderland,
The Coroner's Office, Room 2.108,
Sunderland Civic Centre,
Burdon Road,
Sunderland
SR2 7DN

Director General of Probation and Wales
HM Prison and Probation Service
3rd Floor Churchill House
Churchill Way
Cardiff CF10 2HH

e-mail: DirectorGeneralProbation@justice.gov.uk

(via [\[redacted\]](#))

15 August 2019

Dear Mr Winter,

Inquest into the death of Miss Nguyen Ngoc Quyen

Thank you for your Regulation 28 Report, issued following the Inquest into the death of Miss Nguyen Ngoc Quyen, addressed to the National Probation Service. I am replying as the Director General Probation and Wales as part of Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS).

I know that you will share a copy of this response with the family and I would first like to express my sincere condolences for their loss. Every death in such circumstances is a tragedy and the implementation of learning from this is my absolute priority.

You have raised a number of areas of concerns and I have drawn these together under specific headings, which I hope is of assistance to you, and respond to your concerns as follows: -

Supervision of Offenders on Life Licence (including issues of trust, self-reporting, challenge and the making of contemporaneous notes and updating OASys Risk Assessments)

The National Probation Service (NPS) is required to provide probation services by virtue of the Offender Management Act 2007. Probation is a means through which offenders are supervised and their rehabilitation is managed and Probation Services exist to protect the public by reducing reoffending and rehabilitating offenders to lead law abiding lives.

The effectiveness of probation supervision by trained probation officers/offender managers is key to the rehabilitation of offenders in the community.

To better support front line probation staff in the effectiveness of their supervision of offenders a new national Supervisory and Line Management Framework has been developed and is being rolled out across the NPS Divisions during 2019. This work forms part of the National Probation Service 2020 Change Programme and has been developed using ideas and evidence from the Skills for Effective Engagement Development and Supervision Programme (SEEDS). This Framework is designed to ensure a consistent and appropriate level of management oversight through practice supervision sessions and observation of practice. Through observation of practice senior probation officers will be able to see whether staff are being sufficiently challenging and adopting a properly investigative approach in their face to face supervision of the offender. There is a minimum requirement of four practice supervision meetings and two practice observations per annum for all probation officers with their Senior Probation Officer/line manager. Within this framework Senior Probation Officers with line management responsibility will ensure that best practice is followed and clearly evidenced and all decision making is being properly recorded following appropriate levels of challenge.

This framework sits alongside the new Lifer Review Panels, which were outlined at the Inquest. The aim of these Panels is to ensure Heads of Local Delivery Units have oversight of the lifer cohort under their responsibility and to scrutinise the robustness of the risk assessment/progress of life sentence offenders subject to supervision in their area. An initial lifer panel review will be completed within three months of release and annual reviews will take place thereafter. In preparation for Panel meetings, the offender manager is required to review OASys and the offender manager uses the review as a discussion topic with the lifer to gain their perspective on progress to date. The offender manager and Senior Probation Officer discuss lifer cases in supervision prior to the Panel meeting and undertake appropriate manager oversight recording in NDelius. MAPPA levels are reviewed and updated where required. This additional oversight ensures there is an independent review of the case to check that the offender manager is addressing the right issues in relation to risk.

The new Supervision Framework, together with the new Probation Lifer Panel Meetings are intended to ensure a stronger level of management oversight at a senior level and effective supervision and risk assessment of all offenders subject to a Life Licence.

Information Sharing with the Northumbria Constabulary as Part of MAPPA Arrangements

The regulation 28 report acknowledges that some of the issues identified by the investigation into the death have already been addressed by Northumbria Constabulary. However, you raised concern that actions taken provided an interim rather than a permanent solution. By way of confirmation, I have set out below in an addendum to this response, the actions I am advised have been taken by Northumbria Constabulary and am able to confirm that these steps are acknowledged and accepted by the MAPPA representatives and Heads of Service in the NPS North East Division in both the North of Tyne and South of Tyne Local Delivery Units as being correct and a permanent solution at this time.

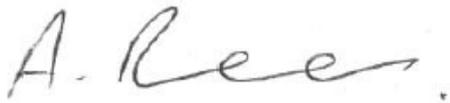
Resources (including staffing, buildings and IT)

The Transforming Rehabilitation Programme (implemented from 1st June 2014) resulted in a number of resource issues, which have been widely recognised and acknowledged. These issues have been taken into consideration in the planning of further structural changes to reunify all offender management into the NPS. At the heart of this is a robust recruitment drive and training programme to increase the number of qualified probation officers in the expectation that by the end of 2021 the current vacancies in the NPS will be filled. Alongside this is a review of required office space and the

provision of mobile IT services to ensure that the necessary resources are available to deliver a high-quality probation service in the future.

Thank you for bringing these matters of concern to my attention. Please be assured that learning from the circumstances of this tragic death will also be shared more widely with colleagues across the NPS Divisions.

Yours sincerely / Yn gywir

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "A. Rees".

Amy Rees,
Director General of Probation and Wales, HM Prison and Probation Service
Cyfarwyddwr Cyffredinol y Gwasanaeth Prawf a Chymru, Gwasanaeth Carchardai a Phrawf EM