

Mr Edward Ramsay,
HM Assistant Coroner,
HM Coroner for Swansea and Neath Port Talbot
The Guidhall
Swansea
SA1 4PE

5th April 2023

Re Death of Hannah Warren

Dear Mr Ramsay,

This response is submitted on behalf of the College of Policing and National Police Chiefs' Council.

Thank you for your Regulation 28 – Preventing Future Deaths report relating to the death of Hannah Warren. The College of Policing and NPCC offer our condolences to Hannah's family and friends.

Hannah's death happened in 2016. Since that time our instructions and guidance on managing missing persons enquiries and the use of PNC and ANPR have been reviewed and updated.

Missing Persons Authorised Professional Practice (APP) sets out clear processes and procedures for investigating these cases including the risk assessment and risk management processes that should be followed. The Regulation 28 report does not contain a great deal of detail on the circumstances of Hannah going missing, but, on the information available, it seems reasonable for her to have been graded a medium risk missing person. There then seems to have been action taken to trace her, including the updating of PNC and creation of the ACT alert.

The issue in this case arises because of the nature of the ACT (an abbreviation of 'action report') alert. Current College instruction on this system is clear-

"An ACT report should be used where it is reasonable and proportionate for that vehicle to be subject of national circulation for the purpose of appropriate action being taken should the vehicle come to notice or when an ANPR intelligence marker normally circulated as an entry on a Vehicle of Interest (VOI) list contains warning signals which may compromise officer safety.

There is an expectation when adding an ACT report that some form of action will be taken should the vehicle be sighted. This action may be to STOP the vehicle, MONITOR the movements of the vehicle pending advice or specialist support, or ASSESS the situation at the time of the sighting and make an informed decision whether to stop the vehicle, or for an alternative response to be taken.

The force originating the circulation must be prepared to provide assistance should the vehicle be stopped and the requested action taken in another force area. This could potentially be anywhere within England, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland, Guernsey, Jersey or the Isle of Man.”

There is then content on levels of risk and response-

LOW	For volume crime, priority investigations and RTC offences where a vehicle and/or occupants need to be traced (taking account of the circumstances where ACT is not to be used).
MEDIUM	For major, serious or complex investigations
HIGH	In the most serious of cases and in particular where life is at risk. This needs the authorisation of a Superintendent (or equivalent). In the event of a Superintendent (or equivalent) not being available an Inspector (or equivalent) can authorise, but this MUST be approved by a Superintendent (or equivalent) within 24 hours.

Hannah would clearly not have fallen into the low risk category (RTC is short for ‘road traffic collision). A vulnerable missing person is specifically listed as a ‘serious investigation’.

If a medium or high ACT report is added, there must be one of three words to start the report indicating the activity that a force should undertake if there is a relevant ANPR activation. These words are – Stop, Monitor or Assess (as described in the above extract).

‘Monitor’ should only be used in exceptional circumstances, usually in circumstances when specialist resources are needed to stop the vehicle and occupants in a safe manor (e.g. should there be concerns about weapons in the vehicle).

‘Assess’ should only be used where there is ‘...credible information to indicate that the vehicle is being used to support criminal activity and that it is determined as reasonable and proportionate for the vehicle to be the subject of a national circulation.’

Neither ‘monitor’ nor ‘assess’ would be appropriate in Hannah’s case.

‘Stop’ would be the appropriate word and this should result in the following response-

This should be used when the circulating force require officers to stop the vehicle and take action as described in the body of the report.

Should an incident similar to Hannah’s happen today, the current ACT instructions should be followed and the ACT report noted with an instruction to STOP. Had this happened in 2016, Hannah’s vehicle would have been appropriately noted on the PNC and ANPR ACT systems and she would have been stopped, with there being clear instructions on what action the officers stopping her should have taken.

I hope that this response is sufficient to deal with your concerns about the missing persons and ACT systems. NPCC will ensure that the issues apparent in Hannah’s case are raised through the

appropriate portfolio areas. This will help to ensure that, should a similar incident be investigated today, the correct actions and responses would happen.

Yours sincerely



Chief Constable [Redacted]
Chief Executive Officer
College of Policing
[Redacted]



Chief Constable [Redacted]
Chair
National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC)
[Redacted]