

Nigel Parsley
HM Senior Coroner for Suffolk
The Suffolk Coroner's Service
Beacon House
Whitehouse Road
Ipswich
Suffolk
IP1 5PB



[REDACTED]

Date: 11th April 2023

Dear Mr Parsley,

Regulation 28 Report – Mr Anthony John Raymond Ingram

I write on behalf of the National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) in relation to paragraph 7, Schedule 5 of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009, and regulations 28 and 29 of the Coroners (Investigations) Regulations 2013, in relation to the prevention of future deaths report sent via email to the NPCC dated 23rd February 2023.

The notice sets out concerns that arose from the information received during the inquest into the death of Mr Ingram which occurred in March 2022. I am very sorry to read of the circumstances of Anthony's death. My sympathies are with his family and friends, and I share your commitment to addressing the issues you have highlighted.

The notice sets out your principal concern in relation to cross border missing person investigations stating that crucial information was not passed between forces as there is no standardised information sharing requirements or protocols in such cases.

The Authorised Professional Practice (APP) which is the official source of professional practice for policing states the following in relation to cross-border cases:

Cross-border cases

Difficulties can arise when a person reported missing resides outside the area where the report is being made, for example, a student in temporary accommodation or a day trip visitor. The police area that receives the report must record it and carry out all necessary initial actions. If the responsibility for a case is subsequently transferred to another force area, the rationale for doing so must be recorded. Written acknowledgement from the receiving force should be obtained.

When deciding where ownership of the investigation lies, the principal issue is to consider where the majority of the enquiries are and who has the greatest opportunity of locating the missing person. It is probable that the place where the person was last seen would generate the majority of the initial enquiries (although this is not always the case, see also Out-of-area placements).



Cross-border enquiries

In cross-border tasking and requests, details of the result of the risk assessment carried out by the investigating force, and other contextual information, should be passed to forces likely to become involved in the enquiry. This transfer of information allows colleagues to decide on the focus of their enquiries.

There is a responsibility on communications staff and investigating officers to request this information. The officer in charge of the investigation in the initiating force should ensure that all relevant information, including the risk assessment, is passed to the force that will be managing subsequent enquiries. It is important that there is a seamless transfer of responsibility for the investigation so that no cases are missed. The officer making the transfer should check that all materials have been received in the receiving force and that details of the person who received the information are noted. Developing a process that includes providing this additional information will reduce the risk to all involved. All police forces should have email addresses that are available 24 hours a day so that investigation records can be shared and transferred where relevant.

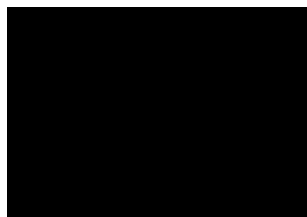
Further to the APP guidance a Task and Finishing Group has been initiated focusing on the very issue you have outlined. Draft NPCC advice on 'Requesting Missing Person Enquiries in Another Force and Transfers of Investigations' has been developed and has now been circulated to all forces for consultation.

In addition to the above The National Transfer form is being updated to include a section to be used for requesting enquiries in another force. One of the new recommendations is to require the officer requesting the enquiries or transfer to contact by telephone or video call the key decision-maker in the other force so that the level of risk and urgency of enquiries can be effectively communicated, rather than rely on what is written on an email or the incident log. We are still waiting for the new form to be completed, but there is a working party completing that task and it is anticipated that it will be available in the next few weeks when the new processes will go live.

I hope that the information that has been provided goes some way to reassure you that the matters of concern you have raised have been addressed and will be subject to continual review.

For any further information please contact my Staff Officer [REDACTED] who will be happy to address any concerns and answer any questions.

Yours sincerely,



[REDACTED]
Chair, National Police Chiefs' Council