

July 2023

Rachael C Griffin  
Senior Coroner  
The Coroner's Office for the County of Dorset  
Civic Centre, Bourne Avenue  
Bournemouth BH2 6DY  
Dorset

**Re:** Ivan Rumenov Ignatov

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Dear Ms Griffin,

I write on behalf of Niche Technology in response to your Regulation 28 Report following the inquest into the death of the above named. Specifically, this response focusses on the following concern insofar as it relates to the NicheRMS365 application.

- i. There is not sufficient clarity in the identifying, collating and recording of factors which may increase a person's risk on the Niche system that Dorset Police, and other forces nationally, use and as a result information could be missed which is vital to a person's risk assessment and their risk to themselves or others.*

As you may be aware, NicheRMS365 is used by 27 police forces in England and Wales and over the past 20 years, working closely with our customer forces, we have striven to ensure compliance with all legislative and procedural guidance. It was, therefore, surprising to hear that some of the guidance issued by the College of Policing Authorized Professional Practice Guidance (APP) in relation to risk assessments appears to be missing.

As a company, Niche Technology, can unilaterally make changes to the RMS, but we are not the policing experts and are reliant on our customers to advise us on matters such as risk assessment content. Nevertheless, we recognize the importance of the issues you raise in your report and, as described below, have already taken action on the matter.

#### **Developments in NicheRMS**

In order to manage changes within the RMS system that will meet the needs of all our UK Forces and each specific area of policing, the UK Niche Forces created the Minerva collaboration. Amongst other tasks, this group considers compliance with APP and best practice, recommending and agreeing where change is required.

With such a large community of users, it is more efficient to manage requests for change via the Minerva Management Board (MMB). The Board is currently chaired by the Chief Constable of Avon & Somerset and on a day-to-day basis, is supported by a Programme Director who has oversight of all change requests.

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*Canada and Australia:* Niche Technology Inc. | 629 McDermot Ave. | Winnipeg MB, R3A 1P6 | Canada

*USA:* Niche Technology USA Limited | 2118 W. Chesterfield Blvd. Suite D100 | Springfield MO, 65807 | USA

*UK:* Niche Technology UK Limited | Reg. office: Azets, Wynyard Park House, Wynyard Avenue, Wynyard, Stockton on Tees | UK TS22 5TB

Reg. England and Wales, No. 5122974 | Australia ABN 84 735 920 227

+1 204 786 2400 | [www.NicheRMS.com](http://www.NicheRMS.com)

everal working groups, each with responsibility for a specific business area (for example, Public Protection or Criminal Justice, or Intelligence) receive and review requests for change from Niche customers relative to their business area. The requests are prioritized and passed up to the MMB, which agrees the overall order, priority, and delivery of the change requests with Niche Technology.

**Current action taken to respond to the Report following the Inquest into the death of Ivan Rumenov Ignatov**

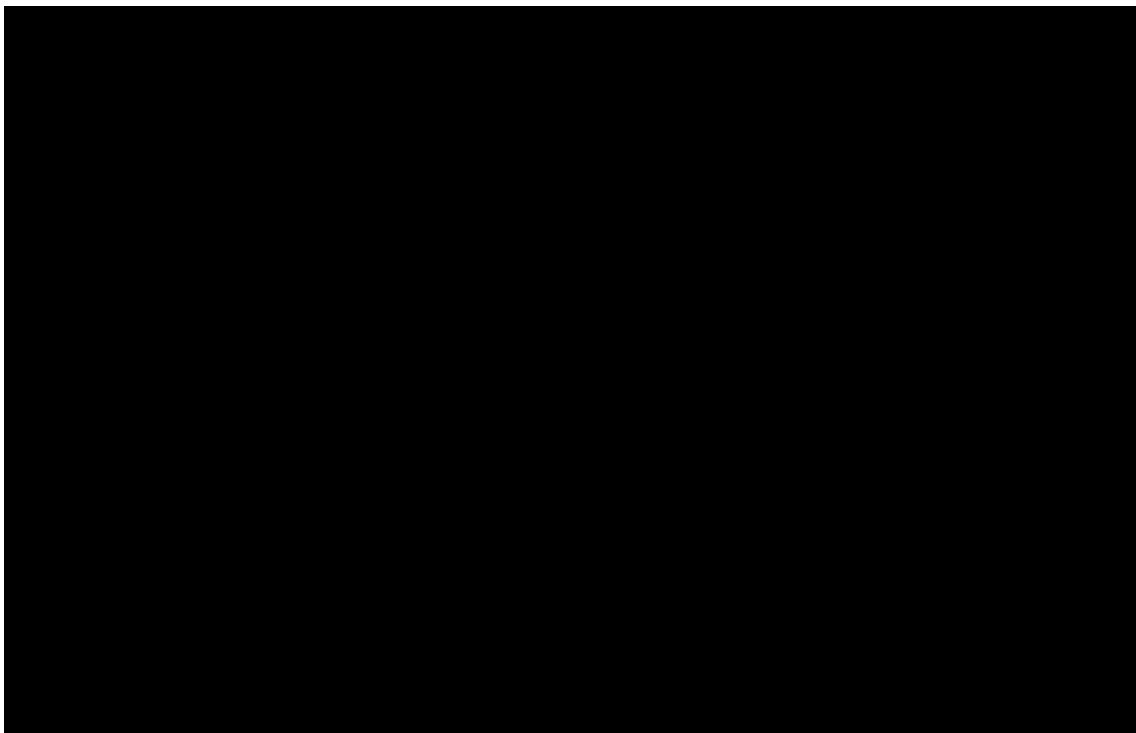
As a matter of priority, the Minerva Programme Director will manage the issue raised in your report with the Minerva Criminal Justice working group.

Action has already been taken which includes:

1. Circulating the facts of your report to Niche Technology customers;
2. Seeking views on the changes needed to reduce the chance of a similar occurrence;
3. Proposal of a temporary solution pending consultation with all Niche forces.

Whilst we await the outcome of the consultation with forces, which I anticipate can be concluded within the next 4 weeks, the Programme Director is suggesting an interim solution that will involve staff making the appropriate detention log entry as occurs for other risk assessment questions.

As you have identified in your report, the question of whether the detainee has been arrested before is not specifically asked. However, there are pertinent risk assessment questions that officers and staff should be aware of and which can be utilized as an interim location for recording such information. These are identified in the screen shot below.



Rumenov Ignatov

NicheRMS365 is highly flexible application that can be configured on a daily basis in response to requests for change. Change can be implemented in a number of ways including:

- Some immediate and urgent application changes can be made using a software 'patch';
- Other change involving more significant development or less urgent change may only be available to forces at their next upgrade.

I would not wish to pre-empt recommendations of the Minerva Criminal Justice Working Group on this matter, so the method of change is not presently clear. Further, I have not seen the response from the College of Policing who may issue additional guidance and changes to the risk assessment process that will need to be factored into any change we make to the RMS. I note also, that Niche Technology can not insist that customers install patches or turn on any specific change in their upgrades.

However, given the significant nature of the issue you have raised, I would expect forces, as a minimum, to have received some more permanent solution to the concern you have outlined when they next upgrade. And, given that most Niche forces upgrade on an annual basis, this will have an immediate impact on the risks presented by the lack of clarity in identifying , collating and recording risk factors in NicheRMS365. I can reassure you that, together with colleagues from MMB, we are actively looking at the issues you have raised.

I have included a map showing the current Niche Technology customers for your information. Please advise if there is anything further you require from Niche Technology.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]  
Director, Customer Support  
[REDACTED]