



Mr Adrian Farrow
Coroner's Court
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Lingley Mere Business Park
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T: [REDACTED]
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Date: 26th January 2024

Dear Sir

RE: Regulation 28 Report into the death of Claire Nicole Briggs

1. North West Fire Control

- 1.1. I write to you regarding the Regulation 28 notice issued to North West Fire Control (NWFC) on 8th December 2023 regarding the death of Claire Nicole Briggs. It is with great sadness that I read about the circumstances of her death.
- 1.2. NWFC was not involved in this tragic incident but is committed to learning and improvement from lessons identified. The response below explains the processes that the organisation currently has in place or planning to implement to reduce the risk of any future event that may involve NWFC.

NWFC is a shared control room for Lancashire, Greater Manchester, Cumbria and Cheshire fire and rescue service. It was established in May 2014 after amalgamation of the above four fire and rescue service control rooms and is based in Warrington. It operates 24 hours a day, 365 days per year.

- 1.3. NWFC is responsible for receiving emergency calls, mobilising fire engines and other resources to incidents, liaising with the incident ground, and liaising with other emergency services and recording this information. During the 12 month period of 2022/23 year, it dealt with 135,455 emergency calls.
- 1.4. NWFC will deal with emergency calls in accordance with the call handling policy and procedures supplied to it by the fire and rescue service as set out in our service level agreement.

2. Multi-Agency Interoperability

- 2.1. NWFC supports the consistent and robust embedding of the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme (JESIP), which promotes effective inter-agency working through its principles of Co-Location, Communication, Co-ordination, Joint Understanding of Risk, and Shared Situational Awareness. We ensure we follow the JESIP doctrine and use clear speech when liaising with other agencies and avoid using fire service terminology.
- 2.2. NWFC interacts with North West Ambulance Service (NWAS) and four police authorities in the North West region, as well as British Transport Police, sharing key information about multi-agency incidents to maintain situation awareness between each service.
- 2.3. After the Manchester Arena terrorist attack and subsequent recommendations from the Inquiry, the recommendations have been implemented and reviewed by NWFC and overseen through a Ministerial board.

- 2.4. Part of the work linked to the Ministerial Board, led by the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) and other blue light partners is to establish a process of providing additional assurance about the application of JESIP. [Download the Joint Doctrine - JESIP Website.](#)
- 2.5. NWFC was an Interested Person during the Manchester Arena Inquiry and fully accepts the recommendations of the report and continues to embed the recommendations, including R28 and R29 (see below).
- 2.6. R28: North West Fire Control should take steps to ensure that it is involved in multi-agency exercises, particularly those that test mobilisation and the response to a Major Incident in line with the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles (JESIP).
- 2.7. R29: North West Fire Control should ensure that it regularly tests how it operates, by ensuring that its staff participate in regular exercises and practical tests. These should include multi-agency exercises.
- 2.8. NWFC has recently established an Organisation Improvement Team to compliment the audit and assurance process.
- 2.9. This is supported with daily testing of our inter-agency communication channels and also through 'real life' incidents and exercising.
- 2.10. NWFC adheres to the Multi Agency NFCC National Operational Guidance using agreed terminology.

- 2.11. To further enhance these principles and multi-agency working with the fire and rescue services, police and NWAS, on 1st April 2023, NWFC secured funding for the appointment of a temporary 'Inter-Agency Liaison Lead' with specific responsibilities for the following:
- 2.12. Ensuring that NWFC is involved in a programme of multi-agency training and exercising to test mobilisation and response to incidents including major incidents.
- 2.13. To ensure that operating standards set out in NFCC endorsed National Operational Guidance and JESIP related to inter-agency working are embedded and being met.
- 2.14. To establish a framework for identifying shortfalls in performance relating to inter-agency working and feeding these back into internal organisational improvement processes and external multi-agency forums
- 2.15. To establish a multi-agency control room forum with clear Terms of Reference to, among other things, improve joint working between control rooms.
- 2.16. The Inter-Agency Lead has successfully established the Multi-Agency Tactical Control Communications Group which has control room representation at senior level from NWFC, Merseyside Fire Control, all North West regional Police Services, NWAS, British Transport Police and the Coastguard.
- 2.17. The Multi-Agency Tactical Control Communications Group has met four times and has already made positive practical change to interoperability ways of working, including sharing lessons identified from incidents, joint training and exercising.

3. Trauma Cell

3.1. NWFC will support its partner fire and rescue services in dealing with incident support in accordance with the mobilising policy and procedures supplied to it by the fire service.

3.2. NWFC have supported fire and rescue services in relation to managing a request from resources at the incident ground when requesting advice from the NWS Trauma Cell. This has been in situ since 2014.

3.3. The process ensures there is the provision for a timely assessment and prioritisation of people who require medical attention. Fire service crews at the scene of an emergency can access clinical support during protracted delays for an ambulance resource via a NWS paramedic on the Trauma Cell. This is supported by NWFC via the following route:

- NWFC contact NWS emergency control room and request Trauma Cell member of staff contact fire service crews at scene immediately.
- Trauma Cell member of staff contacts fire service crews on appliance mobile phone

3.4. In addition, NWS updates NWFC regarding operational pressures they are facing. When NWS REAP (Resource Escalation Action Plan) levels are escalated and therefore even higher demands than usual are placed on the ambulance service, this is shared with our partner fire and rescue services, and allows them to consider making early use of the NWS Trauma Cell.

4. NWAS Triage System

- 4.1. In 2022, NWFC and its partner fire and rescue services updated their standard radio procedure to adopt the triage requirements from NWAS to enable them to make the most appropriate clinical response and assist in conveying the seriousness of any casualty's condition, which will allow NWAS to re-categorise the priority of incidents.

5. Right Care, Right Person

- 5.1. Right Care, Right Person (RCRP) is a framework for assisting police with decision-making about when they should be involved in responding to reported incidents involving people with mental health needs. When adopted the aim is to successfully reduce inappropriate police involvement in care and support better access to mental health specialist services.
- 5.2. NWFC are aware of the framework and will work with the four fire and rescue services to understand the impact on the fire services and subsequently NWFC, who will handle such calls in accordance with the fire services call handling policy and procedures.

6. Multi-Agency Incident Transfer

- 6.1. Multi-Agency Incident Transfer (MAIT) is an electronic means of sharing information with other agencies subscribed to the MAIT hub.
- 6.2. NWFC have agreed to be an early adopter of MAIT within the national fire and rescue service community and aim to have this tool in place by March 2024. When the different police services and NWAS adopt this protocol, this will speed up the information sharing between emergency services using electronic data and reduce the amount of time taken for sharing information verbally via telephone/radio communications.

7. Regional Standard Operating Procedure – Information Sharing

- 7.1. In July 2023, The Multi-Agency Tactical Control Communications Group was presented with a draft version of an information sharing document produced by NWAS to enable collaboration between NWAS and the Police.
- 7.2. The document was initially created in November 2021 for the Police and NWAS, and therefore based upon their own operating models, which are different to the NWFC operating model.
- 7.3. NWFC has provided feedback to NWAS on the document and has conducted a gap analysis of its ability to comply with the ways of working. The governance is being overseen by the NWFC's Operations Management Committee, whose membership includes senior managers from NWFC and our four fire and rescue partners.
- 7.4. The principles of the document relate to gathering information and sharing situational awareness between emergency control rooms, which are also covered in the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles as referred to in section 2.1

8. NWFC wishes to pass on its condolences to family and friends of Claire Nicole Briggs and trusts this response addresses the matters raised in your regulation 28 report. NWFC will continue to adopt the JESIP principles with a view to promoting collaborative working between all emergency services.
9. Please note that as part of best practice and sharing lessons identified, I will be sharing my response with all our partner fire and rescue services.
10. If NWFC can assist the Coroner's service any further please don't hesitate to contact.

Yours faithfully

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Senior Operations Manager
North West Fire Control