




Regulation 28: REPORT TO PREVENT FUTURE DEATHS

NOTE: This form is to be used **after** an inquest.

	<p>REGULATION 28 REPORT TO PREVENT DEATHS</p> <p>THIS REPORT IS BEING SENT TO:</p> <p>1 Rugby Football League</p>
1	<p>CORONER</p> <p>I am M D FLEMING, HM Senior Coroner for the coroner area of West Yorkshire Western Coroner Area</p>
2	<p>CORONER'S LEGAL POWERS</p> <p>I make this report under paragraph 7, Schedule 5, of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 and regulations 28 and 29 of the Coroners (Investigations) Regulations 2013.</p>
3	<p>INVESTIGATION and INQUEST</p> <p>On 17/09/2020 I opened an inquest into the death of Archie Campbell Bruce who, at the date of his death was aged 20 years. The inquest was resumed and concluded on 17th January 2024</p> <p>I found that the cause of death to be: -</p> <p>1a. Central nervous system depression</p> <p>1b. Combined toxic effects of tramadol, cocaine, alcohol and buprenorphine.</p> <p>I arrived at a conclusion of accident.</p>
4	<p>CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE DEATH</p> <p>On 18/08/2019 Archie Campbell Bruce was found unresponsive in his hotel room at The Sporting Village, 272 Route De Launaguet in Toulouse France, after he spent the late evening of 17/08/2019 socialising and drinking with fellow players after his debut playing for the Batley Rugby Club. Despite attempts to resuscitate him, upon the arrival of the paramedics he was found to have died. At post mortem his blood was found to contain alcohol (), cocaine (), buprenorphine () and a fatal quantity of Tramadol ().</p> <p>There is no evidence to suggest that he had any previous history of drug abuse. It is found more likely than not that when he took the drugs, he misjudged their combined toxicity with fatal unintended consequences.</p>
5	<p>CORONER'S CONCERNS</p> <p>During the inquest I heard evidence of the systems for training and educating players with regard to their illicit use of drugs. In addition I considered written submissions from the legal representatives of the RFL, Batley Rugby Club and the family. I also noted copies of the Overseas Travel Code of Conduct for squads submitted by RFL along with the Player Welfare Policy for the Super League and full time Clubs.</p> <p>The MATTER OF CONCERN is as follows. -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• I have noted that the Welfare Policy and Standards provides provision for Clubs outside the Super League to apply for a dispensation primarily on the basis of resources.• I would ask that consideration be given to the appropriateness of amending this provision so that there is not a relaxation of the rules in clubs outside the Super League, given that it is clubs outside the Super League where young players start off their careers, and given their immaturity are more likely to benefit from education and a defined Code of Conduct



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• RFL to consider the appropriateness of over arching guidance, education and training with respect to the code of conduct without dispensations, with regard to the use of both illicit drugs and misuse of prescription drugs, in order to ensure consistency of application of education throughout all tiers of the sport.
6	ACTION SHOULD BE TAKEN In my opinion action should be taken to prevent future deaths and I believe you (and/or your organisation) have the power to take such action.
7	YOUR RESPONSE You are under a duty to respond to this report within 56 days of the date of this report, namely by June 11, 2024. I, the coroner, may extend the period. Your response must contain details of action taken or proposed to be taken, setting out the timetable for action. Otherwise you must explain why no action is proposed.
8	COPIES and PUBLICATION I have sent a copy of my report to the Chief Coroner and to the following Interested Persons [REDACTED] Batley Bulldogs Rugby Club [REDACTED] I have also sent it to Chief Coroner's Office (Reg 28s) who may find it useful or of interest. I am also under a duty to send a copy of your response to the Chief Coroner and all interested persons who in my opinion should receive it. I may also send a copy of your response to any person who I believe may find it useful or of interest. The Chief Coroner may publish either or both in a complete or redacted or summary form. He may send a copy of this report to any person who he believes may find it useful or of interest. You may make representations to me, the coroner, at the time of your response about the release or the publication of your response by the Chief Coroner.
9	Dated: 18/04/2024  M D FLEMING HM Senior Coroner for West Yorkshire Western Coroner Area