



# Hampshire & Isle of Wight Constabulary

Chief Constable [REDACTED]

Office of the Force Solicitor

[REDACTED]  
Police & Fire Headquarters

Hampshire & Isle of Wight Constabulary  
Leigh Road  
Eastleigh  
Hampshire  
SO50 9SJ

HM Senior Coroner  
Mr Christopher Campbell Wilkinson  
HM Coroner's Office  
Castle Hill  
The Castle  
Winchester  
Hants  
SO23 8UL

Date: 29<sup>th</sup> August 2024

Our Ref: [REDACTED]  
Your Ref:

Telephone: [REDACTED]  
Fax No: [REDACTED]

Dear Sir

## Response to Coroner Concerning the Death of George Dillon

This is the Constabulary's response to the Regulation 28 Report to prevent further deaths issued by Henry Charles, Assistant Coroner in the matter of George Robert Dillon deceased. In that notice dated 16<sup>th</sup> July 2024 the coroner outlined his concerns, in respect of an automated telephone call from the deceased's iPhone received in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight Constabulary's control room at 22.26pm on 18<sup>th</sup> May 2023.

1. On 22.26pm the Constabulary's control room were notified by BT of a 999 automated call from the deceased's iPhone indicating that they had been involved in a collision and were not responding to their iPhone.
2. The iPhone was called back but went straight to voicemail.
3. The control room supervisor forwarded the message to the Intelligence desk to establish who the iPhone belonged to and whether there were any previous markers associated to the number which would indicate the owner of the number could be at risk.
4. By 22.43 the Intelligence desk identified that there was no supporting markers.
5. The Constabulary's guidance to operators on automated notifications at the time of the incident aligned to its response for abandoned 999 calls. Having failed to receive an answer on call back and with no supporting information to inform a deployment the incident would be closed. In this case had it not been for a separate call from a member of the public at 22.45 hours police would not have dispatched an officer to the location of the notification where the collision had occurred.

6. Evidence at the time identified that false activations from telephones and watches was common place and the locations received often inaccurate and unreliable, to the extent the routine deployment of police resources without supporting evidence was not appropriate.
7. Apple Crash detection and onward notification was a recent development at the time. Other manufacturers have since introduced similar automated notifications. The investigating officer stated during the inquest that “not enough is known (by the Police) about this technology within people’s personal phones”.
8. The coroner was concerned that the understanding, training and procedures needed to be reviewed to assist with appropriately prompt responses in situations where there is a notification of a collision or where a right to life may exist.

## Action Taken

At the time of the incident there was no national guidance available as to how police forces should be responding to crash notifications. Following the Inquest Hampshire and the Isle of Wight Constabulary accepted the need to put clear guidance in place. As a result immediate action was taken by the Head of Contact Management who;

- A. Included in a video message an update and clear direction to all staff as to the expected course of action upon receipt of a crash notification.
- B. Arranged for the video message to be followed up with written guidance from the Operations Manager across both Hampshire and Thames Valley Forces (Ex1), with the expectation that operators will deploy to all crash technology notifications if we are not able to get a human response or other information to support it being a false notification.

In addition the Constabulary has now developed a toolkit to be made available to all operators and control room staff which is due to go live in September. Once it does a copy will be released to the coroner. The toolkit provides guidance for both abandoned and automated notification calls across what are now, a range of sources, including Apple Crash detections. The toolkit directs the call taker to confirm the eastings and northings, to record what was heard in playback, to check whether any incidents have been reported nearby and to search the caller’s history and undertake precautionary background checks. In the case of Apple Crash detection and Ford Notifications if there is no response on call back and no further information the operator is directed to create a Grade 1 incident for immediate deployment.

Changes have been made in part, because, as recognised at the inquest, the technology has advanced to the extent that the Constabulary’s previous approach left room for error, notwithstanding the development of these technologies has taken place with little or no interaction between the private companies providing these notifications and UK Policing. The Head of Contact Management has since engaged with the Chair of the National Contact Management Support Group, who has confirmed receipt of the coroners PFDNA. A copy of the Constabulary’s Toolkit has been shared and it is now being used to further national discussion on the subject.

Finally, I am enclosing a copy of the email referred to above (Ex1). Whilst the toolkit itself is not suitable to be shared publically, slide 7 which deals specifically with Apple Crash notifications can be published and is included here as part of the email at Exhibit 1.

Yours Faithfully



Force Solicitor

Encs

EX 1



Ex 1

[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 30 August 2024 12:00  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** FW: Deployments to Apple (and other) crash detection software activations  
**Importance:** High

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 30 August 2024 11:56  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** FW: Deployments to Apple (and other) crash detection software activations  
**Importance:** High

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 28 August 2024 11:56  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** FW: Deployments to Apple (and other) crash detection software activations  
**Importance:** High

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 22 July 2024 16:42  
**To:**

**Subject:** Deployments to Apple (and other) crash detection software activations  
**Importance:** High


Team,

As you may or may not be aware – there was a Coroner’s inquest earlier this year which included questions for Contact Management in relation to the Police response to a silent 999 call, in the form of an automated Apple crash detection call.

Following that inquest, we have completed a review of our abandoned 999 operational guidance. That review has nearly concluded and over the next few months I will be sharing an updated ‘Abandoned 999 tool-kit’ which will include some changes in terms of how we manage abandoned 999 calls (including those from automated crash and fall detections).

Prior to that toolkit being launched in its entirety, we now know enough about modern crash detection software to make an immediate change to our operational guidance relating to these type of calls:

The following is a preview of what the toolkit provides you, in terms of operational guidance for these type of calls:



# Apple Crash Detection

## Description

If this feature is enabled and the user handset detects what Apple describes as a 'serious car crash' the handset will trigger an alert. If the user does not cancel the alert, the handset will make an emergency call.

## Call Handler Info

A recorded message is played advising that the user has been involved in a car crash and providing latitude and longitude, message is repeated. You will be provided with the usual mobile call information, EISEC data and can request playback of recorded message if required.

## Call Handler Actions

Attempt to engage with the caller in the normal way in an attempt to secure the information you require for deployment. If the call drops out, please attempt to call the user back in the normal way. The call is not an emergency service, in which case the log can be closed without deployment.

If the line is silent or there is background noise (but you are unable to speak with the caller on a call) you must create a grade 1 incident for deployment at the location provided through the EISEC data.

Please consider this change to our guidance **live as of now** and take particular note of the call handler actions. It is also important to note that (whilst Apple crash detection is the most common) there are several variants that work in the same way, are equally accurate and are all supported by the BT 999 service. These include:

- Ford Car Service Crash Detection
- Real Rider Crash Detection
- Telematics Crash Detection
- E-Call Crash Detection

In all cases, please follow the call handler actions above.

The overarching principle we are working to is that (on the balance of probability) these activations are likely to have resulted from a genuine crash. Unless we are able to quickly re-establish contact with the caller and confirm police are *not* required, we should be deploying officers (on a grade 1 response) to the location provided by the EISEC data - tasking officers with the necessary area searches and associated proportionate enquires to confirm the welfare of the user.

Further context and briefings will come with the formal launch of the toolkit. If you have any further questions or queries in the time being, please don't hesitate to get in contact with me.



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