



S28 Response to John Adrian Gittins, Senior Coroner for North Wales (East and Central)

Matters of concern raised within the S28 Response

Point 1

There was a confused picture of the management of the reports and information being handled by Cheshire Police insofar as a request for observations would be put out to officers by a communications operator, however there was no requirement for any officer to acknowledge that they had received such a request and therefore no means by which it could be confirmed that any actions were being undertaken as a result of the reports which had been received.

Response

Cheshire Constabulary has reviewed the way in which reports of dangerous driving / drivers are processed. As part of that change, all communications operators who work within the resource deployment centre (RDC) and all operational officers will receive new guidance as a direct result of the learning from investigation into the deaths of Mr Butler and Mr Brett on 26th February 2022:

- Part of the that guidance is the requirement for communications operators to make clear and sustained attempts to confirm that an appropriate patrol acknowledges their radio transmissions regarding observations for drivers or vehicles that pose a risk to the public.
- These attempts must continue until it is established that there is either such a patrol available to be assigned, or that there are no patrols available immediately in the relevant location.
- Once these facts are established, the call sign of the patrol assigned must be recorded in line with current practices, with the addition of the patrol's location and their direction of travel.

OR

- The incident log will be updated to reflect the fact that there are no available patrols and where appropriate, this will be escalated to the Force Incident Sergeant for them to consider deploying a patrol from another geographic location or force.
- The practice of operators stating or recording the words 'nothing heard' (or similar) in response to any request for an available patrol that is unanswered will cease, and officers will be required to respond over the air.

Point 2

There was also confusion within the control room as to the methodology by which a vehicle could be added to an ANPR/Vehicle Finder System, and although an IOPC investigation was finalised in February 2023 which identified potential learning for the force in respect of ensuring control room staff understand the appropriate processes, evidence was heard at the inquest that a

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witness had not received this training until December 2024 due to a lack of time being made available to her to undertake the same. (Where learning identifies required training/actions, any delays in delivering this, can only serve to perpetuate the risks which such training/actions is aimed at mitigating.)

Response

In court, communications operator Natalia Komorowska stated that she had not received her training until December 2024. Natalia has clarified that she was referring to refresher training and Constabulary training records show that she had received her initial training in March 2021, and she was confirmed as being a competent deployment operator in October 2021. In December 2024 Natalia received a refresher of the foundation and dispatcher NCALTS training.

All communications operators who currently work within the resource deployment centre have attended a specific course which includes ANPR, Hotlist (Cleartone) and Vehicle Finder. There is also ongoing continued professional development plan in which all operators (including call taking function) will be required to repeat refresher training. Additional support will be provided by the ANPR coordinator.