



HM Prison & Probation Service

Director General of Operations
HM Prison and Probation Service
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Email: [REDACTED]

Mr. Simon Burge
HM Assistant Coroner
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Nottingham City Council
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20 January 2025

Dear Mr Burge,

Thank you for your Regulation 28 report of 3 December 2024 following the inquest into the death of Paul Gobell at HMP Whatton, which was sent to the Ministry of Justice. I am responding on behalf of His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) as Director General of Operations.

I know that you will share a copy of this response with Mr Gobell's family, and I would first like to express my condolences for their loss. Every death in custody is a tragedy and the safety of those in our care is my absolute priority.

You have raised concerns regarding welfare checks when the first night interview cannot take place, communicating changes to Cell Sharing Risk Assessments (CSRA) to prisoners and the involvement of probation whenever an Open Conditions Suitability Assessment (OCSA) is undertaken.

All prisons have well established first night induction processes and policies in place to ensure that prisoners receive appropriate care when entering prison custody. Welfare checks and conversations form part of this process and, in most cases, prisoners coming into reception are inducted in line with existing national and local policies. However, there may be exceptional circumstances when this does not happen, such as in the situation you have described involving Mr Gobell. HMP Whatton will update their Induction policy so that, when a normal induction cannot be facilitated, the prisoner will be asked to complete the "late arrivals form." This form asks the prisoner to provide information that can then be used to consider the prisoner's welfare until a face-to-face interview can be conducted.

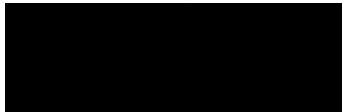
The HMPPS CSRA policy is currently under review and is due to be reissued during 2025. As part of this review, we will ensure that the need to inform prisoners as soon as possible of

changes to their CSRA status is made clear. In support of this HMP Whatton have amended their local safety strategy to now include the line *Prisoners must be informed in writing when their CSRA levels change following a CSRA review.*

HMP Hollesley Bay have provided assurance that wherever possible (for example where an immediate OCSA for public protection reasons is not required) they will seek Prison Offender Manager (POM) attendance at local stability meetings where OCSAs are being discussed.

Thank you again for bringing your concerns to my attention. I trust that this response provides assurance that action is being taken to address this matter.

Yours sincerely,

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Director General of Operations