



By e-mail only

Ms E Hassell
Senior Coroner
East London
St Pancras Coroner's Court
Camley Street
London N1C 4PP

[REDACTED]
Deputy Assistant Commissioner
Metropolitan Police Service
New Scotland Yard
Victoria Embankment
London
SW1A 2JL

Email: [REDACTED]

03 April 2025

Dear Ms Hassell,

On behalf of the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, I write to provide the response to the matters of concern addressed to the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) in your Report to Prevent Future Deaths dated 4th February 2025 following the inquest into the tragic death of Peter Jones.

On behalf of the MPS, may I first of all express my sincere condolences to the family and friends of Mr Jones, our thoughts and sympathies are very much with them.

The MPS has acknowledged and reviewed all the matters of concern raised in your Regulation 28 Report and responds as follows.

The Coroner's "Matters of Concern"

"The jury noted that without the presence of a flat topped telephone hood, there would have been no means for Mr Jones to take his life in this manner. However, I heard at inquest that the telephone hoods in Stoke Newington Police Station have been replaced since Mr Jones's death, and the flat kind are nowhere else in the MPS estate.

The jury also found that there was an MPS failure to have sufficient oversight of the public reception area from "the box", the area that faces out to the public reception area.

I heard that every police station has a different geographical layout, and that some of these are old buildings. However, a senior police officer giving evidence did accept that station officers could be positioned in the box facing out towards the public area, rather than further into the office facing each other".

MPS Response

Following the receipt of this report, a survey into all active front counters across the MPS estate was commissioned (excluding permanently closed counters and those that are currently under refurbishment), and a Custody Centre which has a public waiting area but not a front counter area. The scope of the survey was to:

- Determine the ability of Public Access Officers (PAOs) to view the general counter and public waiting areas from both the main counter and, where provided, the discrete enquiry counter.

- Confirm the availability of desktop MPS IT systems' terminals at the PAO counter positions.
- Determine the ability of PAOs to monitor via CCTV.

The outcome of the survey identified the following issues:

- The MPS IT systems' availability is only reported as an issue at two sites, however, they are within the area at both sites.
- The majority of sites have at least some issue with situational awareness for PAOs when at their counter positions. There are a range of reasons for this but in the main are due to shape of the property housing the front counter area, the internal layout and, for some, the provision of branding imagery applied to internal glazing (obscuring views).
- Limitations in the ability of PAOs to monitor via CCTV were identified.

As a result of the survey and our findings, we have taken the following action:

- All PAOs have been provided with laptops to enable them to work in the general front counter area which will mean much greater oversight of the waiting areas where members of the public wait to speak to officers or staff.
- All PAOs have been reminded of the importance of both their visibility at the front counter and also that they should choose their workstation position at which they work on their laptop so that they can better observe what is happening in the public waiting area.
- The two police stations with issues of MPS IT system availability, have been rectified by providing all PAOs with laptops.

With respect to layout and design (to produce maximum visibility/oversight), retrospectively applying major changes to existing counter areas will require very substantial investment and there are significant spatial constraints at sites which will prevent such action without major site reconfiguration.

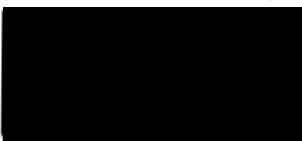
However, we have taken the opportunity to alter the design of the ongoing refurbishment of Forest Gate Police Station to ensure that the layout of the front counter and public waiting area will provide much improved oversight for PAOs, from all counter positions. The lessons learned from this will be incorporated in a forthcoming Front Counter Design Standard that will (after staff safety) prioritise clear sight lines and PAO workplace ergonomics for all new sites or major refurbishments.

Front counter CCTV systems are due to be refreshed over the next few years as part of the MPS's CCTV Lifecycle Programme with the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC).

Once approved it is anticipated work will commence in 2025/26, and will assist to enhance the ability of PAOs to use CCTV to monitor front offices.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require further information from the MPS.

Yours sincerely



Deputy Assistant Commissioner