Ministry of Defence

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MINISTER FOR THE HOUSE OF LORDS

4.4.5

15 January 2026

Dear Dr Sharpstone,

Thank you for your report of 26 September 2025 to the Ministry of Defence (MOD), following your Inquest into the death of Ms Catherine Moore. First and foremost, I wish to express my sincere condolences to Ms Moore's family, friends and all those affected by this tragic incident.

The circumstances surrounding Ms Moore's death are deeply troubling, and I have reflected on the findings of your Inquest with great care. I appreciate your acknowledgment of the improvements the MOD has made to vehicle maintenance processes, particularly in relation to steering components, since this tragic event. I have sought additional assurances to confirm that all reasonably foreseeable risks are being monitored and mitigated.

I am confident that the Electronic Safety Notice issued will address the risk of steering system misalignment being missed again. Furthermore, work to update vehicle maintenance guidance for MOD Land Rovers is progressing, and this will provide a robust, long-term solution to wheel alignment checks. I remain committed to monitoring these efforts closely and will continue to seek assurances regarding the safety and reliability of our vehicles.

Your report raises important concerns regarding the Joint Asset Management Equipment Solutions (JAMES) platform, as well as the repair and maintenance of the MOD Land Rover involved. In considering my response, I have sought advice from Subject Matter Experts in engineering, maintenance, Defence safety and the JAMES platform to ensure we have carefully and thoroughly considered your concerns.

JAMES is a complex system, and this complexity stems from the sheer volume and variety of equipment it is designed to manage. It is unfortunate that the platform was not presented or explained sufficiently at the inquest, but I am reassured that the system is fit for purpose for the current, trained user community. That said, I take the concerns you have raised very seriously, and I have addressed each in the addendum overleaf.

Dr Daniel Sharpstone
HM Assistant Coroner for Suffolk
[redacted]

I hope this response provides reassurance of my commitment to ensuring the highest standards of safety across Defence. Thank you for bringing these important matters to my attention.

Yours sincerely,

THE LORD COAKER

Addendum to Response: Summary of JAMES

JAMES is a digital compliance and information tool that supports Defence maintenance policy by enabling safe, standardised, and well-documented engineering and maintenance activities. It covers the full gamut of Defence equipment and is a vital tool to ensure Defence has oversight of the location and readiness of its equipment, and helps us to embed safety across all Defence activities.

It ensures that only qualified personnel perform maintenance, with users trained through a formal Learning Management System and following Standard Operating Procedures, ensuring activities are safe, auditable, and compliant with Defence safety standards.

1. Terminology and User-Interface Issues.

You highlight in your report that; ***the terminology and descriptors on JAMES forms were very difficult to understand; the user interface is unclear;*** **and** ***the tabling and format are unclear.***

JAMES employs standardised engineering and maintenance terminology aligned with Army Equipment Support Publications. All users are required to complete training via the Learning Management System to understand the terminology and effectively navigate the system. Though it has been in use for some time (and is indeed due to be replaced in 2027), it is considered functional and fit for purpose by the user community, and the training equips personnel with the skills to operate it successfully. The digital nature of the system does not lend itself to clear presentation of the interface in hardcopy form, and I understand this was an issue during the inquest.

2. Data Access and Extraction.

You highlight in your report that; ***it was unclear how data could be extracted for governance purposes; there is lack of clarity on how to locate data and information on the maintenance and repairs; there was no evidence of ability or/to process or extract data from JAMES to facilitate systems and process audits;*** **and** ***there is no formal searchable database.***

JAMES is optimised for digital use, with structured dashboards and reports that support inspections, audits, and fleet management. Data extraction is routine for authorised users, and higher-level accounts enable data access across formations. PowerBI dashboards further enhance managerial oversight.

JAMES records all faults, repairs, and inspections, allowing users to access full maintenance histories. Users are trained to update, extract and utilise the data effectively. Additionally, JAMES captures fault histories and trends, highlighting recurring issues to inform Electronic Safety Notices and policy updates. Army Command Standing Orders mandate annual audits of all Army Land Equipment

holdings, and JAMES supports these as well as other audits, technical evaluations and lesson identified processes.

3. Record Keeping and Traceability of Tasks.

You highlight in your report that; ***there are no details of the referrer if checks are needed with regards to the reasons for the referral; no check in the system allowing feedback to the referrer; limited reasons given for an entry into JAMES; limited details of work done other than task closed or fully fit;*** **and** ***little formal space on system for suggestions with regards to further work or maintenance on the matter attended to and repaired.***

JAMES primarily tracks task completion, timing, and outcomes. It logs the departmental originator of faults (e.g. Motor Transport) and allows follow-up. Feedback mechanisms are under review and though log-in data and user identifiers are recorded, JAMES is not designed for ongoing dialogue between referrers and repairers. Users are trained to provide concise, yet accurate entries and brief entries are common for routine faults.

Regarding your specific observation of the term "Task Closed", this indicates that a repair is complete, and the vehicle is task worthy and ready for road use. While detailed work notes are encouraged, they are not mandatory. The term and its meaning are widely understood and tied to inspection protocols.

Mechanics are also empowered to log new faults encountered during repairs, and JAMES supports recording multiple faults per vehicle. Additional work is logged separately, with further work recommendations managed by maintenance personnel and their Chain of Command.

4. Process Clarity and Scheduling.

You highlight in your report that; ***the rationale and/or schedule in JAMES for some processes, for e.g. ad hoc inspections was unclear*** **and** ***there was repetition of identical time and dates attached to different tasks.***

The term “ad hoc” in JAMES refers to inspections outside scheduled Maintenance Engineering Inspections or servicing, such as post-incident checks or handovers. Incidents of matching timestamps for multiple fault repairs are often a result of batch processing onto JAMES by the user, who would enter data onto the system in one go after completing multiple or simultaneous repairs.

5. Repair and Maintenance of MOD Land Rover.

You highlight in your report that; ***there is no process with regards to; inspection, checking, audit, feedback and testing of MOD vehicle maintenance and repairs*** **or** ***for real time feedback.***

Inspections are conducted in line with policies and publications and recorded in JAMES. As referenced at point 2, the system supports internal and external audits, and all Army Land Equipment holdings are audited annually.

With specific reference to the repair and maintenance of the MOD Land Rover, particularly the steering box, an Electronic Safety Notice (ESN) has been issued to mitigate against steering system misalignment checks being missed. Concurrently, work is underway to update the inspection criteria for MOD Land Rovers, ensuring a comprehensive and long-term solution.

Any ineffective repairs are re-reported as faults through communication between the Mechanical Transport cell and workshops for reinspection and resolution.