



Aled Gruffydd
Senior Coroner
Swansea Neath and Port Talbot
The Guildhall
Swansea
SA1 4PE

5 January 2026

Dear Aled,

Thank you for sending your report concerning the investigation into the death of Mr Alexander Rhys Lewis. I am replying as the Minister of State for Policing and Crime, and I apologise for the delay in responding.

My sincere sympathy is with Mr Lewis's family. I was deeply saddened to read about the circumstances of his death and the impact on his family and those close to him.

I understand the importance of the concerns you have raised and I will respond to each in turn.

Police drivers operate in high-pressure situations to urgently respond to incidents and to pursue drivers who pose a danger to the public. The Government recognises the vital role police drivers play and is committed to ensuring they are trained to high and consistent standards to ensure their safety and that of the public. The Government works closely with the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) and the College of Policing to ensure police driver training meets these high and consistent standards, as set out in the Road Traffic Act 1988 (Police Driving: Prescribed Training) Regulations. These regulations prescribe minimum standards of police driver training in line with the Police Driving Standards measures in the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022.

The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 is a legislation that enhances police powers and reforms the criminal justice system.

This Act amended the Road Traffic Act 1988 to require that an assessment of whether a constable or other 'designated person' has driven carelessly or dangerously compares their standard of driving against that of a competent and careful constable who has undertaken the same prescribed training, rather than with a member of the public, as was the case previously.

The prescribed minimum requirements for police driver training form part of a standardised programme, which is developed, maintained, and implemented by the NPCC and the College of Policing. This training is aligned with the College of Policing's Authorised Professional Practice, Roads policing, police pursuits guidelines for managing pursuits, and the national police driver training curriculum. Officers engaging in pursuits must complete both levels of practical police pursuit driver training: Initial Phase Pursuit and the Tactical Phase Pursuit standard, as set by the College of Policing and within the College's

Police Driving National Policing Curriculum. Police officers should also take account of the College of Policing's Authorised Professional Practice guidance on whether a pursuit is appropriate. The College introduced licensing in April 2024 for police driver training providers to further professionalise police driving standards. These high standards of training are intended to ensure officers do not fall below the professional standards expected of them and to safeguard the public.

College Authorised Professional Practice guidelines set out that officers should give due regard to the purpose and justification of their actions and ensure any decision to pursue is necessary, proportionate, and balanced against threats, risks and the possibility of harm to the person being pursued, the officers involved and any others who may be affected. Any decision on whether to undertake a pursuit is an operational one and Authorised Professional Practice sets out the factors for officers to consider when planning and running an operation.

Your report sets out your concerns that the officer had no opportunity to communicate a dynamic risk assessment to the control room for it to take a decision on whether to authorise or stand down the pursuit; the number of tasks the officer had to undertake meant risks involved in continuing the pursuit were missed; and from a safety perspective, double-crewing is safer.

Authorisation of pursuits

While officers should seek authorisation where possible, in accordance with Authorised Professional Practice, to engage in a pursuit, that Practice sets out that this may not always be possible, depending on the operational circumstances of an incident. Officers performing any role in pursuit management must be trained to the standards set out by the College of Policing and police drivers should not be authorised to pursue if they are unable to meet the required level of competence during training. The College of Policing's Authorised Professional Practice sets out that, in some circumstances, the time available between recognising the need for action and the deadline for taking action may be too short to acquire authorisation from a control/communications room. Officers, in these circumstances, may self-authorise so long as they can justify the decision at a later time, in line with the National Decision Model. The National Decision Model is used by everyone in policing. It encourages officers to act in accordance with the Code of Ethics ([Ethical policing principles | College of Policing](#)) It encourages them to use their discretion where appropriate and should reduce risk aversion. In a fast-moving incident, it makes clear that decision makers should adhere to their overarching mission to act with integrity to protect and serve the public.

Following each pursuit, reflective and lessons-learned meetings are held where forces review and analyse the decision to pursue and examine whether training protocols were followed.

Managing risks

As set out above, College of Policing training requirements must be undertaken and met by officers before they can be qualified to engage in pursuits. This includes officers being trained to demonstrate competence in applying effective decision making from the initial phase to the tactical phase of a pursuit and the need to carry out dynamic risk assessments throughout.

Before engaging in pursuits, officers must be familiar with pursuit considerations and use the intelligence at hand to assess the level of risk posed by the pursued driver and the seriousness of the offence being committed, or suspected, in accordance with the National Decision Model. This allows officers to make decisions where many short-duration pursuits might not allow time for specific guidance to be communicated by a control room and communications room staff.

Crewing

Decisions on crewing are operational matters and at the discretion and judgement of Chief Constables who determine how to deploy available resources to deal with issues for which the force is responsible, considering specific local problems and demands.

Any pursuit that results in a fatality is taken very seriously and referred to the Independent Office for Police Conduct, a statutory body with powers and duties to investigate under the Police Reform Act 2002 and associated legislation. The Independent Office for Police Conduct has the authority to independently investigate cases where there has been a death or serious injury following police contact, public complaints against police, and conduct matters where a member of the public has been adversely affected and/or public interest requires it. Following its investigations, the Independent Office for Police Conduct may direct disciplinary proceedings for persons serving with the police and/or refer them to the Director of Public Prosecutions for a charging decision. Following the Independent Office for Police Conduct investigation into Mr Lewis' death, I note they concluded that the investigation was not subject to special procedures and the decision-maker found the service of the police to be acceptable.

I hope this response is helpful in responding to the concerns raised in your report. On a personal note, I wish again to extend my condolences to the family and friends of Mr Lewis, and to thank you for bringing this issue to my attention.

Very best wishes,



Minister of State for Policing and Crime