

Ref:

17 December 2025

Dear Mr Bridgman,

Thank you for your Regulation 28 Report (Prevention of Future Deaths) dated 4 November 2025, prepared following your investigation and inquest into the death of Oliver Luke Gorman. Your report states Mr Gorman died on 5 May 2025 following inhalation of butane gas from an aerosol deodorant. I am responding on behalf of the Department for Business and Trade in my role as Chief Executive of the Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS), which is part of the Department. OPSS is the UK's national product regulator, responsible for the regulation of most consumer goods except food, vehicles, and medical products.

May I first say how sorry I was to hear of Oliver's death. If you have the opportunity, please convey my deepest sympathy to his family. I recognise the devastating harms that misuse of these products can cause, and, like you, I am aware of other tragic deaths of young people caused by inhalation of substances in aerosol products.

In responding to the matters of concern raised in your report, I would firstly like to explain how aerosol safety is regulated under the Aerosol Dispensers Regulations 2009. These regulations set out requirements for placing aerosols, including deodorants, on the UK market. This includes affixing a compliance mark (UKCA in Great Britain or the reversed epsilon in Northern Ireland) to confirm the product meets the relevant product safety requirements which includes mitigating risks associated with inhalation of the dispenser's contents. Aerosols must also meet aerosol-specific labelling requirements under the classification, labelling and packaging of chemicals legislation. This includes warnings and precautionary statements, such as 'keep out of the reach of children,' where they are relevant to the aerosol product.

Where evidence is available to OPSS regarding products that pose a safety risk or do not comply with the law, we and Local Authority Trading Standards have powers to enforce the law and remove products from the market. As a risk-based, evidence-led regulator, the Office for Product Safety and Standards gathers data on product-related harms from a range of sources, including notifications from local authorities and other regulators about safety issues involving consumer products. We have reviewed these notifications to OPSS and found no reports since 2022 of non-

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compliant or unsafe aerosol deodorants. We have also examined available information from the National Child Mortality Database, which gathers reviews of all child deaths in England.

In your report, you raise three matters of concern. I address those within the remit of OPSS below:

1. Age restrictions

Your report expressed a concern about the absence of an age limit on the sale of aerosol deodorants (unlike aerosol paints and butane for cigarette lighters). To address the dangers from products that might be abused, the *Psychoactive Substances Act 2016* makes it an offence to supply a product containing a psychoactive substance to a person whilst knowing or being reckless about whether it is likely to be consumed for its psychoactive effect. [Guidance](#) published by government and trade associations, such as the [Association of Convenience Stores](#), supports retailers to fulfil these responsibilities, and retailers should make sure they are aware of the potential uses of such products so they can effectively exercise their responsibilities in law.

Local Authority Trading Standards also support retailers to prevent misuse and protect children, through advice to retailers on refusing sales when misuse is suspected, conducting voluntary age checks and spotting red flags, such as unusual or repeated purchasing patterns.

You suggested an age limit on the purchase of aerosol products would help raise awareness among parents and caregivers about the potential associated risks. Aerosol products are common in households, with over 485 million sold in the UK in 2024, according to the British Aerosol Manufacturers Association (BAMA) via [Kantar Worldpanel data](#). Many of these, such as deodorants and hair sprays, are frequently purchased by parents for people under 18, and are typically accessible around the home.

While I share your concern at the circumstances of Oliver's tragic death, it is not clear the available evidence proves that placing an age limit on the purchase of aerosol deodorants would be more effective than the measures currently in place under the existing regulations, or the additional steps the industry is taking on warnings, which I have set out below.

2. Adequacy of warnings

You also raised concerns regarding the effectiveness of the warnings on aerosol deodorants currently required by the existing regulations. Awareness raising of potential harms which can be caused by products is vital, particularly for vulnerable groups.

Your report suggests that the current warning - Solvent Abuse Can Kill Instantly (known as the 'SACKI' label) - does not adequately convey the possible risk of death from inhalation in clear and accessible language or appearance. The SACKI label was introduced in 1997 in response to concerns about awareness of harms caused

by substance abuse, and has been implemented voluntarily by industry since, with currently around 70 percent of aerosols manufacturers in the UK using the warning, according to the BAMA.

Since 2024, businesses have been working with the substance abuse charity Re-Solv and with the BAMA to design a new label to better address concerns, like yours, that the inhalation risks from everyday aerosol items need to be more easily understood. The BAMA is recommending that businesses consider using the new message “**Intentional misuse can kill instantly. Do not deliberately inhale.**” BAMA are also providing guidance to all UK manufacturers regarding the colour and location for the label to help improve visibility, whilst also meeting the other label requirements set out in legislation including the classification, labelling and packaging of chemicals.

I understand that one of the UK market leaders in this industry will implement the new messaging from January 2026, meaning a significant proportion of aerosol products in the UK will soon carry the new label. While this will be voluntary, we expect other businesses to follow suit, and OPSS will be encouraging all aerosol manufacturers to take up the new warning. I understand the BAMA will also encourage their membership to make the change as soon as possible.

The voluntary uptake of this clearer label, which includes a reference to the risks as you set out in your report, will lead to a renewed focus on safety from businesses in this industry and further increase the protection of people from inhalation risks.

OPSS, with the BAMA's support, will monitor the progress on the voluntary uptake of the new labelling and we will make clear that we expect industry to be following this updated best practice for products where it is most relevant.

Consumer awareness campaigns help individuals to understand and engage with product safety issues, enabling them to make informed purchasing decisions to keep themselves, friends, and family safe from harm. There is a history of work to reduce solvent abuse harm built on collaboration between industry and charities like Re-Solv, and OPSS encourages industry-led initiatives to address risks and compliance issues. We also work closely with charities including the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents and the Child Accident Prevention Trust to share information and messages about accident prevention and product-related harms to reach vulnerable groups, and the general public. I have asked my officials to make sure that the new industry labelling initiative is communicated to these groups and others, to ensure awareness is raised as widely as possible.

3. Social media access and content

In relation to your matters of concern regarding harmful content accessible across social media platforms, I know you have sent your report to the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and Department for Science, Innovation and Technology, which are best placed to respond to these matters.

This is clearly a tragic case, with significant implications that we should learn from. I hope that what I have outlined about the existing product safety framework and

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proposed changes to the warnings, intended to protect people, particularly vulnerable groups, from product-related harms, provides some reassurance. OPSS is determined to work with industry on measures to further protect people from potential risks posed by aerosol deodorants. Thank you again for writing to the Department raising your concerns.

Yours

