ESSEX POLICE
Protecting and serving Essex

MISS N PERSAUD
HIS MAJESTY'S CORONER

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Telephone: [redacted]
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15th May 2026

Dear Ms Persaud,

Re: Regulation 28 - Prevention of Future Deaths Report

Thank you for your report issued under paragraph 7, Schedule 5 of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009. 1would like to assure you that the matters you have raised have been taken extremely seriously.

We fully recognise and share your concern that the accurate and timely identification of an incident's location is critical to effective emergency response, and that any ambiguity carries the potential to increase risk and undermine public confidence. This response is therefore intended both to address the specific issues you have identified and to explain the actions being taken to reduce the likelihood of recurrence.

During the course of the inquest, concerns were raised regarding confusion about the precise location of the incident, the perceived absence of precise location technology within police systems, and the riskthat reliance on imprecise mobile phone location data may detract from careful consideration of information provided by callers. These are important points, and I hope it is helpful to clarify the systems we use to ensure we correctly identify the location of incidents whilst mitigating for their known limitations as no one system is completely accurate.

All UK police forces already receive two sets of location data for mobile 999 calls. The first location is provided immediately to BT and passed to the Emergency Authorities. This location data is derived from the mobile phone network using information such as zone codes and cell identifiers, informed by signal strength rather than strict geographic proximity to phone masts. As a result, the call may not always be routed via the nearest mast. One known limitation of network derived location data, reflected in your report, is

the variability in precision, which can be adversely affected by factors such as local topography, including hilly terrain and large bodies of water.

In addition, Advanced Mobile Location (AML) data is available on the majority of mobile 999 calls (currently around 87%). Whereas network location data is generated by the mobile network, AML is generated by the handset itself and, when available, provides a significantly more accurate location, often identifying a precise GPS position. This capability is embedded within existing emergency call handling systems and does not require a separate application to be installed on police IT platforms.

AML is not universally or instantaneously available at the point a call is connected. While many AML messages are now received within a small number of seconds, the initialAML location may populate slightly later into the call and can continue to update dynamically as the call progresses, improving accuracy over time. Recent checks showed that in January 2026, 75.3% of AML messages arrived within four seconds (average delay nine seconds, median delay one second), and on a sample day in March 2026 the median delay was two seconds. Availability and timing can be affected by factors including handset type, operating system, signal coverage and whether the call is made via Voice over Wi Fi. As a result, call handlers may initially receive a broader indicative location that is subsequently refined. These characteristics are recognised nationally and are not unique to this incident or to Essex Police. With BT, the service is moving towards dynamic AML, enabling continued location updates throughout the call handling process.

With regard to call routing, emergency calls are routed by BT in line with the Public Emergency Communications Services (PECS) framework, using the zone code or cell identifier provided by the Mobile Network Operator. While the system is designed to ensure calls are routed as quickly as possible to the appropriate Emergency Authority, variations in signal strength can result in calls—particularly in rural or border areas—initially being routed to a neighbouring force. This is a known national issue, for which established procedural guidance exists within the national 999 codes of practice.

Turning to call handling practice, we fully agree with HM Coroner that professional curiosity, verification and challenge are essential safeguards. While technology such as AML provides critical support, it does not remove the need for careful questioning, active listening and corroboration of information provided by callers.

What3Words remains an important fallback option available to call handlers where AML is unavailable, delayed or requires confirmation. It forms part of standard and refresher training and is used alongside—rather than in place of—other location information. Our clear expectation is that call handlers actively consider, validate and cross check all available information in order to confirm location as quickly and accurately as possible.

All Contact Management staff are trained to establish and confirm precise caller location using multiple methods. This includes structured questioning, the use of digital mapping systems, the interpretation of network derived data, and the appropriate use of tools

such as What3Words—particularly in rural, coastal or non-addressable environments. Operational guidance reinforces that system generated location data must be treated as supplementary and that discrepancies between automated data and caller accounts must be actively explored rather than assumed away.

To further strengthen practice and to provide clear assurance of organisational learning we undertake Continuing Professional Development (CPD) training a cycle of this training (Cycle 7) includes a formal refresher on location searching and digital mapping. This training has been explicitly informed by learning from recent inquest findings and operational reviews.

CPD Cycle 7 will be delivered to all Contact Management staff through scheduled sessions on 1 July, 15 July, 29 July, 12 August and 26 August 2026. The training is supported by updated learning materials and guidance and focuses on reinforcing disciplined, safety critical behaviours rather than the introduction of new tools.

The core learning objectives of CPD Cycle 7 include:

- reinforcing the importance of accurate and validated location information as a safety critical activity;
- developing structured, assertive questioning techniques to establish caller location, including where callers are distressed, mobile or uncertain;
- ensuring competent and proportionate use of mapping systems and What3Words, with clear understanding of their limitations;
- improving understanding of mobile network location data, including that provided by BT, and the risks of over reliance on any single data source;
- strengthening recognition of low or conflicting location confidence and the thresholds for escalation;
- reinforcing supervisory oversight, challenge and assurance where location information is unclear or contested.

The intended outcomes are improved call handling discipline around location verification, reduced reliance on assumptions or single data sources, clearer recording of decision making, and demonstrable supervisory oversight. Collectively, this reduces the risk of delay linked to misinterpreted location data and evidences tangible organisational learning in direct response to the issues raised within your report.

Learning from this case has also been addressed locally through reflective practice and supervisory reinforcement. Supervisors are reminded to ensure that location data is actively re checked and refreshed during live calls, rather than reliance being placed solely on information displayed at the point of call arrival.

Beyond individual learning and ahead of the formal CPD starting a number of wider actions are being taken to strengthen resilience and reduce risk:

- Call handlers are being explicitly reminded to request that telecommunications operators remain on the line where an incident appears close to a force boundary, enabling immediate onward transfer if required.
- Supervisors are reinforcing expectations around professional curiosity, proactive location verification and early escalation where uncertainty exists.
- Processes for formally reporting mis routed calls are being reemphasised to ensure national visibility of scale and patterns, supporting ongoing engagement with telecommunications providers and system designers.

At a national level, work continues between emergency services, telecommunications providers and the Home Office to improve cross border routing arrangements and the early exploitation of enhanced location data. Future system developments are planned to enable more sophisticated use of dynamic location information earlier in the call handling process. Learning from this case will also be shared across UK police contact centres through National Police Chiefs Council.

In conclusion, I accept the importance of the concerns you have raised and are confident that the combination of existing technology, strengthened call handling practice, enhanced supervision, structured refresher training and ongoing national system development provides a proportionate and effective response. We remain committed to learning from this case and to working collaboratively with partners to reduce the risk of future harm and I hope this response gives you and the public the assurance required.

Thank you again for bringing these matters to our attention and be assured that we will continue to keep emergency call handling, location accuracy and cross border response under active review.

I would take the opportunity if your diary allows to invite you to Essex in order to see this work in action and speak to some of the staff and officers involved.

Yours sincerely,

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

Chief Constable