

**Date:** 10<sup>th</sup> February 2021

**Our Reference:** FOIA-2021-013

**RE: Your request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000**

I write in response to your Freedom of Information Act 2000 ('FoIA 2000') request dated **08/02/2021**, in which you requested:

"I write to make a request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 for a copy of the response to Assistant Coroner Brendan Joseph Allen's Regulation 28 Report to Prevent Future Deaths, following the conclusion on 19 February 2020 of the inquest into the death of Katrina O'Hara."

**Decision**

When a request for information is made under the FoIA 2000, a public authority has a general duty under section 1(1) of the Act to inform an applicant whether the requested information is held. There is then a general obligation to communicate that information to the applicant.

In line with section 1(1) of the FoIA 2000, I can confirm the College **holds** the requested information. The report can be found under the title of 'Disclosure document 1', attached to the email.

Your rights are provided at the bottom of this letter.

Yours sincerely,

**Kate Kaufman | Legal Researcher**  
**Information Management and Legal Team**  
**College of Policing**  
Email: [FOI@college.pnn.police.uk](mailto:FOI@college.pnn.police.uk)  
Website: [www.college.police.uk](http://www.college.police.uk)

## **Your right of review**

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 you have a right to request an internal review if you are dissatisfied with our handling of your request. Review requests should be made in writing (by email or post) within **40 working days** from the date of our original response. We will aim to respond to your review request within **20 working days**.

### **The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)**

If, after lodging a review request you are still dissatisfied, you may raise the matter with the ICO. For further information you can visit their website at <https://ico.org.uk/for-the-public/official-information/>. Alternatively, you can contact them by phone or write to them at the following address:

#### **Information Commissioner's Office**

**Wycliffe House**

**Water Lane**

**Wilmslow**

**Cheshire**

**SK9 5AF**

**Phone: 0303 123 1113**



Mr Brendan Allen,  
Assistant Coroner,  
Coroner Area of Dorset

14 April 2020

## Re Katrina Margaret Mary O'Hara – Reg 28 Coroners' (Investigations) Regulations 2013

Dear Assistant Coroner

Thank you for your Report to Prevent Future Deaths regarding the tragic murder of Katrina Margaret Mary O'Hara.

The College of Policing was established in 2012 as the professional body for everyone who works for the police service in England and Wales. The purpose of the College is to provide those working in policing with the skills and knowledge necessary to prevent crime, protect the public, and secure public trust.

We have three complementary functions:

**Knowledge** – we develop the research and infrastructure for improving evidence of 'what works'. Over time, this will ensure that policing practice and standards are based on knowledge, rather than custom and convention.

**Education** – we support the development of individual members of the profession. We set educational requirements to assure the public of the quality and consistency of policing skills and we facilitate the academic accreditation and recognition of our members' expertise.

**Standards** – we draw on the best available evidence of 'what works' to set standards in policing for forces and individuals. Examples include our Authorised Professional Practice (APP) and peer reviews.

In the responses that follow, I refer to APP. These documents address the more substantial issues for policing, such as crime investigation, roads policing, etc. We also develop subject specific APP, including for domestic abuse and stalking. These two documents are publically available on the College website.

APP set out what police forces and individual officers and staff should seek to achieve when dealing with different policing challenges. Each police force has different operating contexts, different structures and different internal processes. APP, therefore, addresses higher level outcomes and forces are then invited to apply it in their own unique situation. APP is not mandatory but Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services may use it to assess how forces are responding to policing issues. The Independent Office for Police Conduct may also refer to APP when assessing whether individual officers or staff have fulfilled their duties.

Please find my responses to the specific issues raised in your report.

- i. Concern is raised in the report about the need for victims of crimes, particularly domestic abuse (DA) and stalking victims, to make a second call for police assistance if their initial 999 call is assessed as not requiring an urgent police response.

This is an operational matter dealt with by the National Police Chiefs' Council.

- ii) A second issue relates to DA risk assessment in relation to threats of suicide by a suspect.

The Domestic Abuse Stalking and Harassment (DASH) risk assessment tool has been used by most police forces, including Dorset, for many years. It was introduced in the early to mid-2000s. The tool has a specific question about suicide threatened by a suspect of DA because it has been recognised for many years that this is a significant risk factor.

The College of Policing has developed APP for DA. Threat of suicide by the suspect is listed as one specific risk factor.

College guidance in the form of APP and the DASH risk assessment form used by most police forces identifies the threat of suicide as a risk factor in DA cases. I am of the view that forces have the guidance and operational tools to support their understanding of the risks posed by suspects who threaten suicide.

- iii) The third issue raised in your report relates to risks created when a victim's phone is taken as evidence by police.

The College became aware of problems that can be created when a mobile phone is seized from a victim of an offence, but particularly in DA and/or stalking cases.

College DA and stalking APP have been amended to alert forces to the risks of removing a victim's means of communication and that replacement should be considered.

- iv) The final issue relates to forces' IT training.

The College of Policing is a national body and does not have a remit for training forces on their IT systems. However, the issues regarding bail should not be reliant on an IT system. If officers are aware of a breach of bail conditions or other orders, they should consider the appropriate action to manage the risk that is apparent from the breach. DA APP is clear on this issue.

I hope that these responses are sufficient to assure you that the College is taking the right actions to assist policing deal with domestic abuse and stalking.

Yours sincerely,



David Tucker

Faculty Lead Crime & Criminal Justice