



**CORONER'S OFFICE  
DISTRICT OF HERTFORDSHIRE**

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**MR EDWARD G. THOMAS** Senior Coroner

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Assistant Coroners

12 December 2014

The Rt Hon Phillip Hammond MP  
Minister of State for Foreign & Commonwealth Affairs  
Foreign & Commonwealth Office  
King Charles Street  
London  
SW1A 2AH

Your Ref:  
Our Ref: 00037-2014

Dear Sirs,

**Re: Simon Peter SATCHWELL, deceased – Travel Advice**

I am writing to you on provisions of schedule 5 (paragraph 7) of the Coroners & Justice Act 2009 which came into force in July 2013. This re-enacted the provisions of the old Rule 43 of the Coroners Rules 1984. Attached to this letter is information concerning the new rules and regulations from which you will see requires a written response. Copies of this letter and the response received from you will be forwarded to the other interested persons identified at the inquest in accordance with the list attached.

On the 10<sup>th</sup> December 2014 I conducted an inquest into the tragic death of Simon Peter Satchwell who was born on the 15<sup>th</sup> February 1999 and was thus only 14 years old. Please find attached a copy of the Record of Inquest from which you will note that Simon died from injuries received whilst riding a jet ski on his own in Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates.

Simon's father gave evidence at the inquest that he had taken Simon and his twin brother [REDACTED] abroad on a number of occasions and in the past two years had ridden with them in jet ski's in Lanzarote and Tunisia. As I understand it from him there was no requirement of supervision of a minor in the United Arab Emirates and certainly this was not raised during the investigations undertaken by the authorities there, who closed the case when they concluded that there had been no third party involvement in Simon's death.

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Simon and his twin brother [REDACTED] had ridden on their own on jet skis with their father who had a jet ski as well. There was some doubt in the evidence as to the exact jet ski used by [REDACTED] because the rental agreement only indicated there were two hired and it was clear that there had been three and [REDACTED] father had paid for three. The 31<sup>st</sup> December was the last full day of their holiday the intention being that they would return back to the United Kingdom the following day.

I received helpful information from the Marine Federation and the Royal Yacht Association (RYA) who helped me with some of the requirements of schemes that are being carried out in the United Kingdom for the use of jet skis. Generally there is a prohibition of use by children under 12 and a requirement that those aged between 12 and 14 demonstrated an evidence of competence (eg completing a training scheme or equivalent and operating under direct adult supervision. The definition of supervision is such that an adult is present on board the craft at all times. This was what happened for Simon and [REDACTED] when they were with their father in Tunisia and Lanzarote previously. Those aged between 15 and 17 should be in possession of an RYA certificate of competence for personal watercraft or something similar. From my own enquiries abroad I have found that generally companies do not hire out to minors the use of jet skis on their own.

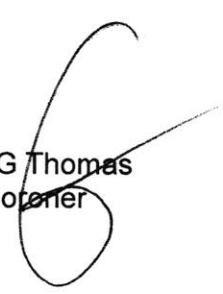
Sadly I have dealt with many inquests of deaths abroad where the arrangements for supervision, maintenance of equipment and hiring conditions are not what one would expect from countries in the European Community such as the United Kingdom. I was wondering whether it would be helpful to highlight this in travel advice that is given to persons generally about hiring equipment abroad. For instance I note that on various websites you give useful information about driving abroad but I think that sometimes persons wishing to undertake an activity abroad that might be considered hazardous do not fully understand that the standards that they might expect in the United Kingdom are not replicated abroad.

I look forward to hearing from you on this and I will obviously pass on any comments that the British Marine and the RYA make in respect of this letter.

The schedule requires a response from you within 56 days of receipt which I calculate is the 4<sup>th</sup> March 2015. Please let me know if there is any difficulty in complying with this timescale or whether there is anything you wish to discuss I am willing to extend the deadline if there is good reason so to do.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

  
Edward G Thomas  
Senior Coroner

ENCS