

HM Coroner
Blackpool and Fylde
Coroner's Office
Municipal Buildings
PO Box 1066
Corporation Street
Blackpool
FY1 1GB

5th May 2016

Dear Sirs

RE: JANE BELL DECEASED
INQUEST ON 14TH MARCH 2016 - REGULATION 28 REPORT

Further to the above matter we can confirm that we received the Regulation 28 Report dated 22nd March 2016.

At the inquest I, Samantha Lewis on behalf of the Dalmeny Hotel confirmed that all members of the leisure staff which includes those based primarily on reception, have poolside responder training. This would enable a member of staff to appropriately deal with an incident in the pool, including diving to the bottom of the pool at its depth of 2.44m to effect a rescue.

Since the inquest the Hotel has had constant poolside supervision in place at all times when the pool is open regardless of whether it is in use. This involves one member of staff (with poolside responder training) constantly patrolling at the poolside and another member of staff (also poolside responder trained) continually monitoring the CCTV footage from the reception desk.

The member of staff at poolside is refreshed at half hourly intervals. The swap is done at poolside to maintain the constant supervision.

All staff have been trained in the role of poolside patrols and what the monitoring entails. This involves keeping a head count of bathers to ensure that there is not overcrowding within the pool. Every 30 minutes the poolside patroller radios to reception with the head count.

This head count is recorded. Behaviour is also monitored and anybody acting inappropriately or not following the pool rules, for example diving, is asked to desist or leave the pool. In the event of an incident occurring within the pool there is a member of staff present who can deal with it appropriately and in line with the training they have received. Alcohol and food are not and never have been permitted to be consumed within the pool. Further they cannot be taken into the leisure area due to the layout.

In addition to this there are documented pool hall safety checks and inspections carried out on opening and closing. These inspections consist of checking the water rescue equipment, looking at the water clarity and lighting and signage and also require the communication folder to be read. The communication folder updates members of staff as to any changes or issues with the pool the previous day.

There is a daily alarm check in place which requires the activation of all of the emergency alarms within the department.

As of 3rd May 2016 the pool has been emptied and closed for its depth to be reduced to 1.4m at its deepest end with no abrupt changes to depth. The pool will re-open on 27th May 2016 at the reduced depth.

All signage is to be changed around the poolside and notification will be given that the Hotel does not have lifeguards on duty. The same rules will apply such that under 16's cannot enter the pool area unless they are accompanied by an adult and diving etc will not be permitted. Monitoring will continue to ensure that these safety rules are being observed and followed.

All members will also be provided with a further induction covering the fire escapes, raising alarms and pool safety.

There is a Health Commitment Statement which all leisure members and hotel guests have been asked to sign and which requests that they do not exercise beyond their capabilities and that all swimmers bathe at their own risk.

The pool rules such as no diving will be reinforced to swimmers as they check into the leisure centre.

The requirement for constant supervision under HSG79 will cease once the depth of the pool is reduced as none of the other criteria within the guidance applies. However, the CCTV will continue to be monitored to ensure that bathers are complying with the rules and regular bather head counts will be taken. Pool water testing will also remain at 2 hourly intervals and during these checks staff will monitor the pool and those in it.

All members of staff will continue to receive refresher training on poolside responder.

In addition to this the Hotel has appointed Adrian Thomas as a new Leisure and Spa Operations Manager. He has held various industry related qualifications as follows:

- Royal Life Saving Society (RLSS) Pool Lifeguard
- NARS (National Rescue Standard)
- Personal Trainer
- Fitness Instructor
- Exercise to Music Instructor
- STA Pool Plant Level III

Mr Thomas has been in the leisure industry since 1994 and has previously worked for Holiday Inn at Kew Gardens and other hotel chains managing their leisure facilities and in particular their swimming pools.

We trust that this alleviates your concerns and responds to the recommendations raised in your report.

The Dalmeny Hotel takes the health, safety and welfare of its employees, guests and members extremely seriously and since this terrible incident has acted promptly and comprehensively. The Hotel has reviewed its systems and procedures and put in place steps and measures to reassure the Local Authority and the Coroner that there is unlikely to be any recurrence of such an incident again or anything similar.

The Hotel has moved on and learned what it can from the accident so that the safety environment of the Hotel leisure centre has improved. This is not a reactive Hotel, it is one that has taken proactive initiatives to try to ensure the safety of its workforce in an industry that carries with it a wide variety of inherent risks.




Director