

Your Reference JSP/ER/02498-2015
Our Reference POR/MH
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Date 25 April 2016

Dear Mr Pollard

Inquest into the death of Lee Richard Gaunt – Response to Regulation 28 Report

Further to your report to prevent future deaths issued on 4 March 2016, I respond to the concerns set out within the report as follows:

Concern 1

1. GMFRS's occupational health providers in 2013 were different to the current providers. GMFRS retendered its occupational health service provision on the expiry of the previous contract on 31 January 2015. The current providers are Healthwork and you heard from one of their directors, [REDACTED] at the inquest.

The current provision operates by way of triage with an escalation procedure. If an immediate doctor appointment is considered necessary the appropriate referral will be made. If a follow up appointment is required after a nurse appointment, this will automatically be with a doctor.

We have for completeness fed back the outcome of the Inquest and your concerns to them.

Concerns 2 & 3

2. GMFRS was aware that the deceased had been suffering ill health as a result of the death of a colleague in July 2013. The medical advice that GMFRS received in January 2014 was that the deceased was fit for his duties in his substantive role of



Crew Manager. GMFRS was not aware that the deceased had begun to suffer ill health again when he took on additional duties on the retirement of his Watch Manager on 30 August 2015 and the implementation of the collective agreement to respond to cardiac arrests on 15 September 2015.

GMFRS operates a mandatory system of critical incident debriefing following attendance at traumatic incidents. Since November 2015 GMFRS has been piloting a system known as Trauma Risk Management (TRiM) which is a proactive, peer delivered initiative for supporting individuals following exposure to traumatic events. The TRiM protocol is widely used in the Armed Forces and Police services and is fully compliant with the National Institute of Health & Clinical Excellence (NICE) guidelines for the delivery of post trauma support.

GMFRS is in the process of evaluating the pilot scheme so as to assess whether it is appropriate for the organisation. If it is, it is the intention is to inform the whole organisation of TRiM and to establish a network of practitioners at all levels across all directorates.

Concern 4

3. GMFRS has amended its procedures to allow employees to self-refer for counselling via its occupational health provider.

In addition to the matters referred to under Concerns 2 & 3, GMFRS established a working group with trade union participation examining the facilities available for addressing the effects of dealing with stressful situations. This working group will continue and seek on-going involvement and contribution from all relevant trade unions and will inform GMFRS's strategy and new organisational structure in this regard, which is currently under review.

GMFRS has taken due notice of the concerns you have raised and I hope that you find our responses apposite.

Yours sincerely



COUNTY FIRE OFFICER &
CHIEF EXECUTIVE