

**David Shaw**  
**Chief Constable**

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Your Ref: DDWR/TW/W1182.15

Mr D D W Reid  
HM Assistant Coroner  
Worcestershire Coroner's Court  
The Civic  
Martins Way  
Stourport on Severn  
Worcestershire, DY13 8UN.

RECEIVED  
18 APR 2016  
H.M. CORONER

18<sup>th</sup> April 2016

Dear Mr Reid,

**Re: Stewart Akins deceased**  
**Regulation 28: Report to Prevent Future Deaths**

Further to my letter of 10<sup>th</sup> March 2016 please find below a response in relation to the issues raised within the Regulation 28 report:

A full review into Mr Akins' detention was conducted on the 4<sup>th</sup> June 2015. As you correctly identify, Mr Akins made a number of comments to persons he encountered within the custody environment highlighting his intention to harm himself upon his release. I am satisfied that these comments were properly and accurately recorded on the custody record and presented Mr Akins as an individual with a high risk of suicide / self harm.

It is clear that there were failings in suitably communicating the degree of risk that was posed by Mr Akins following his movement from custody to the Magistrates Court. As a result of this incident West Mercia Police have immediately revised its' practice to minimise risk and prevent future deaths by ensuring that all Prisoner Escort Forms (PER), whether completed by a detention officer or sergeant, are signed as accurate by the custody sergeant responsible for the detainees welfare prior to their release / movement from custody. The custody sergeant will have overall responsibility for ensuring that the risks are correctly documented and communicated. This practice will ensure that all known and documented risks contained within the custody record will travel with the person and properly inform others in their decision making processes.

West Mercia has also ensured that mandatory training for custody sergeants includes the awareness of highlighting known risks and concerns to the OIC upon consideration of a MG7 remand application. This will enable prosecutors and the courts to make fully informed decisions about a person's vulnerabilities and needs.

I trust that these positive changes and enhanced channels of communication will deter incidents like this from occurring again.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Shaw". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "D".

David Shaw  
Chief Constable