

20 MAR 2017

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Our Ref: [REDACTED]

16 March 2017

Mr J S Pollard
HM Assistant Coroner
The West Annexe
Town Hall
Sankey Street
WARRINGTON
WA1 1UH

Dear Mr Pollard

**In the Inquest Touching the Death of Thomas Coyne
Regulation 28 Report**

We are writing to respond to your Regulation 28 Report dated 19 January 2017 addressed to Northern Rail.

Thank you for drawing your concerns to our attention. Your Report has caused us to review carefully the arrangements at Earlestown Railway Station, following the death of Mr Coyne on 21 May 2016.

At the outset, it may assist if we clarify responsibility relating to the station. Arriva Rail North Limited manage the station as part of a network of approximately 500 stations. Network Rail are responsible for the infrastructure of the stations themselves.

The CCTV system does not extend to the entirety of every platform area on all 500 stations. As the system is developed it has been necessary to prioritise extensions and this has been done by reference to the risk profile of each station, by reference to a diverse range of factors, including the incidence of suicide, vandalism, theft and antisocial behaviour. Earlestown is not considered a high risk station on this evaluation.

As CCTV technology evolves, it is hoped to expand the coverage area and quality of the images produced, but this must inevitably be an incremental programme across the entire network.

A further factor to be considered in relation to CCTV coverage is that the system is only monitored when booking office staff are on duty. The presence of the system itself is intended to have a deterrent effect but it is reliant upon staff observing the monitors at a time when a passenger endeavours to gain access to the rail tracks.

The issue raised in relation to barriers and fencing arrangements to prevent a person walking onto the tracks, properly falls to Network Rail as part of the station infrastructure. In an effort to assist the court we forwarded the Regulation 28 Report to them and understand that they were already considering installing platform end fencing at this location, having regard to the circumstances in which Mr Coyne gained access to the tracks and walked for approximately ½ mile before being struck by a train. The Network Rail Performance Improvement Co-ordinator has indicated that he has asked that the location at Earlestown Station be treated as a priority. It would be necessary, however, for contact to be made directly with them in order to obtain further details.

We offer our condolences to Mr Coyne's family at their tragic loss.

Yours faithfully



Chartered Legal Executive

