



**DIRECTORATE OF PROFESSIONALISM**

Mr Andrew Walker,  
Senior Coroner,  
North London Coroners Court,  
29 Wood Street,  
Barnet, EN5 4BE

Tel.: 020 8 447 7680

Email: court.clerk@hmc-northlondon.co.uk

Richard Martin  
Deputy Assistant Commissioner  
6<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New Scotland Yard  
Victoria Embankment  
London  
SW1A 2JL

Email: [REDACTED]

Tel: [REDACTED]

Your ref:

Our ref: IX/117/17 and 1802\_62

Date: 6<sup>th</sup> February 2019

Dear Mr Walker,

I am the Deputy Assistant Commissioner for Professionalism in the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS). I write in response to your Regulation 28 Report to Prevent Future Deaths dated 20<sup>th</sup> November 2018. Your report was sent following the conclusion of the inquest into the death of Mr Suleyman Yalcin.

In drafting our response we have consulted with the relevant subject matter experts, principally: Inspector [REDACTED] Driving Academy Learning and Development; [REDACTED], Met Command and Control (Met CC); [REDACTED] HQ Strategy and Governance; and the College of Policing Authorised Professional Practice (APP).

**Response to Matters of Concern:**

**1. Insufficient refresher training in emergency response driving given to the driver of the van.**

The national policy for police driving is determined by the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) Driver Training Lead. The development and maintenance of driving related national learning standards and supporting materials are the responsibility of the College of Policing, with assistance from the National Strategic Group (chaired by the National Police Driver Training Lead) and the practitioners' group. Therefore national driving skills and competencies have been applied across all police forces.

Prior to 2015, drivers were locally assessed by an experienced advanced driver who was qualified as an MPS driving assessor. In 2015 the Roads Policing and Police Driving Learning Programme set out national learning standards for police driving, including the delivery of driver refresher training. On 1<sup>st</sup> October 2015, the MPS Driving School introduced a three to five year refresher training course for all response car, covert advanced car and advanced car drivers; this is delivered by a suitably trained driving instructor and complies with the nationally recognised APP. By October 2020, this group of drivers will have received refresher training by the MPS Driving School which will complete the five year cycle.

The driver of the police van was appropriately trained to drive above the statutory speed limit, whilst responding to an emergency request for assistance. He was consequently acting in accordance with legislation, the College of Policing APP and the MPS Police Driver and Vehicle Policy.

## **2. Police under resourcing.**

At the inquest, the jury heard that the police van involved in the collision with Mr Yalcin was travelling from Hackney Borough to an incident in Haringey. Police vehicles have always responded to requests to support colleagues in neighbouring boroughs during serious incidents. Resourcing and demand across the MPS is constantly reviewed to maintain operational effectiveness; this flexibility is essential in preventing crime and keeping London safe.

The MPS has implemented a programme to incorporate thirty two boroughs into 12 Basic Command Units (BCUs), providing resilience and consistency across London to help the MPS meet its financial and operational challenges.

Evidence based innovation is used through subject matter experts and working groups to update standards so police drivers remain adaptable, resilient and safe.

## **3. Inadequate police terminology to describe the urgency of the situation to which the driver was responding.**

The term “on the hurry up” is a widely used term within the police service and means assistance is required as quickly as possible due to officers being involved in a volatile or dangerous situation, for themselves and/or members of the public. The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and The Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2016 exempt emergency vehicles being used for police purposes from:

- Observing the statutory speed limit
- Observing keep left/right signs
- Complying with red traffic lights including pedestrian controlled crossings

Use of legal exemptions are applied every day and the driver must be able to justify their actions in the pursuance of their duty. The MPS use the National Decision Model (NDM) to assist operational officers to risk assess their response to a situation in a reasonable and proportionate manner. The NDM provides a framework that can be applied ethically and with integrity to all driving decisions and actions and can be used to justify decision making when responding to incidents. There is no legal definition of what would or would not constitute justification for making use of police exemptions. In all considerations the NDM should be applied, regardless of what terminology has been used to request their assistance. It is the responsibility of the driver responding to the call to make a determination as to how to respond by using the NDM. For example, the grading of emergency calls by Met CC should only be used as a guide for officers and staff when deciding on the appropriate response to a particular call.

The van that responded to the urgent call for assistance was driven by an experienced police sergeant. He was aware that the request for the van was to convey one of two suspects involved in a fight which had resulted in an allegation of grievous bodily harm (GBH). There was clear evidence that this request required an immediate response and the driver made a dynamic risk assessment as to how he should proceed to the call.

## Conclusion

As detailed in this response, the MPS is committed to ensuring our drivers receive training in accordance with the College of Policing APP and our own driving policies. Refresher driver training is provided every three to five years in accordance with national learning standards for police driving. Resourcing and demand across the MPS is constantly reviewed to maintain our operational effectiveness.

Whilst we recognise the use of MPS terminology, we will seek to remind our staff that if required, further clarification should be sought to justify the request. The MPS are committed to enhancing our training and this will be incorporated in Met CC professional development days and initial training for all operational staff.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R Martin', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

**Richard Martin**  
Deputy Assistant Commissioner