

Heidi J Connor  
Senior Coroner for Berkshire  
Reading Town Hall  
Blagrove Street  
Reading  
RG1 0QH

4 October 2019

Dear Ms Connor,

**Prevent Future Deaths Report for Leroy Dacosta Junior Medford (Deceased)**

Thank you for your correspondence of 9 July 2019 in relation to the Inquest into the death of Leroy Dacosta Junior Medford, along with the Regulation 28 Report to Prevent Future Deaths.

I was not previously aware of this incident, and I am very sorry to learn of the tragic circumstances surrounding the death of Mr Medford. You will appreciate that I am unable to comment on the specific facts of this case, but I can address your concern regarding policing practice more generally. I understand that you have made contact with the chief constable of Thames Valley Police and with the College of Policing, both whom have responded separately in addressing the issues you have raised. I have had the opportunity to see both responses.

Your report raises the following matters of concern:

- 1. The most effective way to deliver training to serving officers*
- 2. The volume of this training*



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3. *Whether training can be prioritised*
  4. *How police forces can reassure themselves that training is not just being offered, but also taken up*
  5. *Whether officers are given adequate opportunity to carry out training*
  6. *How officers can be encouraged to review relevant guidance in situations they are not regularly faced with*
  7. *Access to and updating of on-line guidance and procedures*

It is important to understand the distinct roles of police forces and the College of Policing, which is important as your recommendations have an impact on all those organisations.

The College of Policing is responsible for the National Policing Curriculum (NPC), which comprises the national learning standards for learning and development within the police service, together with a comprehensive range of learning programmes and materials. The College of Policing delivers a range of courses including some specialist learning courses, but police forces themselves are responsible for the delivery of the majority of national learning programmes developed by the College. The College acts as steward, setting standards of learning for the police service, and assures those through the Police Service Quality Assurance Scheme - a system to assure the quality of training, learning and development designed and/or implemented by police forces.

Each chief constable is therefore ultimately responsible for the delivery of training in their police force, which includes making decisions about the volume and method of training, the way in which different training is prioritised according to local need and any issues around levels of participation. This is by no means straightforward; you will appreciate the vast number of important areas of policing practice in which officers and staff require training, which is of course costly, and usually necessitates the abstraction of officers from their regular duties. Chief constables are therefore faced with many competing priorities which must all be carefully balanced so as not to adversely impact upon the service they provide.

As Chair of the National Police Chiefs' Council, it is my role to ensure that chief constables work together collaboratively in the national interest, although that does not extend to directing chief constables to take a specific course of action. I have, however, discussed this matter with the NPCC's national lead for training and development, Mark Milton, Director of People and Organisational Development at Avon and Somerset Constabulary. Mark has carefully considered your recommendations, and reviewed the responses of both Thames Valley Police and the College of Policing. Mark has advised me that on behalf of the NPCC, he is closely involved in the College of Policing's work on a national strategy for police learning, which I know the College of Policing have described to you in their response to your recommendations, so I won't repeat the detail here. Suffice to say, this has the potential to be a transformational piece of work that I hope will address many of the concerns you have raised. I would be happy to ask Mark or colleagues from the College



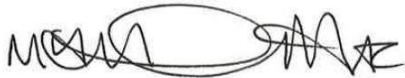
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of Policing to provide you with further detail of the programme, or updates as the programme progresses, if you think that would be helpful.

It appears from the response from the Chief Constable of Thames Valley Police that the force has taken the points you raise very seriously, and have taken steps locally to address your concerns. But this case has clearly highlighted the need to ensure that individual chief constables pay particular attention to the way in which training is delivered within their own force, its method, frequency and participation levels. I have therefore shared your report and this response with chief constable colleagues in all forces across the country, in case there are areas of practice within their own force which they feel may benefit from review.

Thank you for providing me with the opportunity to comment on the areas of concern you have identified. Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you have any further queries about the content of this letter.

Yours Sincerely,



**Martin Hewitt QPM**  
**Chair, National Police Chiefs' Council**

