

26 April 2022



Dear Mr Simpson,

I am writing in response to the Prevention of Future Deaths Report relating to the sad death of Kaja Spiewak who tragically died at Southbourne Station, West Sussex on 7th April 2021.

May I take this opportunity to express my condolences to Kaja's family for their sad loss.

Network Rail (NR) and Govia Thameslink Railway Ltd (GTR) operate a joint control for the Sussex route and, although the majority of the concerns detailed in the Prevention of Future Deaths Report relate to GTR, this response provides details of the action NR and GTR have taken together to improve knowledge and how we deal with situations where we have a concern for someone's welfare as opposed to someone who is physically unwell.

The concern in the Prevention of Future Deaths Report for NR and GTR to address jointly is as follows:

"The Govia Thameslink Railway Ltd control room staff did not contact British Transport Police, 999 nor share the information about this 'concern for welfare' report with Network Rail despite having a joint control room.

I heard evidence that there was no written protocol covering when Govia Thameslink Railway Ltd staff should share a 'concern for welfare' report with Network Rail staff in the shared control room.

I am concerned that there is not appropriate information sharing and reporting to other agencies, including British Transport Police, when a 'concern for welfare' is raised."

NR and GTR have worked jointly to prepare a new section within our joint NR/GTR incident management standard. As a result, there is now a clear joined-up procedure between NR and GTR for dealing with vulnerable people or where there is a concern for someone's welfare (termed 'concern for welfare' reports). This standard now specifically distinguishes between the 'person ill on train' procedure relating primarily to physical illness and a 'concern for welfare' procedure which can include situations where we have a concern for a person's mental health, such as a person being distressed, vulnerable or in crisis.

NR has worked with GTR to brief every member of control room staff, including those employed by both NR and GTR, with the 'Concern for Welfare' briefing, either in person or on MS teams. The briefings addressed the sequence of events that led to Kaja's tragic death and highlighted the key learning and crucially the importance of all agencies including NR, GTR and notably the British Transport Police (BTP) sharing information relating to 'Concern for Welfare'. A copy of this briefing is attached.

NR has shared this 'Concern for Welfare' briefing internally, through face-to-face and virtual briefings with all route controls nationally, including NR route controls and other joint NR/Train Operating Company route controls similar to that in Three Bridges.

I confirm that, as described above, NR and GTR have worked together to create a protocol and training so that GTR staff are aware of how to recognise a potential 'concern for welfare' report, exactly what to do upon a 'concern for welfare' report coming into the control and the importance of GTR staff sharing a 'concern for welfare' report with NR and or other agencies such as the BTP.

Finally, we note that this Prevention of Future Deaths Report was dated 1 December 2021. However, due to a delay in the Report reaching NR, our response was requested by 2 May 2022.

Should you have any further questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards,

██████████, Route Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized, cursive initial followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

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