



The Sheku Bayoh Public Inquiry

Witness Statement

Denise Thomson

Taken by [REDACTED]

In person at Bilston Communication Centre

On 12 September 2024

Witness Details

- 1. My name is Denise Thomson. My year of birth is 1968. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.
- 2. I am currently employed by Police Scotland as police staff as the Service Centre Manager within the Bilston Communication Centre (“Bilston”).

Career Summary

- 3. I joined the legacy Lothian and Borders Police in 1993. I started off at Wester Hailes as a Station Assistant, which was just generally dealing with the public

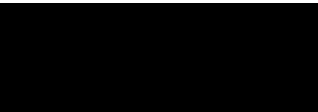
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coming in. Then I got promoted into the Area Control Room as a controller. I worked as a controller at Fettes. When Bilston Communication Centre opened in 2009/2010, I moved to Bilston as a supervisor in the Public Assistance Desk, which is what the service centre now is. Then since 2015, I've been in the service centre environment as a supervisor or team leader.

- 4. Then I was promoted to an operations manager in 2016, and then I've been promoted in May 2022 into my current role as service centre manager. So predominantly, and the majority of my service, is service centre environment.

Experience in the Service Centre

- 5. I have been asked about what my role in 2015 as a service centre team leader involved. I was responsible for the service advisors who are answering 101 and 999 calls. I was responsible for the day-to-day call management, and when I say call management, it's the calls coming in. The calls would come in to the first available service advisor, but sometimes you had to manage that and move people to take 999 call a bit quicker than 101 calls. So you're actually watching the demand and meeting that demand that's coming in to serve the public.
- 6. I have been asked whether, in my role as a team leader, I would have had a detailed understanding of the role undertaken by the service advisors. Yes, but probably not the same practitioner experience using the systems because I would use them in a different way to quality assess their calls, to measure their calls, to measure their performance. So it was in the next level. I had an understanding and I knew what their job entailed, but I wasn't a practitioner to the same degree with the systems. I used other systems as well as. So service advisors used Aspire i.e. the call handling system. I would also have Aspire but I would use it at a different level. I would use it for the quality assessing of calls and, "Did they fill this in correctly?" and look at what a marker was on, and so I'll use it at a different level because I'm a team leader

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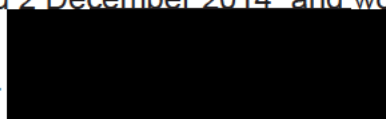
in that next level. But, yes, I had a full understanding of what their job was and what it entailed.

7. I have been asked if I had any involvement in training. No, because we have a learning and development team department. They do all the training. I would know what that programme consisted of and I would probably be involved in more aligning them with a mentor when they join my team. So, no involvement in the actual training aspect of a new start and, in my capacity now as a service centre manager, the only interaction I have with my new staff is by going and meeting them in the first week and introducing myself and getting to know who they are and their background and then vice versa.
8. I have been asked whether I had any involvement in mentoring in the period from when Bilston opened until 2015. Only if a new team leader came in.

Disturbance Calls

9. I have been asked about the note of questions on the journey of a call, which is a list of questions from the Inquiry which have been answered by Police Scotland ("Journey of a Call Questions" SBPI-00694). Question 2 states *"Upon which criteria would a call handler categorise a call as a 'disturbance' call?" This is answered "The generic term 'disturbance' has previously been used for all types of disorder reported to the Police. Much of the previous minor instances recorded under this heading are now covered within AB-24 Public Nuisance.*
This code is intended for Group Public Disorder and more serious incidents which require a higher level of response from the Police.' National Standards for Incident Recording (p.26) – enclosed." A second question is asked, *"How were these criteria accessed by a call handler?"* and this is answered *"They could be accessed in the National Standards for Incident Recording."*
10. I have been referred to National Standards for Incident Recording (PS17585) which I understand is dated 2 December 2014 and would have been in force

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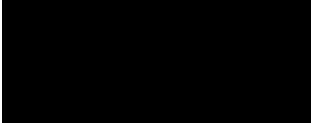
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in May 2015. I have been asked whether I had an awareness of this document in 2015 or whether it is a document I have awareness of now. Probably in the role of team leader, I probably had a knowledge of it in 2015 but I can't remember.

11. I have been advised that category code AB28, a disturbance call, was applied to the calls regarding Mr Bayoh on 3 May 2015. I have been asked whether there are any other category codes for a situation where a person is in a public place with a knife. Yes, a robbery. Say if someone ran into a shop armed with a knife, so that's also a knife. You would put incident or category on for a robbery, but in 2015 it would automatically, grade that call to a priority 1. You would type the word knife and it would add the weapon tag, the blade tag. So robberies, sometimes burglaries or house break-ins, youths, youth calls. So there are other categories that could also be used: when the call comes in, for example there might be a fight on Princes Street in Edinburgh, "Well, are they armed? Do they have weapons?" is what a service advisor would ask. As part of their training, they were told to do that.
12. And if they come back and say, "Yeah, they've got a knife," then the service adviser could categorise the call as a disturbance, armed with a knife or say, the robbery in the shop, they've got a knife, they'll tell you straight away, the shopkeeper, "They're armed. They've got a knife. There are other categories. It wouldn't just be a disturbance call where you'd get a knife. Sometimes we'll a call in for a school where the person's got a knife, or a knife handed into a school, so you still need to have your weapon tag, but it wouldn't be as high a priority but it still could be a knife call. So, not every disturbance call is a knife call. There are other categories.

Grading of Calls in 2015

13. The Journey of a Call Questions (SBPI-00694) states at question 3 that the default grading for a disturbance call, had a default priority of 2 and that this was applied automatically by the Aspire system. However, that the default

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grading could be increased in line with the incident prioritisation and response SOP. I have been asked whether service advisers were trained to consider whether that default grading was appropriate to the circumstances of the call. Yes.

14. I have been asked what process service advisers would apply to consider whether it ought to be increased. I can't remember what they were trained in how to assess in 2015, but it's the questioning. So if a call came in in 2015 and it was a 999 call and they said there's an ongoing disturbance, as soon as you're putting it onto the system it would default its grading. At that point is then when the staff are trained to ask specific questions: "Have they got a weapon?" or, "How many are involved?" because it could just be two individuals. "How many are involved?" It could be 10. "Have they got weapons?" "Yes, they've got broken bottles. One's got a sword, one's got a machete, one's got a knife, one's got a gun," that then ups your grading and that then, for them, they're then permitted to make that the next priority and change it to a 1. We were just not allowed to downgrade anything at that point, but we could upgrade based on what the caller was telling us. So they did have the autonomy to do that, but I can't remember the actual training on the grading because it was so long ago.
15. I have been asked whether the Incident Prioritisation and Response SOP (PS11333) published in May 2014 formed part of the training in 2015. I don't know. It probably more than likely did, but I couldn't say for sure whether it did or not. I have been referred to paragraph 2.11 of that SOP, which states:

"Each command and control incident code will have a default response grade as a minimum standard attached to it. The creator of the incident must review the default response grade in order to ensure that it is appropriate to all the circumstances surrounding the call. This is particularly important when considering incidents associated with particular aspects of risk and/or vulnerability, for example, incidents

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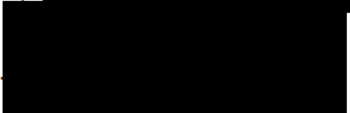
relating to firearms, domestic violence, victim or caller vulnerability, hate crime, suspicious persons.”

- 16. It has been put to me that the SOP doesn’t specify a process as such; however, it outlines an expectation that the creator of the incident, the service advisor, has to review that default response grade and ensure it’s appropriate taking into account the particular aspects of the incident. Yes, that’s right – that’s what I’ve described earlier.
- 17. I have been asked whether if there was a specific piece of training on that for service advisors. I wouldn’t want to say that there was because I had already got my experience. I don’t know what and if any abstractions from the SOP were actually in the training programme. I know from experience and from that time in 2015, the calls coming in; you’re led by what the callers are telling you. Although a disturbance call would automatically default to a lower grade, so say a grade 2, but by what was getting fed to the advisers – and there could have been multiple calls coming in about the same thing – service advisers had the autonomy to say, “Look, there are risks here. We need to put the grading up. We need police there straight away,” and that’s what they would do-- but I don’t know how that was trained to the new staff at that time. I know what their programme consisted of in terms of how many weeks training.
- 18. I have been asked whether I remember, from my time working as a service advisor, having any specific training in this. My training was in the Area Control Room in the 90s, so it was very different to how it is now, then it was always based on what information you were told by the callers fed. What we got training then was very, very different to what is in training now. A lot of it comes from the questioning and what you’re getting told from the customer. It did automatically default to certain gradings and then if you felt, “There’s too much risk here,” for example “I can hear that fight in the background and I can hear that female screaming because she’s being assaulted by her husband,”

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you had that autonomy to upgrade it and amend prior to sending through to the ACR -but I don't know what aspect of training was given at that point.

19. I have been asked whether, when a service advisor then passed the information from a call through to a controller in the ACR, the controller then had the autonomy to raise the grading. Yes, they would. I think they would then speak to their sergeant for that area and say, "Look, that's come through. That needs to be a higher grade," or phone the person back if they could, and then more information would determine. I have been asked whether the controller require his sergeant's approval to increase the grading. That's something someone in the control room would definitely be able to confirm with you in that, because I wasn't in the control room environment in 2015.
20. But I could have four service advisors, one in Govan, one in Motherwell and two here, that all got a call for the same incident. Because we obviously take the calls across the country, and it comes into the first available service advisor. So there could be four calls or five calls come in at different sites that are all to do with the same incident. The service advisors are all putting their incident on through Aspire onto STORM as per their process at exactly the same time, but what one caller is telling one service advisor, it might be that they're looking at the disturbance two streets along and, "Oh, I can see a group of people fighting in the street." "Do you have any more information?" "No, that's all I've got," but they need to put that on as what they've got. Then another caller who can see more of the incident might say "No, he's got a weapon,". So it depends on what's being fed. Obviously because that defaults to that grading, whatever information is being given or has been obtained would enable them to put the grading up, but if they've not got that information, they're not going to be able to so you might find that there are numerous incidents created potentially with different gradings depending on the information being fed.
21. We were never allowed to downgrade an incident. That was not permitted for the staff to do that. It would be, "What was it defaulted to?" or the information

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you were given, “Did you need to make that a higher grading?” So that was what the staff were doing in 2015. When there were multiple calls, sometimes the control room would tell us, “Right, can you use this one incident number and we’re going to keep updating the one incident. We’ve amalgamated them all together, we’ve made this the master. Can you just have your staff update this one,” because calls could still be coming in until the police arrive. Calls could still be being received or maybe that person was still on the phone, so the service advisors can still update an incident even though it’s transferred over. Whether it be Overview or the control room, wherever it’s gone, they can still update their incident with the person still on the phone, because we need to do that because we need the updates.

- 22. In relation to situations where there a numerous calls about one incident, and the calls go to different service centre, I have been asked to confirm that as at May 2015 that, for example, the service centre in Glasgow could have taken calls to do with the incident on Hayfield Road, and then it would have been passed through to the Bilston ACR to deal with it. Yes, that’s correct.

Grading of Calls Currently

- 23. I have been asked about incident codes and call gradings as at the current day. Call gradings are immediate, prompt, standard, other resolution and CRM used by the Service Centre if advice or signposting is all that is required There are no default gradings with the THRIVE assessment determining the grading applied. Where circumstances dictate where there is a threat to life, property or an ongoing incident that requires a dynamic response that would be graded as an Immediate. If dispatch is required as soon as possible then this would be graded a prompt, then a direct crime recording, appointment or telephone appointment would be a standard response, with referral to a further enquiry where an incident has been created is graded for other resolution.

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24. I have been asked to explain the THRIVE assessment and process of using that within the service centre and ACR currently. We've now got THRIVE: Threat, Risk, Harm, Investigation, Vulnerability and Engagement, which is what the THRIVE stands for. The process is the call will come in and you will have these elements of the THRIVE for the service adviser to risk assess. The letters T-H-R-I-V-E that appears on the service advisor's screen. It's almost like a tick list, "Is there a threat there? Is there harm there? Is there a risk there?" etc.
25. The service adviser would go through each element of THRIVE [REDACTED] and they then fill out what they consider in relation to all of those. That's the staff completing their THRIVE assessment. That THRIVE assessment is recorded as part of the STORM record when it goes through either to the resolution team or to the ACR, and they get to see exactly what the Service Advisor considered in relation to each of those elements of the THRIVE assessment. If the call is an immediate, there is no requirement for a THRIVE to be documented in full on the incident, the incident would be immediately transferred over to the ACR for dispatch. It can be re-THRIVE'd again by our Area Control Room. If they're making another call back, or if they've done checks on the systems, that provide information which may change the THRIVE assessment. It's important to understand that the service advisors have not got the same level of access to systems as the resolution team and the Area Control Room have. The service advisors have probably got the minimum access, and as we go along the others have got the more advanced levels of access.
26. The service advisers can do minimum standard checks on things coming in, which would also enable us to make that THRIVE assessment, but it would then go to the Control Room. On them doing further checks, it might be that then they need to reassess and amend THRIVE, by regrading from a "prompt" to an "immediate" based on them re-THRIVEing it. It is the same with the resolution team. So we can upgrade it or downgrade it, but it gets re-

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THRIVE'd. A call coming into us could end up being THRIVE'd three or four times because it's gone through different teams. So that's the difference with THRIVE.

C3 Procedures Manual

27. I have been referred to the Journey of a Call document (SBPI-00693) at pages 6 and 7. This mentions the C3 procedures manual. I have been asked whether there was a version of this procedures manual available in 2015. There was, but it was referred to as the A-to-Z. When we amalgamated all our legacy divisions to Police Scotland, we found that different divisions did things slightly differently, so there were so many processes and procedures that needed to be reviewed and revised to create the one set of procedures because we were all one national force. From the A-to-Z, there was a lot of work that went in to create the C3 procedures manual. A disturbance call in 2015 was probably 99 per cent the same as what the process would be from the A-to-Z to the C3 procedures manual. Not a lot of that would have changed, only maybe a tag if it had evolved. So, not a lot would change for some things, but it was more lower-level stuff that changed because other divisions did things very differently and we needed to make it a national process. So, it was the A-to-Z in 2015 and it got a new name a year or a couple of years after that to C3 procedures manual, but on the Aspire system those were on as prompts.
28. There were always prompts on the system, so as soon as an advisor took the category, it would give them prompts to follow. So, the prompts would come from that as well. The prompts can be seen in the Journey of a Call Document (SBPI-00693) at page 8. A lot of them would abstract it and would align it with our procedures manual, but there would be additional information in the procedures manual. But, yes, then it was called the A-to-Z, and it got renamed a few years after that to the procedures manual.

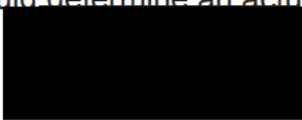
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29. I have been asked whether the A-to-Z was a database accessible on the computer system or was a handbook that service advisers had on their desk. It was not a physical handbook. It was a database and was all available online.
30. I have been asked about the Journey of a Call document, on page 7, there's a heading "*Example of disturbance procedures*". I have been asked if this screenshot is taken out of the current C3 procedures manual. Yes, that's right. I have been asked whether they had this text for the prompts or similar in the A-to-Z. I don't know if that was in there in that time in the A-to-Z.
31. I have been asked whether the A-to-Z still exists, or has it simply just been replaced. I think the A-to-Z has been replaced in some aspects, because it's now the C3 procedures manual, now in a more standard format, because it actually tells each area of business how to deal with it where it didn't before: it would just tell you what to do; it would just have bullet points. But I couldn't confirm if that was in there in 2015, and I can't confirm if that process has changed, if that was in there. I don't know if that was in there in 2015, because in my capacity as a team lead in 2015 I wouldn't have been using the prompts.

Passing Callers to the Overview

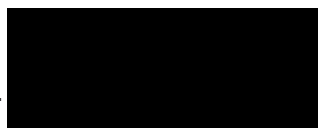
32. There's a further heading on page 7 of the journey of a call document (SBPI-00693) which states "*Service centre guidance*" under which it states "*aim to obtain the following information (this list is not exhaustive)*", and then there's a list which includes: "*Consider passing the caller to the appropriate Overview if weapons such as knives, like machetes, are being carried in a public place and the incident is ongoing.*" I have been asked about this item on the list. I explained earlier that in 2015 that services advisors wouldn't pass a call on for fear of losing it. Consequently, I have been asked whether this is a current day guidance, to pass a call through to the overview. Although Service Advisors can pass a call through, it depends on the circumstances, severity and nature of the call which would determine an actual call being transferred.

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n a 999 call, you would stay on the 999. You don't transfer a 999 over in fear of losing the caller in transit. So, for example, if we've got someone in distress standing on the Forth Road Bridge who's going to jump, I'm not going to transfer them through to anyone because I'm going to keep them talking. So that's why I would keep updating my STORM log, and sometimes the Control Room would then send me a question to ask that person on the STORM log, and I would be asking them, because if I transfer it through, that person might jump in that interim. So we keep them on the phone and we keep talking to them, keep updating. That's not changed since 2015, because we could potentially have lost the call, and also the call is recorded, so there was always a fear that, transferring a call through, would that lose the recording functionality of the call. But we do have the facility of transferring the call through.

33. It has been explained that this appears again at page 13 of the journey of a call document at page 13 "Consider passing the caller to the appropriate overview if weapons such as knives / machetes are being carried in a public place and the incident is ongoing." I have been asked to explain why then the words "Consider passing the caller to the appropriate Overview"? are included as a prompt in the C3 procedures manual. Unless it's come through on a 101 call, we wouldn't automatically pass a call through to the overview on 999 calls. We wouldn't. So maybe the wording is not clear enough. I can see that underneath that prompt it is written *"Please remember whilst you're adding dynamic updates to check the incident notes for messages from Overview asking for the caller to be transferred to them."* Again, I don't know how old that text is.
34. I have been asked if there is a difference in the 101 system for passing the call through to the overview which allows for this or is it some other reason. We wouldn't transfer the call through for the fear of losing the caller, but the severity is probably not as much on a 101 call than if they're on a 999 call. I can't remember in 2015 if we had an occasion where we did have to put them

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through, as I was not taking the calls I don't know if it is how that line is maybe worded, if it's "consider" in the sense of saying, "Consider passing the call to the appropriate Overview," like me telling my team leader, "Look, that's a call for consideration by overview - Can you tell them to have a look at that incident for me?" rather than passing them through. So I don't know what that actually specifically means because, as I say, we wouldn't put a call through.

35. Abductions of children could be potentially different whereby they might need the caller, but we have a facility where we agree with the caller that they will call them back and have a certain process in place, but I don't know if that actual bullet point means us passing it through as in alerting or passing, or me alerting my team leader to say, "I've got this on. Can you pass it to overview because I'm still on the phone?" as in not physically passing it through. So I don't know if it's the wording of that.
36. The team leaders have got the function of being able to listen into the call as well, so they might be told by a service adviser "I need your help, listen in." I have been asked if the Overview have the ability to listen in on a call? I don't think they have, no.
37. I have been asked whether what is listed at page 7 of the journey of a call document is identical to the disturbance entry on our current systems. I've compared them and yes what is on the journey of a call document is exactly what's on there now. It's just, as a rule of thumb, we wouldn't normally or automatically transfer a call through, especially if it's a 999, to Overview. I suppose in exceptional circumstances, if we had to, we would, but we generally would alert, tell them and they would monitor the incident. We'd get the incident away on to STORM straight away and then the service adviser would ask, and we'd do it that way.

Tagging

38. I have been asked whether calls are tagged for the attention of the overview at the present day. Yes, a lot of the incidents in certain categories are

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automatically tagged to overview. So if you put firearms on, it automatically tags, but they have got the autonomy as well to add a tag, so you might hear the phrase where some is automatically tagged but others we need to add a tag. So anything with a weapon, if it's a knife, we can add a blade tag, which then the overview would see.

39. In the note of questions on the journey of a call at question 8, it states "In May 2015, how were calls tagged for the attention of the Overview?" and the answer that's given is, *"Some incident codes would automatically generate an overview tag, for example a firearms incident. A service advisor or an ACR controller can add a tag at any time during the management of the incident."* I have been asked how a firearms incident would generate an Overview tag. On Aspire, when you're putting in the call category and then it goes over to STORM, it then will automatically add that tag based on that category. That's a STORM function. A firearms-related incident code would generate a firearm we can have rangers phoning or emailing us to advise they're doing a planned shoot on culling deer; they have to notify us because they're going to use a firearm. So they get in touch with us, but as soon as you put the firearm on the system, it will automatically tag that so Overview can see, because we have to put an incident in case someone then reports, "Oh, there's someone in that field with a gun."
40. I have been asked how that tag draws attention of the incident to the Overview practically. On STORM it will appear in the bottom of their screen, red. So the Overview would be managing their incidents and then it would come up at the bottom half of the screen which would alert them to the Inspector would need to see it, so as soon as you put "firearm", that would flash at the bottom of their screen so they could then act on it, because they'd have to act on something like that fairly rapidly.
41. With tags, The STORM system will then bring the call to the Overview's attention and it'll come up on their screen in a particular way. They used to

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come up red, but again, I've not worked in the Control Room for such a long time. I don't know if it still comes up in red, but it did used to come up in red. I am asked whether the call comes up in the same way if it's a different tag so a "blade" tag or any other tag. Yes, anything that's a tag – a child abduction, anything – it's going to flash to them because the inspectors are highly trained that they would need to do for their assessments and, consider the most appropriate response , for specialist units to attend So they need to see it as soon as, which is also why a lot of them, if that's an immediate, it would just go straight through. There is no need when it's an immediate call to put a THRIVE assessment on because it's meeting everything, so let's get it there quick, which is why service advisors now don't put a THRIVE assessment on for an immediate call.

42. I have been asked whether there were there knife or blade tags which were automatic. Again, it's such a long time ago, I can't remember. Because naming conventions and naming's changed as we evolve, but any incident that's tagged will flag up. When an initial call comes through, they might not tell you straight away that they have a weapon or it's a child been taken. They might start to tell you a story. Then obviously it depends on what they've put in as that the category, but they would put the category in and it would tag, and going through their THRIVE assessment they can add a tag. So, maybe a missing person has gone, but they've took the car, but they've also took a firearm. So initially, I receive a call reporting that someone's gone missing. I'm taking all the details down asking questions such as: when did you last see them, their description, etc, etc, did they have anything? "Well, they've took the car and there's a firearm in the back of the car." At that point, I'm then going to add a firearm tag.

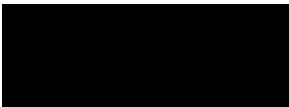
43. In the note of questions on the journey of a call at question 9, one of the answers states, *"Service advisors and controllers had the capacity to inform Overview about an ongoing incident verbally without the application of an Overview tag."* I have been asked how that would be done; was it via telephone or by some other way. Yes, by telephone. If the service advisors

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were not on a 999 call at the time dealing with it, they would alert a team leader or the Control Room so that they can make that call up to overview, but that's if they were on the 999 call, because we couldn't transfer the 999 call through for fear of losing that call in transition. We were able to transfer a call through, but in some circumstances or on occasion. We wouldn't transfer one through in case we lost it. We would keep talking to them. However, if they've already started to create their incident, it could also have the functionality of putting on the STORM incident, "ACR, can you tell Overview?" So there was numerous means of being able to alert them, either via team leader phoning up or Control Room phoning up or putting it on your STORM log.

STORM Logs and incident reports

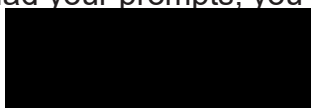
- 44. In the note of questions on the journey of a call at question 23, the question asked the difference between a STORM log and a STORM incident report, and the answer is: *"A STORM log is the log details of the incident from the operator or system. The incident report is a report from the STORM log that can be tailored to include or exclude further management information, for example, a list of all personnel who viewed the STORM incident but may not have been involved in the management of the incident."*
- 45. It has been explained to me the STORM log and then the STORM incident report for some of the calls which were made regarding Mr Bayoh, you can only see the Overview tag in the STORM incident report but not the corresponding STORM log. I have been asked whether there is any significance in that. I don't really know how STORM works. I've used it since it came into use in legacy times. I've been a user of that in different capacities, but we always put the STORM log on, so we're adding the details for the STORM log. The STORM incident report, my understanding of that is that's the actual full incident, the whole STORM incident itself, but the STORM

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log is what we update. I don't know if it's the way that STORM shows you or prints it.

46. In the note of questions on the journey of a call at question 24, the question states, *"What is involved in a controller accepting an incident within the STORM system? [...] How long should this process take?"*. In relation to the query regarding the length of the process, the answer states, "The process should be as quick as possible to commence the management of that incident. There are timers set in STORM - See attached incident timer process document for full explanation." I have been asked if I have any knowledge of this. No, that's more Area Control Room and their, I suppose KPIs, and also the STORM team, IT.
47. I have been asked about my role of supervising service advisers from the point of Bilston opening until May 2015 and how procedures within the service centre changed when we became Police Scotland. I suppose the main differences from when we went from legacy areas to Police Scotland and we became the National Service Centre was we were receiving calls from all over Scotland. It wasn't just our legacy area. It changed in 2015 when our name and roles changed name and we became the National Service Centre. So the change for us really was, instead of us taking calls just within our designated area, so Bilston would have took calls for Midlothian, East Lothian and West Lothian and the Borders and Edinburgh, but we were now taking calls for Fife, Shetland, so we were taking the calls for the whole of Scotland. So that was the biggest change. So, and because there were certain different processes, and not national, which is why we got our procedures manual made to be national processes and where we are today, those were the main differences, but the way calls were coming in and handled was no different.
48. That's why the system's graded and that's why we got the information, we put the incident on. So it was the way that you were trained. Whether it be legacy, that hadn't changed, and if there was something you were unfamiliar with or not sure about, you had your prompts, you had your procedures

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manual, you had team leaders, you had controllers, you had police officers you could ask. The only major difference was we took all of the calls for Scotland. The way we applied assessments and graded calls was probably no different to what we'd been doing.

- 49. I have been asked what feedback I had from staff in terms of their capability to do their job; whether they didn't feel sufficiently trained to do the job. As a team leader, I was obviously responsible for their absences, so if they came back from a long period of absence, whether sickness or maternity leave, you would go through a training log with them just to see if they felt they needed a refresher or anything if they'd been off for a significant amount of time. We did have briefings and Moodle training, which was online training.

- 50. As a team leader, we'd undertake quality assurance, so we would quality monitor their calls. It might be from doing that, something would be flagging up to me to say, "That person keeps making the same error. Are they familiar with that system?" So, I would give feedback to the member of staff. Also, quarterly we would meet and we would discuss their quality and their performance, and from that was where I would have a chat and establish, "Look, there seems to be a regular pattern. Are you struggling with [whatever it may be]?" "Well, yeah, I'm not familiar with this system." We would then talk about it and I would suggest mentoring or put some other measures in place.

- 51. We also did one-to-ones with our staff, and they were open and vocal if they were unsure of something. It was also an opportunity to point out regular faults or that the person was taking a long time to doing certain things. That's when, when I had that time with them, that's when they were then able to open up a little bit more and say, "Well, actually, I'm really struggling. I can't come to grasp with this system". Then I would put an action plan in place if they needed that.

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52. I have been asked whether there was any change in systems from the point where that the service centre moved from being Lothian and Borders to being under the National Service Centre under Police Scotland – whether it was Aspire and STORM that was in use. STORM was but, in legacy Lothian and Borders, we didn’t use Aspire. So we were all trained in Aspire before 2015 because we’d never used that previously. From a team leader’s perspective, there was another couple of management systems. There’s a duty management system, the workforce management system, where you’re monitoring your staff and seeing for demand, but also you’ve got what we call the Avaya system, which is the call demand as well. So, those were all new systems to me as a team leader. I didn’t have them in legacy Lothian and Borders, but I was shown them and used them when I became Police Scotland, the National Service Centre.
53. I have been asked to confirm whether all the staff in the service centre would have been fairly newly trained on Aspire. I know from a legacy Lothian and Borders perspective, we did not use Aspire so we were trained. However, we got staff who had come from Central Scotland and Fife to Bilston but, I don’t know what systems they used and whether they were trained before they came.
54. I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are true. I understand that this statement may form part of the evidence before the Inquiry and be published on the Inquiry’s website

September 24, 2024 | 11:50 AM BST
Date.....

Signature of witness... 