

Inquest into the death of Shaun Charles Coolwell

Mr Coolwell died after he was physically restrained by police officers in a prone position and ambulance officers administered midazolam injection for sedation. At the time of his death Mr Coolwell was affected by amphetamines and had severe coronary atherosclerosis.

State Coroner Terry Ryan delivered his findings of inquest on 10 June 2019.

The Queensland Government responds to recommendations directed to government agencies at inquests by informing the community if a recommendation will be implemented or the reason why a recommendation is not supported.

The departments named in this response will provide implementation updates until the recommendation is delivered. Further information relating the implementation of recommendations can be obtained from the responsible minister named in the response.

Recommendation 1

The Queensland Police Service and the Queensland Ambulance Service work together in relation to the joint management of responses to acute behavioural disturbance, including physical restraint, to ensure that officers from both agencies are aware of the requirement for ongoing monitoring of restrained persons, the differential interpretation of observations and the importance of role clarity and teamwork.

Response and action: the recommendation is implemented.

Responsible agencies: Queensland Police Service (lead), supported by Queensland Health.

On 26 November 2019 the Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services and the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services responded:

An interagency working group with representation from the Queensland Police Service and Queensland Ambulance Service was previously established to implement the coronial recommendations arising from the inquest into the death of Pasquale Giorgio, which was delivered on 11 September 2018.

Given the linkages that exist between the findings arising from both inquests, the scope of this working group is currently being expanded to also address the implementation of the coroner's findings relating to the death of Shaun Coolwell. The Queensland Ambulance Service will maintain its representation through this group.

On 3 June 2020 the Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services and the Deputy Premier and Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services responded:

An ongoing working relationship between Queensland Police Service and Queensland Ambulance Service education specialists was formed to ensure lessons learnt continue to influence training and prepare police officers and Queensland Ambulance Service paramedics to co-respond effectively to persons in need.

The Queensland Police Service will incorporate elements of the lessons learnt from the death of Shaun Coolwell into the 2020-21 Queensland Police Service Operational Skills and Tactics Training as part of Tactical First Aid Training.

Recommendation 2

The Queensland Police Service and the Queensland Ambulance Service develop a formal process to facilitate the early sharing of lessons learned from the investigations of both agencies into adverse events where QPS and QAS officers are co-responders, including access to relevant investigative materials.

Response and action: the recommendation is implemented.

Responsible agencies: Queensland Police Service (lead), supported by Queensland Health.

On 26 November 2019 the Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services and the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services responded:

The Queensland Police Service (QPS) is well advanced in developing a critical incident review framework to strategically manage the findings and recommendations of critical incident review matters and where appropriate, act consistently with the service's continual improvement philosophy. A key element of the framework involves the identification of key stakeholders to ensure relevant parties such as the Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS), are represented in the subsequent review process.

Senior officers from the QPS Operational Review Unit and the QAS Office of the Medical Director are meeting to discuss the integration of QAS into this framework, enabling shared analysis and learnings when the QPS and QAS are co-responders.

On 11 May 2021 the Minister for Police and Corrective Services, and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services, and the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services responded:

The Queensland Police Service and Queensland Ambulance Service representatives met in November 2019 and discussed the sharing of lessons learned and the inclusion of respective agencies in multi-agency debriefs where co-responder incidents occur. A relationship has now been established where opportunities for regular consultation between Queensland Ambulance Service and Queensland Police Service can take place. Consideration for the inclusion of Queensland Ambulance Service in the Queensland Police Service critical incident review process is assessed on a case by case basis.

The *Queensland Police Service Operational procedures manual* contains provisions for external agencies to be involved in the structured debrief of an operation or incident. This includes that 'non-police agencies should be given an opportunity to discuss problems and make suggestions for improvement' and 'minutes should be prepared and distributed to any relevant senior officer or agencies who participated in the operation or incident'.