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REPORT TO THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Pursuant to section 46B of the *Coroners Act 1993*

In the matter of the coroner's findings and recommendations regarding the death of
Ms Roberta Judy Curry (also known as Currie)

Pursuant to section 46B of the *Coroners Act 1993* (the Act), I provide this report on the findings and recommendations of Her Honour Local Court Judge Elisabeth Armitage, the Acting Territory Coroner, dated 10 June 2022, regarding the death of Ms Roberta Judy Curry (also known as Currie) (the Deceased) (refer Attachment A).

The Report includes the responses to the recommendations from Mr Ken Davies PSM, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Department of Territory Families, Housing and Communities (DTFHC) (refer Attachment B), Ms Gemma Lake, CEO of the Department of the Attorney-General and Justice (AGD) as the agency responsible for Northern Territory Correctional Services (refer Attachment C), and Mr Jamie Chalker APM, Commissioner of Police (refer Attachment D).

The Deceased, a 28 year old Aboriginal woman, died at some time between 5 am and 9 am on 18 June 2019, at 19 Holtze Crescent in Katherine, in the Northern Territory. The cause of death was hypovolaemia due to spleen laceration due to blunt force trauma to the torso. The death occurred in circumstances of domestic and family violence.

Recommendations of the coroner

The Acting Territory Coroner made the following recommendations:

- '66. That the Memorandum of Understanding between the Police Force, Corrections and Territory Families concerning the sharing of information, specifically relating to EMD data so that police can access location data be finalised as soon as possible.
67. Community Corrections provide more comprehensive supervision to violent offenders in the first month of their release in to the community.'

Further, the Acting Territory Coroner made a number of comments at paragraphs 60 to 65 which relate to the Police Force of the Northern Territory (NTPF), NT Correctional Services, and DTFHC. The Acting Territory Coroner identified a number of short-comings in responses to the Deceased and the accused and pointed out that 65 Aboriginal women have been killed in the NT by their current or former partner between August 2000 and August 2019.

Responses to coroner's recommendations

A copy of the Coronial Findings was provided to the CEOs of DTFHC and AGD, and the Commissioner of Police, on 11 July 2022, in accordance with section 46A(1) of the Act.

A written response was received from the CEO of DTFHC, dated 4 August 2022, as required by section 46B(1) of the Act, advising that:

- (a) AGD and NTPF operate a contract with Buddi Ltd (the Contractor) to provide electronic monitoring devices (EMD) for the Northern Territory Government. DTFHC and NTPF are authorised users who can access EMD information provided by the Contractor.
- (b) On 7 June 2022, DTFHC executed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between itself, AGD and NTPF to allow for collaboration and information-sharing concerning EMD data.¹ The MoU formalises collaboration around the release of urgent information in circumstances where a serious and imminent threat exists:
 - to life, health or safety of the offender or another person;
 - of harm or exploitation of a child; or
 - to public health or safety.
- (c) The MoU fully actions the Coroner's recommendation at paragraph 66, and DTFHC will continue to participate in the Electronic Monitoring Steering Committee to ensure that the MoU remains effective and provides NTPF with appropriate and timely EMD data as required.

A written response was received from the CEO of AGD, dated 6 September 2022, as required by section 46B(1) of the Act, advising that:

- (a) AGD also executed the MoU to allow for collaboration and information-sharing concerning EMD data. This will allow NTPF to enquire directly with the Contractor for EMD data to locate and immediately respond to persons in emergency situations.
- (b) Community Corrections are presently reviewing the Offender Management Framework (OMF), in consideration of the Coroner's recommendation. This includes matters relating to violent offenders, focussed on managing perpetrators of domestic and family violence, and will reiterate the importance of close monitoring in the first month of release. Alcohol testing frequency will also be increased.
- (c) Community Corrections has collaborated in a Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence (DFSVM) workshop in September 2022 to ascertain whether further enhancements to the OMF are required.

¹ The copy of the MoU referred to in the DTFHC response has been omitted from this report.

On 27 October 2022, NT Correctional Services provided further information on the outcome of the workshop, held on 28 September 2022:

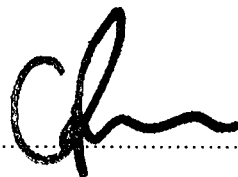
- (a) While no significant concerns were raised about the existing content, Community Corrections undertook to develop DFSV scenarios for inclusion in the OMF.
- (b) Additional guidelines are being developed that will guide Probation and Parole Officers through the importance of increased collateral checking in the first four weeks after release from custody or completion of rehabilitation programs, as set out in the coronial recommendations. The manual will also include contemporary definitions of DFSV and guidance on risk management.
- (c) The updated section, relating to DFSV, will be released to staff on completion, endorsement and approval, pending the completion of the review of the OMF. The DFSV review of the OMF is expected to be completed by the end of 2022.

A written response was received from the Commissioner of Police, dated 10 October 2022, as required by section 46B(1) of the Act, advising that:

- (a) NTPF also executed the MoU to allow for collaboration and information-sharing concerning EMD data.
- (b) NTPF are also committed to opportunities for improvement identified by the Coroner's comments, and will report on their progress in their bi-annual report to the Coroner.

I am satisfied that the CEOs of DTFHC and AGD, and the Commissioner of Police, have considered the recommendations of the Acting Territory Coroner and that they are taking necessary steps to implement the recommendations.

DATE: 15 NOV 2022



CHANSEY PAECH