



VICTORIA POLICE



Deputy Commissioner's Office

Victoria Police Centre
637 Flinders Street
DOCKLANDS VICTORIA 3008

Telephone [61 3] 9247 6890
Facsimile [61 3] 9247 6869

PO Box 913
MELBOURNE VICTORIA 3001

State Coroner's Office
Coroner's Court of Victoria
Level 11, 222 Exhibition, Street,
Melbourne
Victoria, 3000

Re Inquest into the Death of Shane Bennett

I write on behalf of the Chief Commissioner of Victoria Police in response to a number of Coronial Recommendations made in regards to the Inquest into the Death of Shane Bennett delivered on the 23 March 2012.

In particular, I provide the following comments with regards Recommendations 1 to 4 which have particular relevance to Victoria Police. I have met with the Department of Justice with regards to these responses together with the applicable responses of direct concern to DoJ, Recommendations 5 through to 9 which I believe will be responded to directly from the Department of Justice.

Recommendations 1 to 3 relate, in the main to technological systems designed to provide accuracy and timely recording of speeds undertaken by police vehicles involved in pursuits and Recommendation 4 relates to policy matters.

In response to Recommendations 1 and 2

" To better support the existing system and to help ensure the accuracy of information passed to the controller, I recommend the ongoing use of existing MDT/GPS technology to identify and to maintain a lasting record of the speeds undertaken by Victoria Police pursuit vehicles, in all future designated pursuits.."

"To take advantage of this development I recommend that the State of Victoria now seek through the Australian Communications and Media Authority, an allocation of sufficient bandwidth on the national digital satellite system, to allow for the collection of real- time video and location data by Victoria Police"

Parts of these recommendations have or will be implemented. The remaining parts will be implemented subject to availability of funds and appropriately skilled resources. This recommendation is intrinsically linked to Recommendation 3 to the extent that additional MDT/GPS units are required.

The following interventions were planned for implementation and were included in the Mobile Data Network (MDN) Program of Works prior to receipt of the Coroner's findings.

June – July 2012:

- Increase frequency of automatic position reporting a) to ESTA dispatchers – to be increased from 333 metres to 250 metres and b) to VicPol's data feed – to be increased from 333 metres to the maximum rate of every 100 metres. (Note: the frequency of GPS-based automatic position reporting has been steadily increased over the past 3 years from the original 5km's or 1 hour to its current state)
- Easier access to this spatial data through a Track Log Report capability via the MDN Performance Management System (PMS) and the MDN and CAD Patrol Activity Collation (MACPAC) /Track Log reports

The following initiatives are being developed and will be implemented subject to availability of funds and appropriately skilled resources.

Currently evolving, release date yet to be determined:

- Development of spatial (GPS) mapping standards and processes
 - Level 1: General use – real time or end of shift
 - Level 2: Investigation – available in short period of time to support the investigation function
 - Level 3: Evidence – reviewed and QA'd to enable presentation in judicial proceedings

The Business Requirements for these initiatives are being prepared and will be costed. Their implementation will require the allocation of additional personnel to be developed as Subject Matter Experts (SME).

Future development and release:

- GPS accuracy parameters – (Business Requirements to be developed and Technical Solutions to be evaluated and costed)
- Real time reporting/tactical pursuit tracking
- Dead reckoning to improve GPS or other techniques

The Business Requirements are to be developed and Technical Solutions evaluated and costed – expected to be high cost and will be included in a future BERC Submission from 2014/15 – refer Recommendation 3

Recommendation 3

"I also recommend that the State of Victoria, through the Commissioner, further review the need for the additional ancillary equipment, which would also be required.."

This recommendation will be implemented subject to availability of funds and appropriately skilled resources which will be sought through a future BERC Submission, from 2014/15. (Two previous submissions for 2011/12 and 2012/13 BERC funding have been unsuccessful.)

Issues to be addressed include:

- An additional 450 in-vehicle Mobile Data Terminals (MDTs) in the field. (To equip every police vehicle that MAY be involved in a pursuit is seen to be cost prohibitive – this initiative will equip all Highway Patrol Units, Divisional Vans and high use Station Sedans). A further 1370 portable data devices, that will have some GPS capability, are also being requested.
- Approximately 450 In Car Video (ICV) systems to be installed HWP units and other selected frontline vehicles
- Integration of MDN with the Vehicles Computer Management System
- Implementation of appropriate “back-end” support systems – e.g., Digital asset management from collection, through retrieval and analysis, to storage and destruction
- Real time pursuit monitoring system – feedback to coordinators/controllers (in vehicle). (Note: this requires considerable cost benefit analysis particularly as the average pursuit time is apparently three minutes)

Recommendation 4

“ I further recommend, that the same technology be made available and be employed to visually record police vehicle’s passage and speed in all other instances where such vehicle exceeds a specified speed limit, such limit to be set by the Commissioner and to be promulgated in the Victoria Police Manual..”

In October 2011, Deputy Commissioner Walshe initiated an Inspectorate Review of the Victoria Police Pursuits Policy. The report and findings have been published on the Victoria Police Internet and a personal copy forwarded to the State Coroner, Judge Coate in May 2012. In total 11 recommendations were made which will enhance the risk assessment processes contained together with a refinement of the category of pursuit terminology, i.e., Imperative or Elective Pursuits and enhanced training and review regimes.

In the main the policy was found to be contemporary and closely aligns with national and international law enforcement policies.

A number of restrictions are articulated within the policy with regards speed restrictions and driver authority guidelines.

It is envisaged that pending Inquests into fatal Police Pursuits will test the validity, appropriateness and level of safety the policy provides for in the context of this recommendation and any future applicability.

On behalf of Victoria Police I commend this response to you and I look forward to any future recommendations designed to improve safety to all concerned in this environment.

Yours sincerely,

Tim Cartwright APM
Deputy Commissioner

19/6/12