



VICTORIA POLICE

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**Subject:** Wendy McCabe - Finding into Death following Inquest  
**Court Reference:** COR 2021 006480  
**Date of Recommendations:** 12 November 2025

Dear Coroner Jamieson,

**Response to recommendations arising from the Finding into the Death of Wendy McCabe**

This letter provides the Chief Commissioner of Police's response to the recommendations made in your Finding into the Death of Wendy McCabe, delivered on 12 November 2025.

**Recommendation 1**

*Victoria Police (and/or the Officer In Charge at Knox) consider inclusion on the "whiteboard" in the Knox Watch House the level and frequency of observation required for each person in a detention facility/cell (notwithstanding the new alerts on the custody module) to ensure this information is readily available.*

**This recommendation is accepted and has been implemented.**

A new column has been added to the Knox Watch House whiteboard to record the level and frequency of observation required for each person in a cell. Local standard operating procedures have also been amended to reflect this change and all staff at Knox Police Station and in the Knox police service area have been advised of the change.

Additionally, Victoria Police are exploring the use of an electronic whiteboard, akin to what is currently used at the Melbourne Custody Centre.

## **Recommendation 2**

*Victoria Police consider the need to amend relevant VPMs or VPMGs and/or provide specific training to members and staff performing custody duties concerning:*

- a. Definition of key phrases relating to mental health and behaviour including:
  - i. "risk of suicide or self-harm";*
  - ii. "self-harm";*
  - iii. "self-inflicted trauma" (and how this differs, if it does, from self-harm);*
  - iv. "likelihood of self-harm or suicide" (and how this differs, if it does, from being "at risk" and/or presenting with historic or recent risks of these types);*
  - v. "imminent risk of suicide or self-harm" (and how this differs, if it does, to the test for the exercise of police mental health powers);*
  - vi. the type(s) of "new information" that should prompt a review/change of an 'S' (self-harm or suicide) rating;**
- b. lowering the threshold for seeking CHAL advice about 'S' risks, particularly in the context of "new information;"*
- c. the unreliability of demeanour and denial of suicidal ideation as predictors of an individual's risk and/or likelihood of self-harm or suicide;*
- d. assessment of potential risks probabilistically; and*
- e. recording the substance of handovers.*

### Recommendation 2(a)

**Victoria Police supports this recommendation.**

Victoria police intends to include definitions for each of the listed phrases in the *Victoria Police Manual (VPM) Management of people in police care or custody* and in the *People in police care or custody at risk of suicide or self-harm Practice Guide (Practice Guide)*.

### Recommendation 2(b)

**Victoria Police supports this recommendation.**

Victoria Police intends to implement this recommendation into section 2.2 of the Practice Guide, along with considering further changes to the Practice Guide and a review of the requirement to contact CHAL where there is new information or a change in circumstances.

### Recommendation 2(c)

**Victoria Police supports this recommendation.**

Victoria Police intends to implement this recommendation by updating the Practice Guide regarding the unreliability of demeanour and denial of suicidal ideation as predictors of an individual's risk and/or likelihood of self-harm or suicide.

Recommendation 2(d)

**This recommendation is noted and under consideration by Victoria Police.**

Victoria Police have consulted with Custodial Health Services who have advised that there are currently no tools available (or in use) within the medical industry to assist with the assessment of suicide risks or self-harm probabilistically. Victoria Police is currently considering further avenues for investigation in relation to addressing the intent of the Coroner's recommendation.

Recommendation 2(e)

**Victoria Police supports this recommendation.**

Section 47.3 of the *VPM management of people in police care or custody* currently provides that custody supervisors must complete a handover using the Custody Module at the completion of the shift.

This requirement will be inserted into other relevant sections of the VPM where handovers are required and will be expanded to apply to all custody staff as opposed to just supervisors.

Yours sincerely,



Mike Bush CNZM  
**Chief Commissioner**

27/2/21