

Our ref: LEXD 22768



VICTORIA POLICE

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Coroner Fitzgerald
Coroners Court of Victoria
65 Kavanagh Street
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Subject: Narisha Faye Cash - Finding into death with Inquest
Court Reference: COR 2020 1714
Date of Recommendations: 19 December 2025

Dear Coroner Fitzgerald,

Victoria Police response to recommendations in the Finding into the Death of Narisha Faye Cash

This letter provides the response to your recommendations as they related to Victoria Police, arising from the Finding into the death of Narisha Faye Cash, delivered on 19 December 2025.

Recommendation 1:

That Triple Zero Victoria and Victoria Police review the Police Structured Call-Taking process across all event types, in respect of questions asking whether alcohol and/or drugs have been consumed, and consider if two separate and specific questions should be asked, in lieu of a single combined question, to encourage accuracy of information provided by the caller.

The Coroner's recommendation is currently under review.

Victoria Police engage Triple Zero Victoria for all Call-Taking and the dispatch of jobs to operational units. Changes to the Computer Aided Dispatch System (CAD) will need to be made in consultation with Triple Zero Victoria as the CAD is a Triple Zero asset.

On 3 February 2026, the State Emergencies and Support Command, Victoria Police met with Triple Zero Victoria to discuss the Coroner's recommendations. In the preliminary discussions both agencies are in agreeance to review the current policies regarding recommendations 1 – 5.

Recommendation 2:

That Triple Zero Victoria and Victoria Police review its policies, procedures and training to ensure there is clarity for Police Call-Takers in respect of when event types (i) '597-P-EMERGENCY ATTEMPT OR THREAT SUICIDE' and (ii) '594-P-PSYCHIATRIC PATIENT' should be selected, either alone or in combination, especially in circumstances where a person with a diagnosed psychiatric condition is experiencing a mental health crisis and threatening suicide/self-harm.

The Coroner's recommendation is currently under review.

This recommendation relates to work being undertaken through a broader Mental Health Reform Program led by the Department of Health with consultation from stakeholders including the Department of Justice and Community Safety, Ambulance Victoria, Triple Zero Victoria and Victoria Police.

As mentioned in above, Victoria Police engage Triple Zero Victoria for all Call-Taking and the dispatch of jobs to operational units. Changes to the CAD will need to be made with Triple Zero Victoria as the CAD is a Triple Zero asset. Victoria Police are currently in consultation with Triple Zero to review these processes.

Recommendation 3:

That Triple Zero Victoria and Victoria Police review Police event types and associated event types, specifically in respect of overdoses in the context of self-harm/suicide, to ensure Triple Zero Victoria Ambulance call taking and dispatch functions are notified/activated.

The Coroner's recommendation is currently under review.

This recommendation also relates to work being undertaken through a broader Mental Health Reform Program led by the Department of Health. Victoria Police are currently in consultation with Triple Zero to review these processes.

Recommendation 4:

That Triple Zero Victoria and Victoria Police review their policies, procedures and training in respect of the role and responsibilities of Police Dispatchers, to clarify whether it is the role of the Police Dispatcher to consider whether the following are appropriate:

- (a) event type/associated event type; and**
- (b) priority; and**
- (c) ESOs notified.**

The Coroner's recommendation is currently under review.

Police Dispatchers are employed by Triple Zero Victoria however, Victoria Police will assist in the review of their role and responsibilities. Event types and priority are determined by the Police Structured Calling-Taking process which Victoria Police will review with Triple Zero Victoria.

Victoria Police are currently in consultation with Triple Zero to review these policies, procedures and training.

Recommendation 5:

That Triple Zero Victoria and Victoria Police consider amending the CAD system to introduce flagging/alerting of "threat of suicide" events that have been dispatch assigned and allocated to a unit, or to a supervising 251, and for which there has been no update or action for a set period of time.

The Coroner's recommendation is currently under review and a proposed change will be explored. If it is determined that a change to the CAD should be made, it should be noted that this can be complicated and time consuming so specific timelines can be difficult to identify.

Recommendation 6:

That Victoria Police consult with Ambulance Victoria to:

- (a) Clarify the policy/procedure documents that exist between their organisations, in respect of Victoria Police requesting AV assistance (in circumstances where Victoria Police do/do not specifically identify safety concerns); and**
- (b) Communicate these policies throughout both organisations.**

The Coroner's recommendation is supported. The recommendation will be implemented.

The current reform process led by the Department of Health and in partnership with Triple Zero Victoria will provide the necessary changes to call taking and dispatch to ensure responses to people experiencing mental health crises are led by health professionals not police. These changes would ensure that in the event of threat or attempted suicide the primary unit dispatched is Ambulance Victoria not Victoria Police and Victoria Police will only be dispatched if Ambulance

Victoria require assistance. Victoria Police supports mental health crises being led by health professionals, rather than police, and continues to support and encourage the Department of Health to facilitate this transition.

The following inter-agency arrangements provide guidance on Victoria Police and Ambulance Victoria responses to people experiencing mental health crises:

- (a) Joint Department of Health – Victoria Police Protocol
 - (i) Victoria Police is working with the Department of Health to update the joint Department of Health – Victoria Police Protocol for Responses to People with Mental Illness or Experiencing a Mental Health Crisis (the Protocol). The Protocol sets out agreed arrangements for interactions between police, PSOs, mental health clinicians and authorised health professionals, including Ambulance Victoria, when responding to mental health crises.
 - (ii) The Protocol sets out guidance between agencies to limit Victoria Police attendance only to circumstances where there are safety concerns. The Protocol includes that if it is determined that police are required as well as an ambulance, the response is led by paramedics or other health professionals.
 - (iii) Whilst still under development, the draft Protocol addresses calls for assistance between agencies including Victoria Police requesting assistance from Ambulance Victoria and Ambulance Victoria requesting assistance from Victoria Police.
 - (iv) The latest draft of the Protocol is with the Department of Health and expected to be finalised by mid-2026.
 - (v) Once finalised the protocol will be socialised with Victoria Police and Ambulance Victoria employees.
- (b) Joint Ambulance Victoria and Victoria Police Escalation Pathway
 - (i) The Escalation Pathway has been established for resolving disagreements between agencies on scene and supporting rapid decision-making when needed. The Escalation Pathway applies in exceptional circumstances where all avenues for resolution have been tried and been unsuccessful.
 - (ii) The Escalation Pathway is a mechanism that:
 - (a) Enables senior staff with decision making authority within VicPol, AV and DMHS to exchange information in relation to risk and identify a path forward, when all other avenues for resolution have been exhausted. Facilitates fast resolution where there is not a shared understanding on risk and response between organisations.
 - (b) Ensures compliance with the Act and inclusion of safety considerations, clinical and physical health in situations where the Act may be relevant in decision making.
 - (iii) The Escalation Pathway is currently being tested by Victoria Police and Ambulance Victoria and is expected to be finalised by March 2026.

Recommendation 8:

That the Department of Health, Ambulance Victoria, Victoria Police, Triple Zero Victoria and the Department of Justice and Community Safety, in implementing Recommendation 10 arising from the Royal Commission into Victoria’s Mental Health System, review the circumstances of Nish’s passing (as detailed within the Finding into death after Inquest).

The Coroner’s recommendation is supported. The recommendation will be implemented.

Victoria Police supports that the circumstances of Nish’s passing will be considered in the implementation of Recommendation 10 to improve outcomes for people experiencing mental health crises. The Department of Health, as the lead agency, is responsible for the system changes related to Recommendation 10 and Victoria Police will continue to support and advocate for the transition to a health-led response to people in crisis.

Victoria Police has no current information from the Department of Health on delivery timeframes. To address this recommendation the Department of Health has advised they will consider the collation of case studies or other methods for ensuring the system changes address the issues captured by the Coroner.

As the lead agency for the design of health reforms under Recommendation 10, the Department of Health has advised they would consider how the Coronial recommendations can be accommodated.

Recommendation 9:

That the Department of Justice and Community Safety, Victoria Police, the Department of Health and Triple Zero Victoria separately publicly report on the specific actions taken to progress implementation of Recommendation 10 of the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System, including revised implementation dates, and the reasons for any delays.

The Coroner's recommendation is partially supported given the Department of Health's lead of Recommendation 10 and Victoria Police's reliance on the Department of Health to drive progress on implementation.

The Department of Health, as the lead agency for Recommendation 10 reports annually on the status of mental health reforms through the Chief Officer for Mental Health and Wellbeing Annual Report. Victoria Police supports, and will continue to advocate for, the full delivery of Recommendation 10 including regular reporting. However, it is limited in what can be achieved without a government decision to implement and regulate care and control powers for paramedics.

Recommendation 10:

That the Department of Justice and Community Safety, Victoria Police, the Department of Health and Triple Zero Victoria separately report on their websites the activities undertaken and the outcomes achieved as a result of funding received in the 2021–22 and 2023–24 Budgets to progress Recommendation 10 of the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System, and any future funding received.

The Coroner's recommendation is partially supported. Reporting of financial expenditure will be required to align with Whole of Victorian Government financial reporting guidelines.

As per previous recommendation, Victoria Police expenditure to date has mainly been absorbed with salary of project teams to initiate transitions. Any further work by Victoria Police is dependent on Department of Health progressing Recommendation 10. Victoria Police will support Government reporting as required.

Department of Health has an existing website for public reporting and is preparing a draft shared position to align wording on this to be used separately by agencies.

I trust that the contents of this letter assists. Please do not hesitate to contact us should further information be required.

Yours sincerely,



Mike Bush CNZM
Chief Commissioner

18 / 3 / 2026