

**FULL PROGRESS REVIEW INTO THE  
DISAPPEARANCE OF AMANDA (MILLY) DOWLER**

**REVIEW CARRIED OUT BY SUSSEX POLICE  
ON BEHALF OF SURREY POLICE**

**26<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2002**

## 19. Conclusion

19.1 As this review was drawing to an end, Milly Dowler's remains were found in Hampshire near Fleet fairly close to the Surrey border. This will now enable the enquiry team to refocus their lines of enquiry and for them to close some aspects involved in the missing person's side of the investigation. There are a number of positive aspects to this enquiry and these are detailed as follows:

1. [REDACTED]

2. A meeting was held at Bramshill involving Senior Detectives who have been involved with similar investigations.

3. The search and press aspects of this investigation have been taken away from the SIO allowing him to focus more on the investigative issues.

19.2 This has always been a high profile and complex investigation with very few obvious channels of investigation available to identify a particular suspect or suspects. The investigative team have had to be flexible enough to respond to the broad nature that such an investigation prompts and at the same time be strong enough to remain focused on the main issues.

19.3 The investigation team have been unfortunate in that the abduction of Milly Dowler would appear not to have been witnessed by any single individual despite it occurring in daylight outside of a busy railway station. There is little doubt that this was the location of the abduction. This is supported by the evidence gleaned from the CCTV coverage at the station, and at the Birds Eye Factory. The enhanced CCTV obtained from the F.B.I. must now be a priority line of enquiry despite the minor discrepancy in the timings. The evidence from the Police dog handler who attempted a track on the night suggests that there may have been a detour into the car park by Milly. It remains a fact that the vehicle caught on CCTV is the only vehicle seen to stop in that area at that time and pick someone up. It must therefore be eliminated from this enquiry.

19.4 The enquiry have been unfortunate in the fact that the body of Milly Dowler was not discovered for some six months and that none of her clothing or personal affects have yet been found. The location of these articles must also now be a priority line of enquiry. Providing links between the abduction site and the deposition site will require a through review of all the information contained within the enquiry.

19.5 There is no doubt that the investigation team is highly motivated and the review team has been impressed with the efforts of [REDACTED] in redirecting and focusing the enquiry. The discovery of Milly Dowler's body will undoubtedly lead to an even greater impetus being achieved and hopefully will lead to the detection of the offence.

## APPENDIX G

### Review Recommendations

#### Investigative Recommendations

##### Recommendation 1

It may be beneficial to have a meeting with the National Missing Persons help line to ensure that the enquiry has obtained the best assistance possible from this organisation.

##### Recommendation 2

It is still suggested that the SIO meet with the team on a monthly basis at least to discuss all FLO related issues particularly as this appears to be a protracted investigation. Structured meetings with Agendas and Minutes can often provoke thought and ideas, which may otherwise be missed.

##### Recommendation 3

It is suggested that the FLO strategy is reviewed regularly as circumstances develop and/or change.

##### Recommendation 4

It is suggested that depending on how the enquiry develops e.g. if Millie is found dead, then this will need to be strictly monitored.

##### Recommendation 5

That if the recommendation referred to above concerning monthly FLO meetings with the SIO were implemented ██████████ could attend such meetings and be in a more advantageous position.

##### Recommendation 6

That although there are regular meetings with the FLO team the family liaison co-ordinator and the SIO it is still suggested that if the enquiry continues for some foreseeable time that automatic referrals to the Occupational Health Unit should be considered. This is particularly important should developments occur, such as the finding of a body, which will undoubtedly place greater pressure on the Officers involved.

##### Recommendation 7

That the FLO strategy be amended to reflect this fact.

##### Recommendation 8

That the SIO satisfies himself that interview policy documents and interview strategies have been prepared to assist the investigation.

### **Recommendation 9**

That as soon as possible records of interviews held with family members be recorded in the form of Section 9 witness statements as with the passage of time potential evidence may be damaged through what the family members have learnt from the progress of the investigation. Best practice dictates that witness interviews should be produced in the form of Section 9 statements as soon as possible after those interviews are held.

### **Recommendation 11**

That the SIO give consideration to splitting his interview team, having a smaller unit to concentrate on any future suspect interview enabling them the time to prepare for it. The remaining Officers could then concern themselves with the more complex/serious witness interviews.

### **Recommendation 12**

That if the recommendation highlighted above is implemented and suspect interviewers are identified that the SIO considers that all papers entering the MIR be provided to the interview team to enable them to prepare for forthcoming interviews. This will undoubtedly assist in a better pre-interview disclosure as the Officer's concerned will be more fully informed regarding full circumstances of the investigation.

### **Recommendation 16**

That a strategy document is also drawn up to cover any significant property found that could relate to Amanda Dowler. The handling and fast track forensic actions of such a find could prove to be highly significant in establishing a suspect.

### **Recommendation 17**

That similar to sterile scene kits prepared for examination of a potential body dumpsite that similar provision be made for the examination of a potential suspect's address.

### **Recommendation 18**

It is recommended that Operation Ruby appoint a Crime Scene Manager to work as part of the forensic team at the laboratory.

### **Recommendation 19**

Whilst experts have been identified and some have been consulted on an individual basis, consideration should be given for them to take part in a forensic management team meeting. Here, each expert can be brought up to date regarding the examination procedures of the others and a co-ordinated approach can be agreed upon and understood by all. It is crucial that a forensic pathologist attends such a meeting as he or she would play a key role following any body find.

#### **Recommendation 20**

That these experts are only used following discussions with Margaret Cox [REDACTED] of the Search Advisory Group to ensure that they have the required knowledge and experience to recover all potential evidential types.

#### **Recommendation 21**

That in terms of good practice the SIO meet the laboratory reporting officers to ensure an exchange of information takes place so that both parties fully understand the requirements of the other

#### **Recommendation 22**

That the agreed dates with the Forensic Science Service for completion of work are regularly reviewed and an update is requested on progress to ensure that there is the minimum of slippage.

#### **Recommendation 25**

As discussed with [REDACTED] that efforts are made to ensure that Scenes of Crime Officers examination reports are more thorough in terms of detail.

#### **Recommendation 26**

It is advised that the meetings of the forensic management team are minuted correctly and that an agenda is designed to meet the aims of such a meeting.

#### **Recommendation 28**

Consideration should be given to the appointment of a dedicated crime scene manager for the potential scene of a body dumpsite and subsequent post mortem

#### **Recommendation 29**

That the strategies in relation to the scenes mentioned i.e. suspect's address, vehicle and the taking of samples from a suspect at a Police Station, be looked at again with a view to enhancing them further.

#### **Recommendation 30**

It is considered to be good practice for the pathologist to attend the deposition site and this should be reflected within the strategy.

#### **Recommendation 31**

That consideration be given to including the forensic pathologist as part of the forensic management team as previously discussed. At such a meeting the pathologist can be briefed on the circumstance of the case to date following the examination of the body in situ and at the mortuary a verbal report should be sought from the pathologist to include key findings. Notes of these should be taken and fed back to the pathologist to ensure clarity.

### **Recommendation 32**

The strategy for the post mortem needs to reflect the potential need for other experts to be present e.g. biologist. The advantages of the presence of such experts at the post mortem can be discussed at a forensic management team meeting.

### **Recommendation 33**

Operation Ruby should ensure that Amanda's DNA profile is held on or is regularly searched on the DNA database.

### **Recommendation 34**

That the specialist scientific advisor Judith Cunnison who has been utilised by Cambridgeshire Police be contacted to share any issues that have arisen there.

### **Recommendation 35**

That the SIO satisfy himself that the intelligence cell is staffed with sufficient numbers of officers to deal with the current workloads.

### **Recommendation 36**

That consideration be given to the intelligence cell meeting and briefing on a regular basis to ensure that each officer involved is aware of what others are doing.

### **Recommendation 37**

That the SIO satisfy himself that the roles and responsibility of officers within the intelligence cell and the intelligence policy link with the aims detailed in that document.

### **Recommendation 38**

That the SIO ensure that the relationship between the MIR and intelligence cell in particular is professional at all times to ensure the smooth running of the investigation.(Investigative)

### **Recommendation 39**

That the SIO assures himself that the criteria for scoring potential suspects in this area is still relevant. It needs to be taken into account that statistically it may not be the case that an offender in this case pursues only female victims.

### **Recommendation 40**

The intelligence cell has identified documents which are sensitive but there is a need to commence a schedule to list all sensitive material to save completing the task at a later time. Such action will also assist the disclosure officer.

### **Recommendation 44**

That the SIO satisfy himself that his review of all messages which was being conducted during the course of this review has been satisfactorily completed to ensure all investigative opportunities have been progressed.

#### **Recommendation 45**

A generic significant policy should be established by the SIO and recorded in the policy file.

#### **Recommendation 48**

Operation Ruby and Surrey Police in general should make full use of the electronic grading system available within Holmes 2 in order that the flow of documents through the room can be properly managed.

#### **Recommendation 49**

That the backlog in reading and indexing sections should be addressed as a matter of priority.

#### **Recommendation 50**

On a large major enquiry using many indexers it is vital that the database is properly managed by an indexing supervisor. In this particular case the SIO needs to assure himself that some retrospective work is carried out to retrieve some of the areas referred to above.

#### **Recommendation 51**

That action exception reports are used to assist in the proper management of allocated actions.

#### **Recommendation 52**

That care is used in the use of the 'pending' queue and that the SIO reviews all of those actions currently within the 'pending' section to ensure that they are being expedited properly.

#### **Recommendation 53**

That the issue of SIO instruction books if used is tightly controlled. Officers should be encouraged to submit paperwork from which urgent actions are to be raised into the incident room and for the indexers to raise the necessary high priority actions from these documents.

#### **Recommendation 54**

That the SIO ensure that all paperwork within the MIR goes via the analysts as recommended within the MIRSAP 2000 document.

#### **Recommendation 55**

The SIO should ensure that there are sufficient analysts dedicated entirely to this investigation

#### **Recommendation 58**

It is recommended that the SIO considers the analytical work undertaken so far to assure himself that what is produced satisfies the needs of the investigation.

#### **Recommendation 59**

The room used for storage of exhibits is small and at the time of the review had a quantity of miscellaneous items not related to Operation Ruby present. These should be removed to allow more space for the ongoing investigation.

#### **Recommendation 60**

That a policy be created to allow for storage of exhibits related to Operation Ruby out of hours. This could quite simply be covered by exhibits being placed in the normal station's property store with a copy of the property receipt left for the exhibits officer, thereby minimising the possibility of time delays and ensuring continuity.

#### **Recommendation 61**

That at agreed periods the SIO is supplied by the exhibits officer with an updated list of exhibits regarding Operation Ruby. This would enable the SIO to be fully aware of exhibits entering the store.

#### **Recommendation 62**

That all video tapes that could become material to the case are copied, exhibited and the exhibited copies are then used to carry out further work or investigation thus preserving best evidence.

#### **Recommendation 63**

That the disclosure officer be brought up to date as a matter of urgency with the progress of the investigation to enable him to have a better perspective of the relevance of documentation in order to assist him with preparing disclosure schedules.

#### **Recommendation 64**

That the disclosure officer expands on the summary of the scheduled items which he has already commenced doing. Consideration should be given to the employment of a typist to assist the officer in catching up with the volume of documentation.

#### **Recommendation 65**

That consideration be given to providing a clerk within the MIR to assist with filing freeing up the disclosure officer to utilise his time more effectively.

#### **Recommendation 66**

That consideration be given to appointing a deputy to the disclosure officer who can assist with the backlog of work and be available to offer support to the current incumbent.

#### **Recommendation 69**

That the SIO clearly documents and details the current lines of enquiry.



### **Recommendation 70**

That the SIO revisit the matrix used in order to satisfy himself that the current criteria is correct and serves the purposes of the investigation.

### **Recommendation 71**

Any person who has been arrested during the course of this enquiry and has not been completely eliminated should be constantly re-looked at in the light of changing developments.

## **Organisational Recommendations**

### **Recommendation 10**

From an organisational point of view, to the benefit of Surrey Police, contact be made with [REDACTED] Sussex Police, Force Interview Advisor, regarding the enhanced cognitive interview method.

### **Recommendation 13**

That Surrey Police consider addressing the issue of dealing with sensitive potential crime scenes with Senior Detective Officers and scenes of crime staff.

### **Recommendation 14**

That Surrey Police satisfy themselves for the future that Senior Detective Officers and relevant scenes of crime staff are aware of the need to detail specifically within strategies exactly what searches and actions are to be carried out at scenes.

### **Recommendation 15**

Attached to this report is a draft forensic strategy document for Surrey Police to consider in order to develop this further and incorporate it into their own major crime investigations.(See Appendix F)

### **Recommendation 24**

Officers engaged on Operation Ruby should review this paper and consider issuing a similar document to any experts that they consider using.(See Appendix E)

### **Recommendation 27**

In cases of the magnitude of Operation Ruby Surrey Police may wish to consider in the early stages of such an investigation allocating a dedicated full time co-ordinator. This would allow the work that needs to be completed in the preparation of forensic strategies to be carried out within a short time frame.

#### **Recommendation 42**

Where there is CCTV available and this has the potential in itself to identify the offender or offender's vehicle at the time of an offence the SIO or Deputy SIO needs to satisfy themselves of the quality of the product.

#### **Recommendation 43**

The parameters for the CCTV need to be realistic and linked in with relevant times identified by the SIO in policy.

#### **Recommendation 46**

Surrey Police should consider the introduction of a Major Crime Policy for significant witnesses.

#### **Recommendation 47**

In instances where the volume of statements is such that the SIO is unable to read all statements entering the enquiry the SIO should be satisfied that there is a system in place that allows for all key statements to be brought to the SIO's attention.

#### **Recommendation 56**

That Surrey Police in general ensure that sufficient analysts are trained on the Holmes 2 system.

#### **Recommendation 57**

That Surrey Police formulate an appropriate policy regarding the typing of at least the most significant 'other documents' onto Holmes 2 during any enquiry.

#### **Recommendation 67**

That Surrey Police consider having officers trained for the important role of disclosure within major crime investigations and that they are familiar with the Holmes 2 disclosure package as well as all aspects of CPIA.

#### **Recommendation 68**

Surrey Police review critical incident procedures that they have in place so that such enquiries are recognised as such and every effort is made to ensure that the most suitably trained and experienced officers within the Force are released to lead such investigations.

## **Good Practice Recommendations**

### **Recommendation 23**

The maintenance of such a matrix is good practice, which should assist in any future major crime investigations.

### **Recommendation 41**

That the record keeping of [REDACTED] which allows for easy searching and recording for CPIA purposes is recognised as good practice.