



VERDICT AT CORONER'S INQUEST

File No.: 2008-0366-0058

An Inquest was held at the Coroners Court, in the municipality of Burnaby in the Province of British Columbia, on the following dates February 10,11,12,13, 2009 before Owen Court, Presiding Coroner, into the death of Laura Eileen Coward 26 (Age) Male Female and the following findings were made:

Date and Time of Death: February 4, 2008, 0918 hours

Place of Death: Cell 6 RCMP Detachment 4592 Airport Rd Chilliwack, BC (Location) (Municipality/Province)

Medical Cause of Death

(1) Immediate Cause of Death: a) Sudden Cardiac Arrest of Undetermined Cause DUE TO OR AS A CONSEQUENCE OF

Antecedent Cause if any: b) DUE TO OR AS A CONSEQUENCE OF

Giving rise to the immediate cause (a) above, stating underlying cause last. c)

(2) Other Significant Conditions Contributing to Death:

Classification of Death: Accidental Homicide Natural Suicide Undetermined

The above verdict certified by the Jury on the 13th day of February AD, 2009.

OWEN COURT Presiding Coroner's Printed Name

Original signed by O. Court Presiding Coroner's Signature



VERDICT AT CORONER'S INQUEST

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS AS A RESULT OF THE INQUEST INTO THE DEATH OF

FILE No.: 2008-0366-0058

COWARD

SURNAME

Laura Eileen

GIVEN NAMES

Pursuant to Section 38 of the Coroner's Act, the following recommendations are forwarded to the Chief Coroner of the Province of British Columbia for distribution to the appropriate agency:

JURY RECOMMENDATIONS:

**TO: Commissioner William Elliot
Royal Canadian Mounted Police
Ottawa, Ontario**

1. Recommend all RCMP members and guards receive a mandatory annual refresher course with a written exam of National, Divisional and Detachment policies with regard to cell block security, guarding prisoners, assessing responsiveness and medical assistance, and that records must be kept on file
2. Recommend that there be regular audits of RCMP procedures regarding cellblock security, guarding prisoners, assessing responsiveness and medical assistance
3. Recommend that upon admission to cells, there be an immediate medical assessment of known or suspected substance abusers with re-assessment every 24-36 hours or as recommended by a medical professional
4. Recommend that under National Policy 19.2.2.1, the definition of illness be more specific
5. Recommend that guards training include both theoretical and practical (on the job) training regarding all levels of policy pertaining to cell block duties

**TO: Officer-in-charge, Chilliwack Detachment
Royal Canadian Mounted Police
4592 Chilliwack Road,
Chilliwack, BC**

6. Recommend that there be a physical check sign-off sheet utilized by both guards and RCMP members posted outside of each cell for the purposes of:
 - a. Signing all physical and responsiveness checks
 - b. Medical requirements and attentions received
 - c. Must be kept as part of the inmate's file upon release
7. Recommend that at guard shift change guards be required to do a physical cell check together and review C-13 forms, incident reports and medical requirements for each prisoner
8. Recommend that Watch Commanders or designates at shift change be required to do a physical cell check together and review C-13 forms, incident reports and medical requirements for each prisoner

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INTO THE DEATH OF

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9. Recommend that RCMP members complete fingerprinting duties in a more timely manner
10. Recommend that guards no longer perform clerical duties for prisoner transfer and release

**TO: City Manager, City of Chilliwack
8550 Young Road,
Chilliwack, BC**

11. Recommend that guards have a shift overlap for peak periods. For example, Monday mornings, in order to prepare prisoners for court. A two hour period of overlap would seem reasonable

**TO: Honourable George Abbot
Minister of Health
Government of British Columbia**

12. We recommend that drug treatment be more accessible
13. Recommend that treatment for substance abuse be available for incarcerated prisoners
14. Recommend that ambulance crew reports be completed and available in a timely manner

**TO: Registrar, College of Physicians and Surgeons of British Columbia
400 – 858 Beatty Street,
Vancouver, BC**

15. Recommend that EHS crew reports be reviewed by emergency physicians prior to patient examination