



VERDICT OF CORONER'S JURY

AS A RESULT OF AN INQUEST INTO THE DEATH OF SAMUEL AITACK

HELD ON MAY 13 2003, AT IQALUIT IN NUNAVUT

THE JURORS HAVE CONSIDERED THE EVIDENCE AND MAKE THE FOLLOWING DETERMINATIONS:

1. IDENTITY OF DECEASED: SAMUEL AITACK
2. DATE AND TIME OF DEATH: SEPT 12, 2002 15:31
3. PLACE OF DEATH: BAFFIN REGIONAL HOSPITAL
4. CAUSE OF DEATH: ASPHYXINATION (SUFFOCATION)
5. MANNER OF DEATH: HANGING
6. CIRCUMSTANCES UNDER WHICH DEATH OCCURRED: SUICIDE

RECOMMENDATIONS OF JURY: (SEE ATTACHED)

DATED AT IQALUIT ON MAY 14 2003.

NAMES OF ALL JURORS:

SIGNATURES OF ALL JURORS:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____



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RECOMMENDATIONS OF JURY:

Commendations:

1) We wish to note the positive comments made about the approachable staff at the Baffin Correctional Centre by witnesses, in particular those of a previous inmate who gave testimony.

2) We wish to note the speed at which the Iqaluit Emergency Services responded to the emergency and the thoroughness of their service.

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BCC = Baffin Correctional Centre
DoJ = Dept. of Justice, GN

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RECOMMENDATIONS OF JURY:

Recommendations

1.) We recommend to BCC and DoJ that Remand Unit always have an assigned guard, even when others go to recreation. Rather than split one guard between recreation and Remand, an additional guard should be assigned to cover those left behind in the Dorm. As well, as per a previous inmate's suggestion, another guard should be available as a "floater" to assist where necessary. This may also assist with keeping inmates constructively employed whereas so many have little to do but line up to use the smoking room.

2.) We recommend that BCC and DoJ review the effectiveness of the CRAMS evaluation tool. Although it appears to have been modified for the NWT and Nunavut, it clearly did not work in

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RECOMMENDATIONS OF JURY:

this instance.

We would recommend that this tool, perhaps improved upon, be used along with other evaluative tools, preferably involving counselling with elders upon check-in and regular sessions during their stay in Remand, as well as consultations with the nurse and other medical staff. The evaluation upon intake then, would comprise of an evaluation tool, an interview with an elder as well as a medical/psychiatric evaluation.

3) From what we have heard at this inquiry we understand that virtually all inmates at BCC are people at some level of risk. Therefore, we recommend that BCC and DoJ review its approach to inmates and find ways to expand counselling and psychiatric services.

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A previous inmate's observation of the difference in Mr Aitask's behaviour prior to his death in September 2002, underscores the need for more counselling support.

4.) It appears, based on our visit to BCC and the witnesses' remarks, that the Centre is now trying to handle more inmates than it was ever designed for. The net result is cramped facilities which are harder to keep clean and maintained. We noted that the Remand Dormitory, Remand Common Area and Smoking Room, appeared rather dingy and contribute to a stressful environment. While it appears obvious that expanded facilities are needed, we recommend that BCC and DoJ look at practical, immediate measures to improve the physical environment, i.e. fresh paint, cleaner facilities, tidier dorms, etc.

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5.) Due to the limitations of the surveillance cameras, and a need to respect a reasonable level of privacy in the washrooms, we recommend to BCC and DoJ that in the Remand Dormitories:

a.) the current cameras be repositioned for maximum viewing efficiency

b.) a second camera be installed in each dormitory at a complimentary "eye-level" angle which exposes the bottom bunk's (currently not in view) as well as the area above and below the half-door in the washrooms

6.) We recommend to BCC and DoJ that changes be made to the design of the control room so that the monitors are not visible to the inmates.

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surveillance We note a previous inmate's testimony that the viewing areas, and gaps in coverage, are well known by inmates as the current monitors are visible to them.

7) We recommend to BCC and DoJ that all washroom and shower facilities be re-evaluated to make them "suicide proof."

We note the shower head unit that the sheet was tied to could be replaced with a unit which wouldn't ~~be~~ lend itself to this purpose.

8.) We recognize the right of the media to report upcoming court activities. This was the case on September 9, 2002 in NewsNorth regarding Mr. Aitak. It has been implied, however, that this

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coverage may have contributed to Mr. Aitaok's decision to commit suicide, and we note that it does not appear that this stressor was noted by BCC staff. We recommend that BCC and the DOJ, as part of the review and expansion of counselling services, institute a procedure to cope with media coverage and its possible stressful effects on inmates.

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