

For immediate release 7 July 2006

## INQUEST BEGINS INTO THE DEATH OF VULNERABLE MAN IN PRISON SEGREGATION UNIT

Inquest starts Tuesday 11 July at 10.00am  
Venue: Coroner's Court, Portsmouth Magistrates Court,  
15 Landport Terrace,  
Portsmouth, Hampshire  
PO1 2QS  
Sitting before HM Coroner David Horsley

The inquest into the death of 32 year old David Hull is due to start on 11 July 2006 and is expected to last until the 19th or 20th July.

David Hull, a talented artist, was found hanging in a cell in the segregation unit of HMP Kingston on 11 October 2004. He had a long history of depression and in the months leading up to his death had self harmed and attempted suicide on numerous occasions. Before his death a psychiatrist advised that he was a high risk of suicide.

On 9 October David was moved to the segregation unit under restraint where he remained on suicide watch until his death. Although David was taken to segregation under 'good order and discipline' rules he had initially requested to move there himself as he was having thoughts of suicide. However, he refused to co-operate when he was told he could not take any of his belongings with him. Once on the segregation unit it is believed that David smashed his toilet seat and was seen to be eating broken glass. In the late evening of 11 October he was found hanging from his cell window bars. He died the next day in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

Mr Hull's former partner hopes the inquest will explore the following issues:

- The decision to place David Hull in the segregation unit;
- The failure to use a specially designed "safer cell" and instead to place him in a cell with window bars;
- The management of David's suicide risk including frequency of observations and quality of the reviews;
- The adequacy of the self-harm prevention regime at HMP Kingston including staff training;
- The failure to transfer David to a properly equipped health care facility.

Deborah Coles, co-director of INQUEST, said

*“This death raises serious concerns about the use of segregation units to house vulnerable and at risk prisoners. It is vital that this death and the issues it raises are fully explored, failings identified and any recommendations implemented.”*

Mr Hull’s former partner is being represented by INQUEST Lawyers Group members barrister Richard Hermer from Doughty Street Chambers and solicitor Tony Murphy of Bindman and Partners.

Deaths in Prison segregation units 2000-date								
Classification	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	Total
Self-Inflicted	6	5	8	10	12	11	5	57
Non-Self-Inflicted	0	1	2	0	1	0	0	4

(England & Wales)

Source: INQUEST casework and monitoring

### Note to Editors

INQUEST is the only non-governmental organisation in England and Wales that works directly with the families of those who die in custody. It provides an independent free legal and advice service to bereaved people and conducts policy and research work on the issues arising.

Segregation units are also sometimes referred to as ‘care and separation units’.

Further Information	
INQUEST	<a href="http://www.inquest.org.uk">www.inquest.org.uk</a>
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