

PRESS RELEASE 22 JUNE 2005
POLICE NOT TO BE PROSECUTED IN FIRST BLACK DEATH IN
CUSTODY INVESTIGATED BY IPCC

The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) decided on 20th June 2005 not to prosecute the arresting Metropolitan Police officer of 42-year-old black man, Kebba Jobe, who died during a police restraint at Camden Lock, London on 15th May 2004. Mr Jobe was a father and worked as a storage equipment installer.

The CPS made a number of criticisms of the arresting officer's conduct, but was not of the view that there was sufficient evidence to mount a prosecution against him.

These criticisms included that the officer:

- Should have undertaken a number of actions to assist Mr Jobe;
- Ought to have recognised the risk posed to Mr Jobe's life;
- Lacked credibility in suggesting that he had checked if Mr Jobe was seriously hurt following a fall;
- Kneeled on Mr Jobe's back, which carried the risk of positional asphyxia (self suffocation);
- Failed to relax his restraint even once Mr Jobe had begun to gag;
- Failed to even consider applying various elements of his life support training;
- Failed to appraise his police colleagues and/or London Ambulance Service personnel that Mr Jobe may have had something in his mouth;
- Provided contradictory accounts.

Mr Jobe's widow Jackie Jobe said as follows:

"I work for Social Services. If I had shown the same disregard for one of my client's lives that the Met showed for Kebba's I would expect to be prosecuted. The IPCC must ensure this officer faces disciplinary charges."

Mrs Jobe's solicitor Tony Murphy of Bindman & Partners said as follows:

"The way in which the Metropolitan Police treated Kebba Jobe raises important issues regarding the right of all citizens to have their lives protected. It is vital that the Commissioner and the IPCC act now to acknowledge the serious failings identified by the CPS."

Helen Shaw, Co-Director of INQUEST said:

"The evidence heard about Kebba's death tells a harrowing story of how a black man was allowed to die beside Camden Lock after being restrained by the police. Once again a family feels let down by the legal system. The IPCC now has the opportunity to demonstrate to the

family and the wider public that such deaths will be taken seriously and action taken to prevent them and hold those responsible to account."

NOTES FOR EDITORS:

Kebba Jobe was the first black death in police custody to be independently investigated by the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC). The IPCC was established in April 2004 following a recommendation made by the McPherson Inquiry into the death of Stephen Lawrence.

On 19th January 2005 an inquest jury found that Mr Jobe died of an acute airway obstruction due to the inhalation of a drugs package.

Bindman & Partners was founded in 1974 by a small group of solicitors specialising in civil liberties and the rights of the individual. These concerns have remained at the heart of the firm as it has grown to its present size of 13 Partners and 65 other staff and is widely regarded as one of the country's leading civil rights practices.

Further background information about the work of the firm can be obtained by calling 020 7833 4433, emailing info@bindmans.com or visiting our website at www.bindmans.com.

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 on inquest procedures and their rights in the coroner's courts.