



Department
for Transport

Rt Hon Sir George Howarth MP
House of Commons
London
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From the Minister of State
Chris Heaton-Harris MP

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Dear George

Thank you for your email to Priti Patel of 4 June on behalf of your constituents, about the investigation into the death of Belly Mujinga, a railway ticket officer at Victoria Station.

I understand your constituents' concerns about the tragic death of Ms Mujinga. My sympathies and thoughts are with Ms Mujinga's family, friends and all those who have been affected by her death. Any death in the transport sector is regrettable and, sadly, Ms Mujinga is one of several frontline workers who have died as a result of COVID-19.

The British Transport Police (BTP) released a statement regarding the alleged incident after conducting their investigation. It concluded, based on key witness statements and having reviewed the CCTV footage, that "there was insufficient evidence to substantiate that any criminal offences had taken place and that the death of Ms Mujinga did not occur as a consequence of that incident". In recognition of the wider public interest, the BTP has asked the Crown Prosecution Service to carry out an independent review of its decision.

The outcome of the BTP investigation, however, does nothing to change the fact that no one should be treated disrespectfully or made to feel unsafe when they are trying to do their job.

Regarding personal protective equipment (PPE), Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR) followed all the government health advice and industry guidelines at the time, which did not recommend the use of PPE for staff outside of a clinical setting. GTR continues to follow the latest government advice on PPE, responding to changes as they occur. In addition, extra measures have been put in place by GTR to help staff stay safe while at work, including adjusting shift patterns, handing out face masks (now that government advice is to

wear these on public transport) and the cleaning of stations and trains with an antiviral cleaning agent. GTR is conducting its own internal review and investigation into the incident.

The Department and I stand ready to do everything we can to support the safety of all frontline transport workers.

Thank you once again for raising your constituents' concerns with me. I hope you find this reply helpful.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Chris', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Chris Heaton-Harris MP

Minister of State for Transport