



Sergeant Matt Ratana, who was aged 54

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UPDATED: Commissioner and Chief Inspector pay tribute to Sergeant Matt Ratana

Statement from Commissioner Cressida Dick:

“Earlier today I said I would give more information about the terrible events of the early hours when I could. It is now my sad duty to confirm that our colleague who was killed was 54-year-old Matt Ratana, a custody sergeant.

“He joined the Met in 1991 and was captain of his recruit training class.

Posted to Charing Cross and worked as a constable on the streets of the West End and Westminster in various roles. Later, he worked with the Territorial Support Group and in Hillingdon.

“In 2010 he worked as a sergeant in Hackney in the response team and in neighbourhoods. Five years later, in 2015, he moved to Croydon, where he worked in response, in neighbourhoods and then our detention command.

“In all, nearly 30 years spent as a uniformed officer serving the public of London.

“He was originally from Hawke’s Bay, New Zealand, and educated, I believe, at Palmerston North Boys School, where he developed a passion for rugby.

“After Otago University, he came to London in 1989 and played for London Irish. He was a leader in his sport, well known as a player in several teams including the Met Police, and as a coach, most recently at East Grinstead.

“As a colleague, he was big in stature and big-hearted, a friendly, capable police officer. A lovely man, highly respected by officers and staff, and by the public, including suspects he arrested or dealt with in custody.

“He was very well known locally and will be remembered so fondly in Croydon, as well as in the Met and the rugby world.

“He leaves a partner and an adult son from a previous relationship. Our thoughts are with them.

“The suspect, a 23-year-old man, was arrested by regular patrolling local officers for possession of ammunition and possession of class B drugs with intent to supply in Pollards Hill, SW16, after a stop and search. He remains in hospital in a critical but stable condition.

“Our investigation is led by homicide investigators from the Specialist Crime Command. We are not treating it as a counter-terrorism incident. We are doing all we can to establish a motive for the murder.

“Having retrieved CCTV and body-worn video, the footage is being reviewed

in detail and we are working closely with the Independent Office for Police Conduct.

“I understand the great concern about how this happened and we will establish the facts. We owe it to Matt, his loved ones and all other officers. But we need to give investigators space to do their job. Speculation at this time is unhelpful and may even harm our efforts.

“Every day, the Metropolitan Police arrest several hundred suspects, many of them violent criminals who pose a risk to the public.

“The safety of my officers is a top priority and very close to my heart. We are a large, professional, resilient, and very experienced police service. As we mourn the loss of a much-loved colleague, senselessly killed, be under no illusion that our resolve to protect the public and to tackle violent crime – whoever may be responsible for it – will be undiminished.”

Chief Inspector Phillip Palmer of Met Detention, said: “Matt was a very outgoing character, and a supportive and kind colleague. Anyone who met him warmed to him straight away.

“I met him on his first day on Met Detention two years ago, and he proved to be a very dedicated officer. He often worked his rest days and filled in at other custody suites across London.

“He was well known across the Met, across different communities and nationalities, touching the lives of many in a positive way. He will be sorely missed.”

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