

Raoul Moat inquest jury returns suicide verdict

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THE Raoul Moat inquest jury has returned a verdict of suicide following a three-week hearing at Newcastle Crown Court.

Police fired shotgun Tasers as he prepared to kill himself in Rothbury, Northumberland, in July last year, but the round had no effect on him, the three-week inquest at Newcastle Crown Court heard.

The 37-year-old ex-doorman was surrounded by police marksmen and negotiators tried for six hours to get him to surrender but he was determined not to go back to prison.

The inquest heard that the aim was to incapacitate him, allowing officers to make an arrest, but that in all likelihood there was little or no electrical discharge needed to lock up his muscles.

On day 15 of the hearing at Newcastle Crown Court, coroner David Mitford offered the five men and five women final directions before they retired.

He told them they must select either a verdict of suicide, or choose an "open" verdict if they feel they can't "beyond reasonable doubt" rule that he killed himself.

Mr Mitford said: "Suicide is defined by a person deliberately committing an act with the intention of taking his own life and is successful.

"You have to decide whether you are satisfied so that you are sure beyond reasonable doubt that on July 10 on that riverbank in Rothbury, Raoul Moat deliberately shot himself with the intention of taking his own life.

"If so, you must record a verdict of suicide."

Mr Mitford told the jury that if a suicide ruling can't be reached, the only other option is to give an "open" verdict.

"This is the verdict that must be made when a firm conclusion to the standard required can't be made in this case."

The coroner went on to outline questions the jury must answer alongside its decision.

They include: should the Northumbria Police Gold Commander have authorised the firing of unlicensed X-rep electro-charged Tasers? If not, why not?

And does the jury, on the balance of probability, believe the decision not to deploy the killer's brother Angus and best friend Tony Wright in direct negotiations with the trapped gunman was appropriate?

:: Reporter Alastair Craig was at the hearing, and you can replay his coverage by clicking to page two.

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A JURY at the inquest of cornered killer Raoul Moat will consider whether police should have used unauthorised Taser weapons on the night, the coroner has said.

The 37-year-old ex-doorman shot himself in the head in Rothbury, Northumberland, after being hit by a shotgun Taser round fired by marksmen who believed he was preparing to kill himself.

The inquest at Newcastle Crown Court has heard the aim was to incapacitate him, allowing officers to make an arrest, but that in all likelihood there was little or no electrical discharge needed to achieve that.

Moat was on the run after shooting his ex-girlfriend Sam Stobbart, executing her new boyfriend Chris Brown and then blinding PC David Rathband after declaring war on police.

Newcastle Coroner David Mitford began summing up the case on the 14th day of the hearing.

He said up to 300 armed police - half of the country's trained firearms officers - were involved in the manhunt.

While on the run, Moat left messages threatening the wider public.

"That created a massive problem, an unprecedented problem for the police to deal with.

"It was known he had the capacity and was prepared to use violence with a lethal weapon."

Police were offered and accepted X12 Taser shotguns which were only licensed for testing in the UK. They fired X-REP cartridges over a longer range than conventional handheld Tasers.

Assistant Chief Constable Steve Ashman made the decision to accept the shotgun Tasers for use, and a senior officer said they should be deployed on the night, the coroner said.

He told the jury: "These are issues that you will need to look at.

"I invite you to make a decision on whether that was appropriate."

Mr Mitford said the jury needed to consider what options were available to the police, and described the "rather stark" situation they found themselves in.

"You have to decide whether it was appropriate. Was it a sensible thing to do at that time, not knowing how it would turn out?

"You need to test that by asking what else they could do."

The coroner said it was "blatant" Moat shot himself, but the jury needed to determine the circumstances.

That would be conveyed in a narrative verdict, he said.

The panel of five men and five women would have to be "satisfied so you are sure" before returning a verdict of suicide, whereas other verdicts could be decided "on the balance of probabilities".

On Friday the inquest heard an unauthorised Taser weapon fired by police at Moat did not cause him to accidentally blast himself in the head.

Dr Ian Schofield, a consultant neurophysiologist with expertise in how electric currents affect the nervous system, said even if an electrical discharge went through Moat, it would not have made him act involuntarily.

Moat was hit by an X-Rep projectile fired from a shotgun which was intended to incapacitate him before he committed suicide.

His family fear the round may have caused him to inadvertently clench his fingers and pull the trigger.

The ex-doorman was sitting in Rothbury, Northumberland, with a sawn-off shotgun pointing at his temple when the Taser hit him.

Moments later he fired, blowing a hole straight through his brain.

The jury has heard although the X-Rep hit his arm, it did not pierce the skin, and any electric shock was localised, if it happened at all. Dr Schofield produced a report for the coroner with the summary: "Mr Moat was struck by an X-Rep projectile on the left forearm. There is no definitive evidence to suggest that electrical discharge of any type was felt by Mr Moat.

"In the event that electrical discharge did occur, in my opinion, this would only precipitate an action for which there was a pre-existing, conscious intent."

Dr Schofield said Moat may have been startled by the impact of the Taser round, but any response to the shock would have happened within two tenths of a second.

The jury has heard several witnesses say Moat shouted "Ow" after being struck by the Taser, rocked backwards then forwards before pulling the trigger.

The X12 shotguns were licensed only for testing but were used on the night in July 2010 as regular hand-held Tasers could not hit Moat from 10m away as their range was too short.

Coroner David Mitford adjourned the hearing until Monday when he will sum up the evidence.

On Tuesday, a Home Office expert told the inquest the unauthorised shotgun Tasers used by police in the stand-off with crazed killer Raoul Moat were not an effective weapon.

The hearing at Newcastle Crown Court heard that in testing "more often than not" the X-Rep cartridges did not achieve their purpose of incapacitating the target.

Officers fired twice at the 15st 7lb (100kg) fugitive as he prepared to kill himself with the sawn-off shotgun he had already used to blast his ex-girlfriend Samantha Stobbart, execute her new lover Chris Brown and blind PC David Rathband.

The inquest has heard that police fired the X12 Tasers - which were licensed only for testing - because standard X26 handheld Tasers did not have the necessary range.

Graham Smith, a Home Office physicist who advised the Association of Chief Police Officers on weapons, explained to the jury how the X12 shotguns fire X-Rep cartridges at a speed of 18 metres per second.

The idea is that the projectile's nose sticks into the target's torso, and if he then grabs trailing wires to pull it out, an electrical circuit is made, causing incapacitation.

But tests showed that the secondary contact with skin, required to complete the circuit often did not happen.

Newcastle Coroner David Mitford asked if the witness considered it an effective non-lethal weapon.

Mr Smith replied: "I think conceptually it could be but in its current configuration I don't think it is."

Mr Smith said "more often than not", it did not incapacitate.

He agreed that there were few alternatives available to police given Moat was 10 metres away, sitting down and pointing a shotgun at his head during the stand-off in Rothbury, Northumberland.

The inquest will also hear evidence from hospital staff at Newcastle General who tried to save Moat's life.

On Monday, the inquest was told Raoul Moat's heart was still beating when he arrived at hospital after shooting himself in the head.

A paramedic described seeing the gunman take a deep breath as he lay on the ground fatally injured in Rothbury, Northumberland, last July.

He was part of an emergency response team that battled to save the former doorman's life.

North East Ambulance Service Hazardous Area Response Team (HART) manager Simon Swallow said the gunman had a "strong, normal" heart rhythm but was not breathing during the 35-minute dash from Rothbury to Newcastle General Hospital's Accident and Emergency department.

He rushed from a police armed response vehicle to Moat's stricken body after hearing "a loud bang", the jury at Newcastle Crown Court heard.

Moat had lifted his sawn-off shotgun to his right temple and pulled the trigger.

Mr Swallow said he had to ask a policeman where Moat had been shot.

He said: "I know it sounds quite bizarre bearing in mind we are talking about a shotgun wound to the head but he had his hood up and a cap on.

"The policeman gestured with his arm and I looked very briefly. It was quite a strange atmosphere."

Asked by Newcastle Coroner David Mitford whether Moat showed any sign of life, Mr Swallow said: "Not initially but soon after, and I'm talking seconds, he actually drew a large breath.

"After that large single breath he did not draw another."

Mr Swallow said his team would try to save the life of any casualty who was breathing or whose heart was still beating.

The former doorman was connected to intravenous drips and fitted with a breathing mask and electrocardiogram heart monitor.

He said: "His heart was fine, in a normal sinus rhythm. He had a really strong output. His heart was normal.

"But he was not breathing; he was in respiratory arrest.

"It was a difficult situation to be in, knowing the extent of the injury."

He continued to treat Moat "all the way to the hospital" where an accident and emergency team including a neurosurgeon was waiting.

Cross-examining, John Beggs asked: "Despite your best efforts, that shotgun injury was absolutely non-survivable; there is absolutely no way he could have survived it?"

"That is fair to say," Mr Swallow replied.

As Moat's body was wheeled on a trolley from the back of the ambulance, Mr Swallow noticed a "strange-looking thing" hanging by wires from the top end of his stretcher.

"It was not a piece of medical equipment; that's why I looked at it," he said.

The inquest has heard how Moat was hit by a non-lethal round from an experimental shotgun Taser, which was designed on impact to burst apart on wires and deliver an electric shock.

The inquest heard how torrential rain prevented Moat's body being carried to the hospital by air.

The 37-year-old was pronounced dead on arrival at Newcastle General Hospital in July last year.

The six-hour stand-off in Rothbury, Northumberland, ended a huge hunt for Moat who had shot his ex-partner, Sam Stobbart, murdered her new boyfriend, Chris Brown, and later blinded Pc David Rathband.

The inquest at Newcastle Crown Court continues.

Last week, a police officer told how Raoul Moat "moaned repeatedly" when officers approached him after his apparent suicide shot.

Giving evidence as officer Alpha 7, the Northumbria Police Bronze Commander was tasked with controlling the immediate area where the gunman was captive on Rothbury riverside.

Alpha 7 co-ordinated the clearing of Press and public who were trying to get close enough to the siege scene to take photographs.

He also ordered that a Sky News helicopter hovering above keep its distance because negotiators were struggling to make themselves heard.

Alpha 7 described the final moments of the six-hour stand-off at Newcastle Crown Court.

He said, at first, he thought Moat had missed his head in his suicide bid because he "saw leaves move on a tree behind".

But then he slumped backwards and he realised the shot must have connected, he told the jury.

Alpha 7 told the hearing that the bang of Moat's sawn off shotgun was preceded by the "pop" of an X12 Taser rifle, and a second "pop" came shortly after the killer pulled his own trigger.

The Northumbria Police officer, based in the force's firearms unit, accompanied several marksmen to attend Moat and call in paramedics.

When asked by coroner David Mitford if he thought Moat was dead, he said: "No, sir. I could hear him moaning."

He said the 37-year-old former doorman was given emergency first aid then stretchered into an ambulance and taken to hospital in Newcastle, but he passed away.

On Wednesday the hearing was told Moat was shot twice with Tasers before he blasted himself in the head.

The gunman yelled: "It's going to end in this field tonight," shortly before he was fired at by two firearms officers using experimental X-12 shotgun Tasers.

The claim was made by a chief marksman who was standing next to an officer who fired at Moat.

Giving evidence behind screens under the name Tango 21, the West Yorks sergeant, from the force's firearms support unit, gave a fresh account of Moat's last seconds of life.

Tango 21 was standing behind a car around 15m from where Moat was kneeling at Rothbury riverside with a sawn-off shotgun pointed at his head.

The sergeant was standing alongside one of the West Yorks marksmen who would eventually fire an unlicensed X-rep Taser round at the cornered killer.

A second X-rep rifleman was positioned in the cluster of three police negotiators attempting to talk Moat into peaceful surrender.

Tango 21 said, at around 1.11am on July 10, as Moat moved the gun from his chin to his temple, he heard the pop of a Taser firing from the area where negotiators were working.

He said he heard another pop of the Taser held by the officer next to him discharge split seconds later.

Moat let out a "yelp of pain" after the first Taser was shot "as if something had hit him", said Tango 21.

Only after the two Tasers were fired at Moat did he start to fall, firing his shotgun into his temple as he did, the inquest heard.

Tango 21 said he saw Moat's head "rock violently to the side" before he slumped into the long grass.

The evidence offers another version of events regarding Moat's death, conflicting with previous details given by negotiators and Northumbria Police marksmen.

A jury heard the officers had received no formal training to use the weapons and had never fired an X-Rep projectile before.

Moat had shot and injured his ex-girlfriend Sam Stobbart, killed her new boyfriend Chris Brown and the next day blinded Pc David Rathband last July.

He evaded a huge police manhunt for days until he was cornered in Rothbury, Northumberland, by the River Coquet.

On Tuesday the jury heard evidence that the gunman was hit by the Taser before he pulled the trigger of his sawn-off shotgun.

The claim by an unarmed police officer conflicts with evidence given earlier in the hearing by firearms officers.

The unnamed officer, known only as Alpha 10, told how the unlicensed X12 shotgun Taser was considered the last chance of saving the fugitive's life.

Alpha 10, a firearms tactical adviser with Northumbria Police, was based at the force's Ponteland HQ in the nerve centre co-ordinating efforts to secure Moat's surrender.

In a de-briefing note following Moat's apparent suicide by the river in Rothbury, Alpha 10 wrote that he believed a Taser round was fired at Moat as it became apparent he was about to take his own life.

The gunman "moved the weapon from his chin to his temple and rose up slightly" said Alpha 10.

At that point, he told Newcastle Crown Court, one officer fired a Taser.

Moat then fell sideways from his kneeling position, said Alpha 10, fired his sawn off shotgun at his head, and there followed a second Taser round aimed at the former Newcastle doorman.

The version of events differs from previous evidence in the hearing, when police marksmen said they believed Moat shot himself twice in order to end his life.

Firearms chiefs earlier revealed that all possible types of "non lethal" force were considered to bring Raoul Moat in alive.

The inquest into his death heard today that shooting him with conventional rifles would have been "the absolute last resort" during the riverside stand-off in Rothbury.

Among those so-called non-lethal control measures on standby were police dogs, baton guns, which fire plastic bullets and CS sprays.

But all were considered too dangerous or unpredictable over the 10m range between marksmen and the spot where Moat was kneeling with a sawn off shotgun pressed to his head.

In the end, an alternative, the unlicensed X12 Taser rifles were given authorisation as the only suitable weapon to be used instead of traditional firearms.

The X12 was fired at Moat during the final seconds when he shot himself in the early hours of July 10 last year.

On Monday the inquest heard Moat grew so hungry that he resorted to eating dead mice when on the run.

Police negotiators attempted to strike up a rapport with the gunman by feeding him sandwiches as he knelt on a riverbank with a shotgun to his head.

Moat knew he faced the rest of his life in prison which made police negotiations with him extremely difficult, the hearing at Newcastle Crown Court heard.

A police negotiator who saw the killer shoot himself in the head said the gunman was a "broken man" who was "100% suicidal".

The officer, who was granted anonymity by the court, said: "He told us he had been starving and had been eating dead mice.

"Giving him food and drink was a positive action in which he learned to trust us a little bit; it taught him that not all police officers are bad."

He described seeing Moat wound himself then shoot himself dead with two shots from a sawn-off shotgun.

He described seeing a "diamond-shaped flash" as Moat fired the second, fatal shot at his head.

The former doorman had been kneeling upright with the double-barrelled sawn-off shotgun "wedged tightly" beneath his chin.

He then raised himself slightly and, still kneeling, moved the shotgun to point at his temple.

The negotiator saw him begin to breathe deeply, in his opinion to "psyche himself up" to make "the most horrendous decision any human being could make in their life".

He said: "My colleagues were shouting 'Raoul, put the gun down; Raoul, don't end it, don't do it, think of your kids'.

"But he didn't listen. At that point there was a pop and the firearm moved several inches from his head.

"He made a scream, he shouted out 'ow' loudly, then pushed the gun back against his temple.

"There was a second pop and a diamond-shaped flash and that's when he shot the side of his head off and there was an exit from the side of his head.

"And then he fell over and that was the end."

Asked whether he thought the former doorman was suicidal, the negotiator said: "100%, yes. I would best describe him as a broken man.

"Looking at him, I just did not hold out much hope that he would come out of that scenario unless it was in a body bag."

Moat told officers during the six-hour stand-off: "I cannot do the jail."

A second negotiator told the inquest jury sitting at Newcastle Crown Court that police tried to convince him he had a future, and to think of his family.

But he shot himself in the head with his sawn-off shotgun moments after police fired two Taser rounds at him.

Moat had shot his ex-girlfriend Sam Stobbart, then executed her new boyfriend Chris Brown and the next day blinded PC David Rathband last July.

He evaded a huge police manhunt for days until he was cornered in Rothbury, Northumberland, beside the River Coquet.

The inquest continues.

On Friday, the hearing heard how Moat likened himself to King Kong and the Incredible Hulk while on the run from armed police.

The gunman said he struggled to contain his murderous rage and that he "hated himself" because of it.

The feelings could have been triggered by a traumatic childhood in which he was beaten and once saw his mother burn all his toys, an inquest at Newcastle Crown Court heard.

A jury heard the fugitive was paranoid, suspicious, mistrustful of authority figures and blamed other people for his misfortune.

But he was not mentally ill, according to a forensic psychologist brought in to advise expert police negotiators.

Moat shot himself after a tense six hour standoff with armed police, in Rothbury, Northumberland, last year.

The inquest heard Moat was tormented by bad dreams and feelings he struggled to control.

He detailed how they affected him in recordings made on a dictating machine while he was on the run following the shootings of karate instructor Chris Brown, his ex-girlfriend Samantha Stobbart, and Northumbria Pc David Rathband.

He said: "I feel like King Kong when he's right at the top of that building, all messed up, when he's in a real mess.

"I hate myself. I do hate myself.

"It is a part of me. I'm like the Incredible Hulk. It is not anger, it is something completely different.

"It is just like a wild animal, and it's been there all my life. I'm not sure if my parents put it there or if it has always been there.

"I've had it at the back of my mind and it only ever comes out when I get hurt. It is just bonkers.

"A psychologist said it has got something to do with my mother and rejection; I don't know, I don't understand that kind of thing."

He said the violence he'd committed "did not feel real" and likened it to playing the shoot 'em up video game Doom.

And he said when he shot his victims his jaw had been "champing, like he was on ecstasy".

Forensic psychologist John Hughes said the recordings showed Moat "ruminating and rehearsing" what had happened in his mind, as he tried to make a decision on his next move.

On Thursday the inquest heard how Moat told the first officer to confront him: "Shoot me, ***** shoot me" while holding a sawn-off shotgun to his head.

The officer said the maniac expressed his hatred of police but ended up apologising when he realised the firearms expert was from West Yorkshire and not the Northumbria force he detested.

Moat shot himself after police fired two experimental Taser rounds at him following a six-hour stand-off in Rothbury, Northumberland, in July last year. He was wanted for blasting ex-lover Samantha Stobbart, killing her new boyfriend Chris Brown and blinding PC David

Rathband, 24 hours later.

The officer, who gave evidence anonymously behind a screen, said he stood just 10 metres (32ft) away from Moat, without a ballistics shield, knowing Moat had declared war on police.

The inquest at Newcastle Crown Court heard that the armed officer and his colleague raced to the scene after another officer in a car gestured for them to follow from Rothbury centre.

They arrived at the riverside to see a man in a baseball cap facing away from them, carrying gun.

The officer shouted: "Armed police drop your weapon."

He said Moat replied: "Shoot me, ***** shoot me."

If Moat had pointed his shotgun at police, he would have been shot, the officer said.

He calmed down when he realised the officers were from West Yorkshire, the witness said.

"The tone of voice changed and I seem to recall he actually apologised and recognised we had different accents," he told coroner David Mitford.

On Wednesday the officer in charge of the police operation to capture Moat said the use of experimental Taser weapons gave the "one chance" to bring him in alive.

Police feared the gunman intended to end his rampage of violence by attacking police marksmen and committing "suicide by cop".

North Police Assistant Chief Constable Steve Ashman was offered the use of the non-lethal X-Rep Taser shotguns on the day detectives discovered Moat intended to kill innocent members of the public for every "lie" printed about in the national Press.

The pump action shotgun-style weapons would enable officers to shoot Moat from a greater distance than standard police issue X-26 Taser pistols.

They also delivered an electric charge for longer than the X-26, the inquest at Newcastle Crown Court heard.

Mr Ashman said he'd had to balance breaking the Association of Chief Police Officers code of conduct, which forbade the use of non approved weapons, with Moat's right to life under Article 2 of the Human Rights Act.

He said the decision to use the guns meant "the buck stopped with him".

The weapons were used during the stand-off on the riverbank in Rothbury, Northumberland, when Moat shot himself using a sawn off shotgun.

Mr Ashman, who led Operation Bulwark, the mission to find and capture the fugitive, said he wanted to bring in Moat alive to face justice.

He said: "We had reached the stage where there did not appear to be many alternatives.

"I was constantly having to reassess and re-evaluate my position; to stop us from sliding into a plan which had only one outcome.

"Moat had to face justice for what he had done but I also had a duty to protect his life.

"An opportunity had been presented to me, one I had not thought of but one which I was duty bound to examine because it gave us possibly the only chance, possibly one chance and one chance only, a single chance to apprehend him without using lethal force, without shooting and killing him."

X-Rep Tasers fire a cartridge for 30 metres, where standard police tasers have a range of just seven metres.

Mr Ashman said anyone going within seven metres of a killer armed with a loaded shotgun would be "foolish".

But he said that as well as being a breach of the ACPO code, he knew the use of the X-rep carried a risk, one of which was that he had "no idea" of what the physiological impact would be.

He said: "This was a situation that was in extremis, at the far end of the scale in terms of the threat that he presented and with that I was duty bound to consider all the options available to me to achieve the objective.

"There was nothing else."

Moat died after a stand-off in Rothbury following a week-long manhunt.

ON Tuesday the jury heard how the 37-year-old said he would "take the shoot-out" rather than go back to jail.

The gunman was on the run from police following the shootings of karate instructor Chris Brown, his ex-girlfriend Samantha Stobbart and Pc David Rathband when he made the vow.

It was part of a message recorded by the gunman on a dictating machine three or four days before he was cornered by armed officers in Rothbury, Northumberland.

In the message, the former bouncer said he had lost the only two people who mattered to him - his grandmother and Miss Stobbart.

He said if he returned to jail he would have "nothing to come out to" and that a shoot-out would mean "everybody's happy".

The message was read out to the inquest at Newcastle Crown Court by Superintendent Jim Napier, the Northumbria Police officer in charge of the criminal investigation into Moat's rampage.

He told John Beggs, cross-examining for Northumbria Police, that the recordings revealed Moat considered himself to have lost the only two adults he cared about.

In the message, Moat said: "If I went to jail now, I could hack it because I have lost everything and I have nothing to come out to.

"I have come out and got my vengeance.

"I have set Sam up for life, financially at least.

"But it is not really what I want.

"It would be a waste of a life and a waste of the taxpayer's money.

"Just take the shoot-out and everybody's happy."

Mr Napier said he took the message as an indication that Moat was contemplating provoking a shoot-out with police.

He said this knowledge informed the police reaction to the gunman when he was cornered.

Nowhere in the messages was there any mention of Moat's "estranged" family - specifically his tax inspector brother Angus or uncle Charlie Alexander, a former artilleryman, both of whom were at the inquest today.

Barristers for the Moat family, the chief constable of Northumbria Police, West Yorkshire Police officers, and Pro-Tec Limited, the firm that supplied new shotgun Taser weapons, were in court.

The inquest, which is expected to last five weeks, will focus on the events in Rothbury on July 9 and 10 when Moat was found, the coroner said.

There will be questions about weapons used, how police managed the incident, how officers dealt with the dead man and how he acted, the jury was told.

Moat callously described leaving PC David Rathband "a bit of a mess" afterwards.

In a recording he said: "I'm not too fussed about not killing him.

"I was going to go along and finish him. He got two shots - that's enough - and at the end of the day he is looking a bit of a mess."

Moat acknowledged the PC was not one of the officers he accused of "pushing" him.

"The officers know who they are, some of the officers have gone into hiding," he claimed in the tape.

Mr Napier conceded that Moat was not a stupid man.

"If he had been stupid, he would never have avoided detection and arrest, and he worked very hard to do that for five or six days."

Moat threatened to kill members of the public if he read any more "lies" in the national media about him, the inquest heard.

Mr Napier said: "This was the first time he had turned his anger towards innocent members of the public."

That accounted for the large number of armed police from around the country who joined the hunt for the fugitive, the officer said.

In another recording, Moat admitted: "My kids are going to be disgraced for the rest of their life for what their father did.

"I am disgraced. All the people I cared about are going to suffer through this."

Moat said he could easily shoot himself, but "I want to kill as many police officers as I can".

He distanced himself from Derrick Bird, who had killed 13 people largely at random in Cumbria just weeks before, saying Bird had "gone round shooting old ladies in bobble hats".

Mr Beggs said Moat was "relishing his war with the police", referring to when Moat said: "No one has ever taken on the police before, no one has been daft enough.

"One thing I have noticed, when I have been out and about, I was literally right under your nose.

"It does give us a little bit of satisfaction now after all these years of p***** me about, you are treating me seriously."

Mr Napier said: "He was relishing the havoc he was creating."

The officer agreed he would have preferred Moat to be arrested than to end up dead.

"It is a personal disappointment I never got to see Mr Moat account for his crimes," he told the hearing.

The jury was shown a montage of video clips of the scene in Rothbury when Moat was cornered.

The first clip was taken by a local resident from her home, showing armed police pointing their weapons towards a figure lying prone on the ground.

The next showed Sky TV footage in darkness, with that night's heavy rain visible.

More footage close to where Moat lay was taken from a camera mounted on an officer's helmet.

There were also clips taken from the police helicopter of the scene by the River Coquet.

:: Click to page two to read a summary of day one of the inquest, and to listen to audio of Moat's phone calls to police which were made during his gun rampage.

SHOTGUN killer Raoul Moat claimed he was persecuted by police after being offered drugs by an officer's mistress.

An inquest into his death heard he sent a rambling letter sent to a friend while he was on the run claiming the police officer saw him as a love rival.

He said: "Ponteland's chief inspector has a personal grudge over his mistress, going back 2000.

"I was working in Stanley when a woman came out the back and introduced herself as the manager.

"She regularly offered me coke in the office or drink, neither of which was my thing as a bodybuilder.

He said the woman befriended him and offered him a pay rise.

Moat was warned off by a colleague who explained who she was, the hearing heard.

He also described how his relationship with girlfriend Sam Stobbart had affected his life.

He said: "She was like no other and filled the huge gaps in my life and changed my view of life and I began to change.

"Always in my adult life I felt alone, estranged from my family and needing to belong somewhere.

"I tried to fill this gap with beautiful women but all those relationships failed because it was never enough.

"No matter what the looks, no matter what the personality, I wanted more, but I did not know what.

"I used to hate myself because most blokes would give an arm for what I had."

:: Listen to Raoul Moat's call to police before he shot PC David Rathband

The evidence came as a jury was sworn in for the inquest into his death.

The 37-year-old died in Rothbury, Northumberland, in July last year.

The jury panel of 11 were asked a series of questions before they were sworn in at Newcastle Crown Court.

Newcastle Coroner David Mitford said he wanted to ensure they were not familiar with any of the witnesses and read out a long list of names.

:: Listen to Raoul Moat's call to police after he shot PC David Rathband

He said: "Mr Moat's death was confirmed at the General Hospital at Newcastle on 10th July of last year.

"That was after an incident that had occurred in the course of the previous evening on 9th/10th July. That was at Rothbury.

"Mr Moat was a 37-year-old man, single, with children. He lived in Newcastle."

An inquest was needed because "Mr Moat met his death when he was effectively detained", the coroner told the jury.

Barristers for the Moat family, the Chief Constable of Northumbria Police, West Yorkshire Police officers and Pro-Tec Limited, the firm that supplied Taser weapons, were in court, Mr Mitford said.

"The publicity was so great it would be impossible for anybody not to know what happened, to some extent, in the summer of last year," the coroner said.

"You will recall there was a very substantial number of police officers involved, not from just Northumbria, but others included from many, many forces and one of those was West Yorkshire Police."

He added: "It will not have escaped your attention that there were some weapons called Tasers used on the night in question.

"Those Tasers were supplied to Northumbria Police by a firm called Pro-Tec Limited."

He asked the jurors to try "the impossible" and forget what they have already heard about the Moat case.

"There have been lots of theories and conclusions drawn, some of which may have been accurate, some of which may not."

The inquest will focus on the events in Rothbury on July 9 and 10, he said.

There will be questions about weapons used, how police managed the incident, how officers dealt with the deceased and how he acted, the jury was told.

But it will first hear why so many officers were involved in the "manhunt", the coroner said.

The jury will decide whether Taser rounds fired from experimental weapons may have caused the former nightclub doorman's death.

Moat died during a six-hour stand-off with police marksmen after a rampage of violence which left one man dead and two people maimed last year.

The former bouncer shot himself in the head and was fired at twice during the stand-off by officers armed with new XREP shotgun Tasers.

Moat's tax officer brother Angus, 41, his biological father, Peter Blake, and his uncle Charlie Alexander were at the hearing.

Moat went on the run after shooting dead karate instructor Chris Brown, 29, and maiming Moat's ex-girlfriend Samantha Stobbart, 22, in July last year.

The steroid addict, who had served time in jail for assaulting a child, then shot and blinded Northumbria Police traffic officer PC David Rathband.

He managed to evade police for a week before he was finally surrounded on the banks of the River Coquet in Rothbury.

The jury heard a recording of a telephone conversation Moat had from Durham Prison to his girlfriend Samantha Stobbart.

The recording, made on June 10 2010 - and which was standard police procedure - details Miss Stobbart ending the relationship.

The jury listened as Moat asks her "what's wrong?"

"It's over", she replies.

"Over what?", he asks her.

"I've had enough," she replies.

"Of what?", Moat asks.

"Everything," she replied.

Moat adds: "We had one argument the other day. Let's not get all silly about it."

He complains that "everybody is getting on my case" and that he is getting "picked on."

The conversation ends with the phone been abruptly slammed down.

The recording was played as Superintendent Jim Napier gave an overview of the police investigation into Moat and his criminal activities.

Mr Napier, who was the senior investigating officer, added: "It is clear from the evidence that Moat's break-up with Samantha Stobbart was the catalyst for his murderous acts."

Moat was serving an 18 week prison sentence for assault when the calls were made.

Following Moat's shooting spree, which left one man dead and two other people injured, police retrieved three recorded calls from the prison as part of their investigation.

THE inquest jury was read six letters written by gunman Raoul Moat which indicated he intended to take his own life.

The letters are undated and addressed to social services, his ex-girlfriend Samantha Stobbart, business partner Karl Ness and other friends.

He outlines the problems in his life, particularly the split from Miss Stobbart, and what people should do with some of his belongings.

In a letter addressed to Miss Stobbart he says: "I don't know what to say except I love you, always have, always will.

"I can't go on without you. Knowing you hate me is tearing me apart. I don't really understand much of what has been going on lately. You are the love of my life I just can't go on without you. I know I can't live without you. I know we were so much in love.

In the note he suggests Miss Stobbart "pushed me too far".

He adds: "You push and push with your nasty words."

The letter continues: "I always wanted you to be happy, I still do. I love you."

He ends the letter with three Xs.

In a letter to Ness he apologises for not being a good friend and says he is "done with it".

"Sorry mate, but I'm done with it. You have been a good mate, even though I have not been the best."

He indicates that he should take over the "company" and asks him to put some money aside for his family.

In a letter to another friend, named in court as Richard, he tells him how much he misses Miss Stobbart and that the break-up has taken the "stuffing" out of him.

In another letter to a friend he says he "kinda lost myself for a while and always regretted it".

He said he "missed the old times" but he loved Miss Stobbart, adding he "can't live without her".

The letters were read out by Superintendent Jim Napier, who said the notes were found during a search of Moat's property.

He said the search indicated Moat was "suicidal or had been suicidal in the past" and the letters appeared to be prepared by Moat and intimated he intended to take his own life.

He said officers also found a noose in the property near the loft hatch, he told the jury.

The detective also revealed officers found "significant material" at the house, some of which suggested he intended to make his own ammunition from fishing weights.

The inquest jury heard a recording of a telephone call Moat made in which he threatened to kill Northumbria Police officers.

In the five-minute conversation, made to a police call handler shortly before Moat blasted Northumbria Police traffic officer Pc David Rathband, the gunman said he was "not coming in alive".

He said he had taken two hostages and would kill them and any police officer that approached him.

:: Listen to Raoul Moat's call to police before he shot PC David Rathband

He said he was sorry he had injured his ex-girlfriend Samantha Stobbart, leaving her in a critical condition in hospital, but blamed police for "stitching him up" and triggering his rampage.

He said he believed karate instructor Chris Brown was a Northumbria Police officer.

He says in the recording: "Hello there, this is the gunman from Birtley last night.

"What I'm phoning about is, is to tell you exactly why I have done what I have done, right?

"Now, my girlfriend has been having an affair behind my back with one of your officers.

"This gentleman that I shot last night, the karate instructor, right, now I...

:: Listen to Raoul Moat's call to police after he shot PC David Rathband

"Youse bastards have been on to me, right, for years.

"Youse have hassled us, harrassed us, youse just won't leave us alone.

"I went straight six years ago when I met her and I have tried my best to have a normal life and you just won't let up.

"Youse won't leave us alone for five minutes.

"I can't drive down the street without the blue lights flashing.

"Youse have stitched us up for years; you have been in court, stitching us up, so the fact of the matter is, right...

"She has had an affair with one of your officers.

"If he had not been a police officer, I would not have shot him."

Talking about his relationship with Miss Stobbart, he said: "I have had nothing but grief... But I have had a genuine relationship with her for six years, which is why we have stayed together, and I have gone straight.

"I have had a totally legit life with her, I have opened a business, and I have been shafted.

"You police have took too much off me over the years."

"Youse won't leave us alone.

"And now youse think you can take me missus."

The call continues: "But the fact of the matter is I'm not coming in alive. Youse have hassled me for so many years. If you come anywhere near me I'll kill youse. I have got two hostages at the moment, right - come anywhere near me and I'll kill them as well.

"I'm coming to get youse.

"I'm not on the run.

"I'm coming to get you."

He continues by saying Miss Stobbart had changed while he was in jail.

The call ends: "Right. Now I have had enough. I have had enough of youse.

"That jail made us unwell. I came out a different kid, y'knaa what I mean?"

"I lost everything through youse, right?"

"Youse just won't leave us alone, right?"

"So at the end of the day, youse killed me and him before that trigger was ever pulled."

Call handler: "Right."

Moat: "Y'knaa what I mean?"

CH: "OK."

Moat: "Youse are..."

CH: "We are trying to help you."

Moat: "You're not trying to help us, you're not trying.

"Youse wanted me to do myself in and I was going to do it till I found out about him properly and what was going on - and as soon as I found out he was one of your officers I thought, 'nah, youse have had too much from me'.

"You will get your chance to kill us, right, you will get your chance to kill us."

CH: "Right, we don't want to do that, we don't want to do that."

Moat: "Aye, youse wanted me to kill myself but I'm gonna give youse a chance cos I'm hunting for officers now, right?"

CH: "No. Please don't do that."

"We don't want any more killing, all right?"

Moat then hangs up.

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