# New drama series Suspect revisits the death of Jean Charles de Menezes and police failings



On 22 July 2005, 27-year-old Brazilian electrician Jean Charles de Menezes was fatally shot by firearms officers on the London underground at Stockwell station. The Metropolitan Police at the time claimed that De Menezes had jumped over the ticket barriers wearing a bulky coat under which officers believed he was concealing a bomb. This tragic incident happened two weeks after the 7/7 bombings in London, which had killed 52 people, and a day following a failed copycat attack involving attempted detonations on three underground trains and a bus, which prompted a large-scale police manhunt.

Subsequent investigations revealed that the intelligence used to identify De Menezes as a suspect was flawed. Contrary to the initial police narrative, it emerged that he had entered the station calmly, picked up a newspaper, and boarded the train without any suspicious behaviour. De Menezes was shot at close range seven times in the head inside the train carriage, causing immediate death.

The circumstances and aftermath of the shooting are the subject of a new drama series, Suspect: The Shooting of Jean Charles de Menezes, written by Jeff Pope (known for Philomena and Stan & Ollie) and directed by Paul Andrew Williams. The series, set to premiere on Disney+ on 30 April, delves into the events leading up to the shooting, the fatal incident itself, and the subsequent confusion, misinformation, and obfuscations by police officials.

Shooting victim Jean Charles de Menezes is portrayed by newcomer Edison Alcaide, who highlights De Menezes’ everyday life before his death, including working two jobs and maintaining contact with his mother in Brazil, who was concerned about living in a city under terrorist threat. Alcaide shared his personal connection to the story, recalling how moving to London years later brought him close to the site of the shooting and his initial exposure to the misleading early reports about De Menezes.

Among the key figures depicted in the drama is Metropolitan Police commissioner Ian Blair, played by Conleth Hill, who rushed public statements prior to having complete facts. Another is Cressida Dick, played by Emily Mortimer, the gold commander for the operation. Russell Tovey portrays deputy assistant commissioner Brian Paddick, who was critical of the misinformation being spread regarding De Menezes and later testified at the inquest, contradicting statements by Blair. Paddick’s honesty, according to Tovey, led to career repercussions, underscoring the tensions within the police force following the shooting.

One dramatic sequence in the series highlights a tense confrontation between Blair and Paddick, where the timeline of knowledge about De Menezes’ innocence is disputed, revealing possible attempts by senior officials to downplay the error. Hill conveyed a nuanced portrayal of Blair, portraying him as a man under extreme pressure rather than a simple antagonist.

The drama also sheds light on Lana Vandenberghe, a Canadian secretary and whistleblower at the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC). Vandenberghe became alarmed by discrepancies between public statements and the evidence being gathered. Demonstrating significant courage, she secretly copied documents and passed them to a journalist, an act that ultimately cost her her job. Laura Aikman plays Vandenberghe in the series, emphasising the fear and risk involved in her decision to expose the truth amidst police pushback, including police raids and criminal accusations against her for the materials she leaked.

Legal proceedings following the shooting concluded that the Metropolitan Police had breached health and safety laws and put the public at risk. Jean Charles de Menezes’ family was closely consulted during the production of Suspect, wanting an accurate portrayal that corrected the false narratives surrounding his death.

Jeff Pope remarked on the enduring relevance of the story in a contemporary context where misinformation and manipulation of facts have become common. Russell Tovey reflected on the role of dramatizations in illuminating truth and encouraging accountability, especially at a time when public trust in official narratives can be fragile.

Suspect: The Shooting of Jean Charles de Menezes aims to offer a comprehensive and factually grounded depiction of one of the most controversial police shootings in recent British history, revisiting the loss of Jean Charles de Menezes and the institutional failings that followed. The series will be available to stream on Disney+ starting 30 April.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Killing_of_Jean_Charles_de_Menezes> - This page details the killing of Jean Charles de Menezes by Metropolitan Police officers at Stockwell station, confirming the shooting at close range and the mistaken identity that led to the fatal incident two weeks after the 7/7 bombings.
* <https://www.amnesty.org/en/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/eur450322005en.pdf> - Amnesty International's report discusses the flawed police intelligence, the initial false narrative about Menezes' actions, and the subsequent admission that he was mistakenly killed despite no involvement in suspicious activities.
* <https://rusi.org/explore-our-research/publications/commentary/de-menezes-what-are-lessons-need-be-learnt> - This article highlights the legal consequences following the shooting, including the ruling that the Metropolitan Police breached health and safety laws, illustrating the institutional failings after the incident.
* <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt28046866/> - The IMDb page for 'Suspect: The Shooting of Jean Charles de Menezes' confirms the new drama series, its release date on Disney+, and key cast members portraying real-life figures involved in the case.
* <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/apr/15/suspect-drama-series-jean-charles-de-menezes-met-police> - This Guardian article describes the portrayal of Jean Charles de Menezes by Edison Alcaide, the perspectives of actors playing police officials, and the whistleblower Lana Vandenberghe’s role in revealing police misconduct covered in the drama.