

# UNDERCOVER POLICING INQUIRY

## Questions and answer sheet

**To accompany the public notice issued on 2 November 2016 relating to the use of deceased children's identities of by police officers for undercover purposes**

### How do I contact the Inquiry?

The contact details for the Undercover Policing Inquiry are:

Email:	<a href="mailto:info@ucpi.org.uk">info@ucpi.org.uk</a>
Telephone (9am – 5pm):	0203 741 0429 or 0203 741 0430
Letter:	PO Box 71230, London NW1W 7QH

### What happens if I contact the Inquiry?

If you write to us or email us with the information we asked for in the [notice](#) we will acknowledge receipt of your letter within five working days. We will record the details you have provided us with; this information will be kept securely.

If you phone the Inquiry your call will be answered by one of the legal team. They will ask you if you want to provide your contact details, if you do not, no record of your contact details will be retained. If you do want to register your interest in the Inquiry the legal team will take your contact details and ask you for some more information.

### What happens after the initial contact?

We may need to get in touch with you to ask for further details. However it is very likely that after this point the Inquiry may not get in touch with you again for some time. The Inquiry will contact everyone who has registered an interest at some point during its progress, even if it's only to tell you that we are not able to give you any information.

### How soon will I receive a response about whether my child's identity was used?

If the Inquiry is in a position to publish the cover name of an undercover officer, and if that name was taken from a deceased child, the Inquiry will make all reasonable efforts to contact that child's parents or close relatives before the information is made public. Where the Chairman is considering publishing the child's name, he intends to seek the views of the parents or relatives of the child with whom the Inquiry is able to make contact before making a final decision. The Inquiry wants to avoid the scenario of someone finding out on the news that their child's name was used in undercover policing.

## **Do I need a lawyer to contact the Inquiry?**

No. However you may want to take legal advice if the Chairman seeks your views about putting a name into the public domain, or if you are engaging with the Inquiry about the impact of the practice of using deceased children's names on you. The Inquiry will not be able to recommend a lawyer, but can offer you advice on what you need to do. In some cases you might become [a 'core participant'](#) within the Inquiry. More information about this, and other matters relating to the Inquiry, can be found on the Inquiry's website [www.ucpi.org.uk](http://www.ucpi.org.uk)

## **Will I have to give evidence in court if I contact the Inquiry?**

It would be very unlikely that you would be required to give evidence. In most cases the Inquiry won't ask people to come forward to give evidence in person. In some cases the Inquiry will ask for written information and/or information through a solicitor where you have one.

## **How will I be told if my child's identity was used?**

The Inquiry is currently working with a bereavement counselling support service on the best way to do this. Our current thinking is that the Inquiry, or its representative, will inform you face to face, unless you have informed us that you would like another form of contact to be used.

## **Will I also be told if my child's identity wasn't used?**

It is too early to say. The Inquiry wants to give as much information as it can. But the Chairman is likely to receive requests from former undercover officers not to reveal their undercover names so as to avoid or reduce a risk of harm to them or their families. If the Chairman does make orders restricting the disclosure of an undercover name, the Inquiry will not be able to disclose any information that would undermine them. It is possible that if the Chairman were to provide reassurance to all the families whose child's name was not used, that would have the effect of revealing to others identities that were used, thus defeating the purpose of any restriction orders. The Chairman has decided that he will have to wait until later in the Inquiry to see whether and how information can be released without causing further harm.

## **What happens if my child's identity was used and I haven't contacted the Inquiry?**

The Inquiry will make all reasonable efforts to contact a parent or relatives where a name is about to be published, regardless of whether or not they have contacted us first. However, if you do not contact us we may not be able to find you.

### **Will there be support available for me if I get upset on the phone?**

If you call us, you will be speaking to a member of the legal team, not a specialist in bereavement support. However the Inquiry has taken advice from a national bereavement charity for those answering the phone. There are a number of national charities who specialise in bereavement counselling, as well as local charities. The Inquiry team can provide you with a list of the charities we know about, but we cannot make a referral.

### **Should I still contact the Inquiry if I don't want to know if the identity of my child was used?**

Yes. It's important that we know if you do not wish to be contacted. The Inquiry has a responsibility to contact parents and close relatives whose children's identities were used, where this information is going to be published. The purpose of issuing the notice is to enable those who may have been affected to register their details with the Inquiry so as to (i) make it easy for the Inquiry to contact them in the event that it proves necessary, and (ii) to enable those who do wish to know one way or the other to register their interest for consideration in due course.