

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PRESS NOTICE

Update on Inquiry timescale

The Inquiry has received a number of requests for clarification about its intended timescale, and the Chairman, Sir Christopher Pitchford, is providing the following information to respond to those requests.

The Inquiry's original terms of reference stated: *"The inquiry will report to the Home Secretary as soon as practicable. It is anticipated that the inquiry report will be delivered up to three years after the publication of these terms of reference"*.

The Chairman is of the view that the work of the Inquiry is too important to artificially squeeze into a three year time frame, and that the Inquiry is unlikely to deliver its final report in 2018. Core participants have also expressed concerns to the Inquiry that a compacted timescale would not allow for a thorough investigation.

The Inquiry is being provided with the financial resources it requires. However, its timetable has been impacted by a number of factors. The volume and complexity of the material the Inquiry is receiving is unusual in kind and scale for a public inquiry. The [legal processes](#) for making decisions on key anonymity applications have been time consuming for both the Inquiry and its core participants. Finally, the Inquiry has needed to get the right systems in place. The Inquiry requires specialist secure document handling IT systems, which cannot be purchased 'off the shelf'. The Inquiry's systems have been designed and built for the Inquiry to handle its substantial volume of information, and to deal with the highly sensitive nature of much of the information. There have been delays to the delivery of the Inquiry's IT. The Inquiry expects that new systems will be fully up and running in the New Year.

The Inquiry has singularly complex challenges in terms of the volume and kinds of information it is investigating. Nevertheless, the Inquiry will not be open-ended; all those involved need a timely outcome. With this in mind the Chairman intends to provide a revised time estimate to the Home Office by spring 2017, following which the Inquiry will publish an agreed timetable.

None of the above has prevented the Inquiry's work progressing in other areas. The Inquiry has made good progress since its set up in July 2015 as detailed in its [three update notes](#). The Inquiry is in regular receipt of evidence and currently has over 320,000 documents. It has more than 200 core participants, made determinations on 24 anonymity applications, held five preliminary hearings, published 67 separate rulings, orders directions and legal

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notes, gathered more than 220 witness statements and has issued more than 290 requests for information to around 50 organisations. Furthermore, the Inquiry regularly seeks the core participants' views, via their legal representatives.

Background

The work of the Inquiry ranges across the full scope of undercover policing work and will look at the work of the Special Demonstration Squad, the National Public Order Intelligence Unit and police forces in England and Wales. The Inquiry will also examine whether people may have been wrongly convicted in cases involving undercover police officers, and refer any such cases to a separate panel for consideration.

The work of the Inquiry will fall into three modules:

1. Module one will look at what happened in the deployment of undercover officers in the past, their conduct, and the impact of their activities on themselves and others.
2. Module two will look at the management and oversight of undercover officers, including their selection, training, supervision and care after the end of an undercover deployment. This section will also look at the law and other rules covering undercover policing.
3. Module three will make recommendations about how undercover policing should be conducted in future.

ENDS

NOTES TO EDITORS

1. The Undercover Policing Inquiry is constituted under the [Inquiries Act 2005](#).
2. The Inquiry's [terms of reference](#) were announced by the Home Secretary on 16 July 2015.
3. The Inquiry's ['frequently asked questions'](#) provides more information on the Inquiry more generally, as do [three published update notes](#).
4. The Inquiry's website is www.ucpi.org.uk and the Inquiry can be found on Twitter @ucpinquiry

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