

**IN THE MATTER OF THE PUBLIC INQUIRY INTO UNDERCOVER
POLICING**

OPEN APPLICATION FOR A RESTRICTION ORDER (ANONYMITY)

RE: HN106

SUBMITTED ON BEHALF OF THE MPS

Restriction Order Sought

1. The MPS applies for a restriction order over the real identity of HN106 to last indefinitely in the following terms:

No direct or indirect disclosure of HN106's real name (including any description or image capable of identifying HN106) beyond the Chairman and the Inquiry team;

The Commissioner reserves the right to make further submission as to the effective operation of this Restriction Order during the course of the Inquiry.

Legal Basis for the Application

2. The Application is made on the following statutory basis:
 - s.17(3) of the Inquiries Act 2005: the duty to act with fairness in the procedure or conduct of an inquiry
 - s.19(3)(a) of the Inquiries Act 2005 and Article 8 ECHR: the duty to act in a way that is not incompatible with the right to private and family life under Article 8 ECHR
 - s.19(3)(b) read together with s.19(4)(b)-(d) of the Inquiries Act 2005: conducive to the Inquiry fulfilling its terms of reference or necessary in the public interest, having regard in particular to the matters mentioned in subsection (4).
3. The applicable legal principles have been comprehensively set out in the Chairman's Restriction Order: Legal Principles and Approach Ruling ("the Principles Ruling") of 3 May 2016. Regard has also been had to the restriction order rulings and the 'minded to' notes issued to date in respect of various former SDS officers.

Evidence in Support

4. This application is supplemented by a closed Risk Assessment which is not to be disseminated further than the Chairman and the Inquiry team.

Reasons

Section 17

5. Application of the statutory and common law principles of fairness require that the real identity of HN106 is not disclosed. The considerations which apply are highlighted below in relation to: s. 19(3)(a) and/or 19(3)(b) and s.19(4).

Section 19(3)(a) and Article 8

6. A restriction order protecting HN106's identity is required in order for the Inquiry to meet its duty under the Human Rights Act 1998 not to act in a way which is incompatible with a Convention right. The Convention right in issue is Article 8.
7. It is reasonable to infer that there would be some public interest in HN106 by virtue of HN106 being a former UCO. Disclosure of HN106's real name would amount to an unjustified and/or disproportionate interference with HN106's right to private and family life. The nature, source and level of the interference with HN106's private and family life is set out in the risk assessment at §19.

Section 19(3)(b) and s19(4)

8. The Chairman is invited to find that a Restriction Order protecting HN106's real identity is conducive to the Inquiry fulfilling its Terms of Reference or is necessary in the public interest having regard in particular to the factors set out at s.19(4) of the Act read together with the Chairman's approach at [152] of the Principles Ruling:

"...when considering whether to make an order restricting disclosure of any relevant particular piece of information on public interest grounds I will be required to:

- (1) identify the public interest in non-disclosure;*
- (2) assess the risk and level of harm to the public interest that would follow disclosure of that information;*
- (3) identify the public interest in disclosure;*
- (4) assess the risk and level of harm to the public interest that would follow non-disclosure of that information;*
- (5) make in respect of that information a fact sensitive assessment of the position at which the public interest balance should rest".*

The public interest in non-disclosure of real identity

9. HN106 was attached to the SDS from the late 1970s. It is in the public interest for HN106's identity to be restricted on the basis that it would avoid or reduce the risk of causing harm to HN106 and his/her family, namely interference with his/her/their private lives (as set out above). The evidential basis for this assertion is the Risk Assessment (see §19).
10. HN106 was promised anonymity by his managers at the time. This promise was made in the presence of HN106's spouse (Risk Assessment at §3.4).

The public interest in disclosure of real identity

11. The MPS appreciates that the public interest in openness is a factor which weighs against the making of a restriction order in HN106's case. However, the MPS submits that there is no properly identifiable public interest in disclosure of HN106's real name in circumstances where the real name alone is of no assistance to the Inquiry in fulfilling its Terms of Reference or to Core Participants or witnesses who would not have known HN106 by his real name.

Where the public interest balance lies

12. The MPS has considered the Chairman's Principles Ruling and has had particular regard to the importance of openness in the Public Inquiry.
13. In all the circumstances, the MPS makes this application for a Restriction Order over HN106's real and cover identities on the bases of fairness, and to avoid a risk of unjustified and/or disproportionate interference with HN106's right to private and family life. The MPS submits such an application is in the public interest and conducive to the Inquiry's terms of reference.

**MPS, Department of Legal Services
29 January 2018**