

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

**OPEN APPLICATION FOR A RESTRICTION ORDER (ANONYMITY)
RE: HN296
SUBMITTED ON BEHALF OF THE MPS**

Restriction Order Sought

1. The MPS applies for a restriction order over the real identity of HN296 to last indefinitely in the following terms:
 - (1) No direct or indirect disclosure of HN296's real name (including any description or image capable of identifying HN296) beyond the Chairman and the Inquiry team; and
 - (2) 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 in respect of Cairo and HN7; the 'minded to' note dated 25 October 2016 in respect of Jaipur and Karachi; and the 'minded to' notes dated 3 August 2017, 23 October 2017 and 14 November 2017 in respect of former SDS officers.

Evidence in Support

4. This application is supplemented by evidence which is not to be disseminated further than the Chairman and the Inquiry team:
 - a. a closed Risk Assessment; and
 - b. a closed Impact Statement.

Reasons

Section 17

5. Application of the statutory and common law principles of fairness require that the real identity of HN296 is not disclosed. The considerations which apply are highlighted below in relation to s. 19(3)(a), 19(3)(b) and s.19(4).

Section 19(3)(a) and Article 8

6. A restriction order protecting HN296'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. Disclosure of HN296's real name would amount to a disproportionate interference with his right to private and family life. In particular, the sources of harm and levels of risk are set out in the Risk Assessment at §19. It is reasonable to infer that there would be some public interest in HN296 by virtue of HN296's status as a former UCO.

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

8. The Chairman is invited to find that a Restriction Order protecting HN296'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. The following public interest factors are pertinent:
- (a) HN296 was attached to the SDS in the 1970s and infiltrated a group that is now defunct.
 - (b) The likely sources and the level of risk of physical harm to HN296 in the event of disclosure of HN296's real identity are set out at §14 and §16 of the Risk Assessment. It is in the public interest for HN296's real identity to be restricted on the basis that it would avoid or reduce the risk of causing harm to this officer, or his/her family, namely physical harm and/or interference with their private and family lives.
 - (c) It is in the public interest for HN296's real identity to be restricted on the basis that it would avoid or reduce the risk of causing harm to this officer and his family, namely interference with their private and family lives. In particular, HN296's partner has expressed concerns about any release of HN296's real name.
 - (d) Detail concerning the risk of disproportionate interference with HN296's private and family life are set out at §16 and §19 of the Risk Assessment.
 - (e) HN296 has respected the confidentiality of his work and has relied on his anonymity as a source of protection and security.

The public interest in disclosure of real identity

10. The MPS appreciates that the public interest in openness is a factor which weighs against the making of a Restriction Order in HN296's case. However, the MPS submits that the public interest in disclosure of HN296's real name attracts very low or no weight 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 HN296 by his real name.

Where the public interest balance lies

11. The MPS has considered the Chairman's Principles Ruling and has had particular regard to the presumption of openness in the Public Inquiry.
12. In all the circumstances, the MPS makes this application for a Restriction Order over HN296's real name on the bases of fairness, and to avoid a risk of disproportionate interference with HN296'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

24 November 2017