

18 May 2021

STATEMENT FROM THE DANIEL MORGAN INDEPENDENT PANEL

The Daniel Morgan Independent Panel has completed its Report.

The Panel had anticipated the Report would be tabled in Parliament, in accordance with its Terms of Reference, by the Home Secretary on 17 May 2021.

Last week the Panel was advised the Home Secretary was unable to table the report in Parliament on 17 May, that 24 May would be the best option and it was hoped this would be the publication date. The Panel was told the period of mourning after the death of His Royal Highness, the Duke of Edinburgh, followed by the elections had resulted in a backlog of matters to be placed before Parliament, hence the delay in the process.

There was no mention by the Home Office of a need to review the report.

However, the Panel was informed yesterday (Monday 17 May) that a publication date will not be agreed until the Home Secretary and Home Office officials and lawyers have reviewed the contents of the Panel's Report.

This review is being sought on the basis of the Home Office ensuring the Report's compliance with the department's obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998 and for reasons of national security. The Home Office advised it would make redactions if it did not consider the Report complied with these obligations.

A review of this nature has not been raised previously in the eight years since the Panel was established in 2013.

The Panel believes that this last-minute requirement is unnecessary and is not consistent with the Panel's independence.

The Panel has worked closely with its Counsel (a QC) and its solicitors throughout the course of its work to ensure the Report complies with all the relevant legal obligations including the Human Rights Act 1998.

A senior specialist Metropolitan Police team, subject to strict non-disclosure agreements, also reviewed all relevant parts of the near final Report as part of a Security Check governed by an agreed Protocol with the Metropolitan Police. This review enabled the Report to be checked for any potential security risks.

The Home Office was informed several months ago that it would be provided with an embargoed copy of the final Report a working day before it was due to be tabled in Parliament as is the usual courtesy to the sponsoring department. This would have been effectively three days ahead of the Report's publication because of the intervening weekend.

The Panel's Terms of Reference drawn up in 2013 and a Management Statement agreed to by the Secretary to the Panel and the Home Office in 2014, outline the responsibilities of the Home Secretary in relation to the Panel's work. In relation to report publication the Home Secretary's role is limited to reporting to Parliament on the Panel's work, receiving the Panel's report and laying it before Parliament, and thereafter responding to the Panel's findings.

In accordance with the Family First principle set out in its Terms of Reference, the Panel has today briefed members of Daniel Morgan's family on the current delay to the publication of the Report.

The Panel is disappointed with this position and hopes the matter can be resolved in adequate time for its Report to still be published in May while Parliament is sitting.

ENDS

Note to editors

Panel members will not be giving any interviews.