

Stakeholder Update

July 2023

Meeting with Bishop James Jones KBE

In April 2023, we met with Bishop James Jones KBE to discuss the *'Charter for Families Bereaved through Public Tragedy.'* After the meeting, we formally adopted the Bishop's Charter as an organisation.

During the meeting, we took the opportunity to generally update Bishop James about the progress of the investigation, and he highlighted the importance of having a 'families first' principle.

Since our investigation began, we have been committed to a 'families first' principle. Having such a principle does not mean that we are in a position to share draft reports with families before publication, but it does mean that we recognise the importance of ensuring that families, and then also complainants and survivors, receive information about the progress of our investigation from the IOPC directly, and not from any other source.

We are currently considering all the options available to us that will allow us to maintain our 'families first' principle. We will share as much information as we can in the lead up to the publication of our Hillsborough investigations' report, while protecting the integrity of the information included, and complying with our statutory obligations under the Police Reform Act 2002.

This includes considering how best to inform you about what we will publish, ahead of publication of the report.

We are also planning how we can continue to update complainants and other interested parties about the outcomes of their complaints. Due to our statutory obligations, this will happen before the investigations' report is published.

The Hillsborough investigations' report

We have listened to some feedback we received about the name of the Hillsborough investigations' report including the word "final". At the IOPC, we use the word "final" when referring to reports as routine practice, because it refers to the completion of our investigation. However, we would like to inform you that the word "final" will not be used in the title of the Hillsborough investigations' report.

A key principle underpinning the Hillsborough investigation is our commitment to the transparency of the evidence and supporting material contained in the Hillsborough investigations' report.

To ensure this, we have a dedicated Quality Assurance team working on all the chapters and reports that will be published. This includes ensuring that all references made to the several thousand supporting documents (or relevant extracts of those documents), which are going to be uploaded and available on the website, are accurate, categorised correctly and compliant with data protection legislation.

The Salmon process

Since this process started in March 2023, we have continued to send 'Salmon letters' as part of our incremental approach to those individuals and organisations we propose to criticise in our reports.

Due to the sizeable task at hand, we are not yet able to confirm a date for when this process will be completed. However, we will continue to provide updates when we are in a position to do so.

IOPC Hillsborough Legacy Team Update

At the beginning of our Hillsborough investigation, we acquired the original Hillsborough archive material that was reviewed by the Hillsborough Independent Panel (HIP). We are the current guardians of this material—the majority of which came from Sheffield Archives, Liverpool Archives, The National Archives (TNA) and the Home Office. This material is being stored and cared for by archive specialists at the IOPC office in Warrington.

After our Hillsborough investigations' report has been published, we will comply with the recommendations made by the HIP and return the archive material back to the original providers.

As we formally came under the Public Records Act 1958 (PRA 1958) in 2018, we now have an obligation to transfer the significant amount of new investigative material we created as part of our investigation to TNA, for long term preservation. Some of this material consists of digital and hard copy documents, and audio-visual material, which is vulnerable to decay over time. This transfer will make this material fully accessible to the public via TNA.

Our dedicated Legacy team will assess, process, and select the material that will be transferred to TNA. Due to the sheer amount of the IOPC investigation material, this process will take several years to complete. This is a separate process that will not impact on or affect the timing of the publication of the Hillsborough investigations' report.

The Home Office also has a dedicated Legacy team that will apply the same approach for the material relating to the Operation Resolve investigation. TNA has invited the IOPC and the Home Office to transfer our respective records early, because we are two of the public bodies that hold the majority of the Hillsborough material.

Update from our decision maker, Sarah Green

The Hillsborough decision maker, Sarah Green, has now reviewed all the PRA complaint and conduct reports and has drafted or reviewed opinions and decisions in relation to all of them. The drafts will now be checked and amended where necessary but will remain in draft format until we have completed the Salmon process and considered any representations.

If you have any questions, please get in touch with us using the details overleaf.

To find out more about our work or to request this report in an alternative format, you can contact us in a number of ways:

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We welcome telephone calls in Welsh

Rydym yn croesawu galwadau ffôn yn y Gymraeg

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