



**NOTICE OF DETERMINATION  
CORE PARTICIPANT APPLICATION  
MODULE 2 - BLUE LIGHT SERVICES**

**Introduction**

1. In my [Opening Statement](#) on 21 July 2022, I explained that Modules would be announced and opened in sequence, with those wishing to take a formal role in the Inquiry invited to apply to become Core Participants for each module. On 31 August 2022, the Inquiry opened Module 2 and invited anyone who wished to be considered as a Core Participant to that Module to submit an application in writing to the Solicitor to the Inquiry by 23 September 2022.
2. The Provisional Outline of Scope for Module 2 provides that this module will examine the decision-making by the UK Government during the Coronavirus pandemic. Further modules will be announced and opened in due course, to address other aspects of the Inquiry's Terms of Reference.
3. On 15 September 2022 the Inquiry received an application from Blue Light Services ("the Applicant") for Core Participant status in Module 2.
4. I made a provisional decision not to designate the Applicant as a Core Participant in Module 2, thereby declining the Applicant's application ("the Provisional Decision"), on 13 October 2022. The Applicant was provided with an opportunity to renew the application in writing by 12pm on 20 October 2022.
5. On 14 October 2022, the Applicant submitted a renewed application for Core Participant status in Module 2. This notice sets out my determination of the Applicant's application for Core Participant status in Module 2.

## Application

6. Applications for Core Participant status are considered in accordance with Rule 5 of the Inquiry Rules 2006, which provides:

*5.—(1) The chairman may designate a person as a core participant at any time during the course of the inquiry, provided that person consents to being so designated.*

*(2) In deciding whether to designate a person as a core participant, the chairman must in particular consider whether—*

- (a) the person played, or may have played, a direct and significant role in relation to the matters to which the inquiry relates;*
- (b) the person has a significant interest in an important aspect of the matters to which the inquiry relates; or*
- (c) the person may be subject to explicit or significant criticism during the inquiry proceedings or in the report, or in any interim report.*

*(3) A person ceases to be a core participant on—*

- (a) the date specified by the chairman in writing; or*
- (b) the end of the inquiry.*

7. In accordance with the approach set out in my Opening Statement and the Inquiry's [Core Participant Protocol](#), I have considered whether the application fulfils the requirements set out in Rule 5(2) in relation to the issues set out in the Provisional Outline of Scope for Module 2.
8. I have taken into account all of the information which the Applicant has relied upon. The fact that I have not, in making this determination, referred to every matter which is set out in the application does not mean that I have not considered it. The summary below is intended to capture what appear to be the most important points made in support of the application.

## Summary of Application

9. The Applicant's original application stated that they are a private ambulance service company who converted approximately 150 ambulances for various companies including London Ambulance Service to protect the driver from airborne infection and to protect patients and passengers on board. This followed NHS advice to NHS Trusts

that all ambulance drivers should be atmospherically separated from the treatment area in the vehicle, requiring adaptations to be made.

10. The application is put on the basis that Mike Ellard, owner of Blue Light Services, has a significant interest in Module 2, that Blue Light Services played a direct and significant role in relation to Module 2 matters and their contribution to the health service is an important aspect of the matters to which the Inquiry relates.
11. In its renewed application, the Applicant states that Module 2 is also looking at public health and covid legislation. The Applicant reiterates that its role was highly important and raises questions relating to the impact on patient and NHS workers' safety. The Applicant explains for lessons to be learned and issues to be examined, they should be called upon so that the Inquiry can receive evidence holistically. The Applicant invites the Inquiry to consider the importance and significance of their role as the sole company operating nationally at the time.

### **Decision for the Applicants**

12. I have considered with great care everything that is said in the Applicant's renewed application. I have also reminded myself of what was said in the original application to enable me to assess the merits of the application for Core Participant status as a whole.
13. I note the work the Applicant undertook and the sphere in which this took place. However, in light of the Provisional Outline of Scope for Module 2, I consider that the Applicant did not play a direct and significant role in relation to the matters sought to be investigated in Module 2. Furthermore, I do not consider that the Applicant has a significant interest in an important aspect of the matters to which Module 2 relates. The Applicant's role and interest is not sufficiently proximate to those issues under consideration in Module 2. It played no role in core political and administrative decision-making. Although involved in aspects of implementation and with an interest in enforcement of Public Health and Covid-19 legislation and regulation, I am satisfied that in the context of Module 2 that the Applicant played a limited role and that its interest is not significant such as to warrant designation as a Core Participant.

14. Having done so, in my discretion, I consider that the Applicant does not meet the criteria set out in Rule 5 for designation as a Core Participant in Module 2 and, therefore, I have decided to not to designate the Applicant as a Core Participant in Module 2. I confirm that this is my final decision.
  
15. I am obliged to manage the Inquiry effectively and efficiently, bearing in mind the Inquiry's wide-ranging terms of reference and the need for the Inquiry process to be rigorous and fair. Given the vast numbers of people who were involved with, or adversely affected by, the Covid-19 pandemic, very many people and organisations in this country could potentially have an interest in it and not everyone can be granted Core Participant status for the purposes of the Inquiry hearings.
  
16. It is also not necessary for an individual or organisation to be a Core Participant in order to provide evidence to the Inquiry. The Applicant may have relevant information to give in relation to matters being examined in the Inquiry and the Inquiry will be reaching out in due course to a range of individuals, organisations and bodies to seek information, to gain their perspective on the issues raised in the modules and, where appropriate, to ask for witness statements and documents.
  
17. My decision not to designate the Applicant as Core Participants in Module 2 does not preclude it from making any further applications in respect of any later modules. The Applicant may wish to consider applying for Core Participant status in relation to future modules likely to deal more directly with the matters which have been referred to in both the original application and the renewed application. I will consider any future applications the Applicant may wish to make on their merits at the time they are made.

**Rt Hon Baroness Heather Hallett DBE**  
**Chair of the UK Covid-19 Inquiry**  
**25 October 2022**