



**NOTICE OF DETERMINATION
CORE PARTICIPANT APPLICATION
MODULE 3 - ST JOHN AMBULANCE**

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 8 November 2022, the Inquiry opened Module 3 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 5 December 2022
2. The Inquiry has published the Provisional Outline of Scope for Module 3, which states that this Module will consider the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on healthcare systems in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Further Modules will be announced and opened in due course, to address other aspects of the Inquiry's Terms of Reference.
3. On 2 December 2022 the Inquiry received an application from St John Ambulance ("the Applicant") for Core Participant status in Module 3.
4. I made a provisional decision dated 16 January 2023 not to designate the Applicant as a Core Participant in Module 3, thereby declining its application ("the Provisional Decision"). The Applicant was provided with an opportunity to renew the application in writing by 4pm on 23 January 2023.
5. The Applicant did not renew the application by the prescribed deadline. Accordingly, this Notice sets out my final decision on the application.

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 3.

Summary of Application

8. The Applicant identifies itself as England's leading first aid and health response charity – responding to emergencies, supporting communities, and saving lives. The application is put on the basis that the Applicant, during the Covid-19 pandemic, coordinated with the Department of Health and Social Care, NHS England, and local NHS trusts to provide a range of services to “help get the nation through the pandemic”. The Applicant states that it liaised with NHS England from the very start of the pandemic to support the NHS' ability to respond to the pandemic by adding thousands of clinically skilled volunteers – including recruiting, training and deploying 26,500 vaccination volunteers – and employees to the healthcare workforce. The application is put on the basis that the Applicant continues to support the NHS through emergency ambulance provision, as the nation's ambulance auxiliary,

volunteering in hospitals, and administering vaccinations. The Applicant states that it provides specialist critical care transport services to the NHS, local communities, and healthcare providers, including paediatric transport services, neonatal transport, bariatric transfers, end of life transport, renal dialysis transport, NHS support and volunteering.

9. The application is put on the basis that the Applicant played a direct and significant role in a number of areas of healthcare provision that are said to fall within the Provisional Outline of Scope for Module 3.

Decision for the Applicant

10. I have considered with great care everything that is said in the application. Having done so, I consider that the Applicant does not meet the criteria set out in Rule 5 for designation as a Core Participant in Module 3 and, therefore, I have decided not to designate the Applicant as a Core Participant in Module 3.
11. Module 3 will consider the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on healthcare systems in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. This will include consideration of the healthcare consequences of how the governments and the public responded to the pandemic. It will examine the capacity of healthcare systems to respond to a pandemic and how this evolved during the pandemic. It will consider the primary, secondary and tertiary healthcare sectors and services and people's experience of healthcare during the pandemic, including through illustrative accounts. It will also examine healthcare-related inequalities (such as in relation to death rates, PPE and oximeters), with further detailed consideration in a separate designated Module.
12. The application is put on the basis that the Applicant played a direct and significant role in the matters to which Module 3 relates (Rule 5(2)(a)).
13. Although the Applicant may have played a direct and valued role in the response to the Covid-19 pandemic in terms of the services it provided, including ambulance services, in my view this was not a "significant" role within the meaning of Rule 5(2)(a) for the purposes of Module 3, in the context of overall healthcare systems or their

delivery during the Covid-19 pandemic, as compared with any other groups of providers of services.

14. Although the application is not put on the basis that Rule 5(2)(b) is met, I have nevertheless gone on to consider this. Given the matters described in its application, the Applicant could be said to have an interest in healthcare and in healthcare systems. However, I do not consider that this amounts to a significant interest in an important aspect of the matters to which Module 3 relates within the meaning of Rule 5(2)(b). Given the vast numbers of people who were involved with, or adversely affected by, the Covid-19 pandemic, very many people and organisations in the UK could potentially have an interest in the Inquiry. Not everyone can be granted Core Participant status for the purpose of the Inquiry hearings.
15. Even if that were not the case, and having regard in particular to the need to manage the Inquiry efficiently and effectively, in my discretion I would decline to designate the Applicant as a Core Participant in Module 3. While I am bound to consider the factors set out in Rule 5(2), it is also open to me to take into account other relevant factors. I am not obliged to designate any particular person or organisation as a Core Participant. I am determined to run the Inquiry and Module 3 as thoroughly and as efficiently as possible, bearing in mind the Inquiry's wide-ranging Terms of Reference and the need for the Inquiry process to be rigorous and fair.
16. It is not necessary for an individual or organisation to be a Core Participant in order to provide evidence to the Inquiry. The Inquiry will in due course seek information from a range of individuals, organisations and bodies who may have information relevant to the issues raised in the Modules and, where appropriate, make requests for witness statements and documents.
17. For all of those reasons, having considered all of the information provided by the Applicant, in light of the Provisional Outline of Scope for Module 3, I have decided that the Applicant should not be designated as a Core Participant in Module 3 and I confirm that this is my final decision.
18. I will keep the scope of Module 3 under review. My decision not to designate the Applicant as a Core Participant in Module 3 does not preclude it from making any

further applications in respect of any later modules. 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

13 February 2023