

Witness Name: David Peter
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UK COVID-19 INQUIRY

WITNESS STATEMENT OF DAVID PETER WILLIAMS CB

I, DAVID PETER WILLIAMS, Permanent Under-Secretary, Ministry of Defence, of MOD, Main Building, Whitehall, London, SW1A 2HB, will say as follows: -

A: INTRODUCTION

1. I am the Permanent Under-Secretary, Ministry of Defence, employed by the Ministry of Defence (“MOD” or “Defence”) since April 2021. I previously served as the Second Permanent Secretary at the Department of Health and Social Care from the beginning of the Covid-19 outbreak in the UK in March 2020 (“the pandemic”).
2. This statement has been prepared at the request of the UK Covid-19 Inquiry (the “Inquiry”) to assist the Inquiry in relation to Module 1: Resilience and preparedness (“the request”). This statement has been produced with the assistance of a wide range of individuals within the MOD and legal advisors. It draws from a range of reports and written documents which are exhibited.
3. In preparing this statement the MOD has used its best efforts to identify relevant workstreams and individuals within the MOD that would have had responsibility for or involvement in civil contingency planning and preparedness and MOD resilience between 2009 and 2020 (“the relevant period”): which is the period identified in the request. The MOD has a very large range of different work streams and groups that all may be described as within the overall ambit of “resilience” and “preparedness”. In

line with the terms of reference for Module 1 and the conversations with the Inquiry Legal Team, we have interpreted the rule 9 as being focused on pandemic preparedness.

4. The MOD, as set out in more detail below, has played an important role in assisting civil authorities in preparing for and responding to pandemic events and other civil emergencies. This is additional to its primary obligation to protect the UK from external military threats. The essential role of the MOD is summarised in the Defence Operating Model: How Defence Works as follows: *“To protect the people of the United Kingdom, prevent conflict, and be ready to fight our enemies. We seek to be prepared for the present and fit for the future.”* [DW1]. MOD is generally not funded to respond to domestic civil crises. Accordingly, the Civil Contingency Act 2004 (“CCA”) places no statutory responsibility on the MOD to plan and prepare for civil crises; the statutory responsibility rests with Category 1 and 2 responders. The CCA 2004 placed a legal requirement on these Category 1 and 2 responders to think, plan, procure, exercise, and generally become more self-reliant in responding to crises within their remit. Civil authorities take the lead in responding to any emergencies or non-military threats to the safety and security of the UK and its citizens. Government departments or civil authorities may call upon the armed forces, civil servants, and others as necessary to assist in the planning for or response to an emergency. This is known as Military Aid to the Civil Authorities (“MACA”), which is set out in further detail below. MOD planning focuses on risks to military capability and effectiveness in future crises and participates in cross-government preparedness exercises and planning to build awareness and capability at national and local level.

5. I set out lessons identified by the MOD throughout this statement. Key themes observed by the Department over the last 10 years in relation to resilience are; 1) the value of liaison officers to assist MOD to understand potential requests from other government departments for support, assist in developing MACA requests and to assist others to understand what support Defence can provide; 2) the importance of clear governance and ‘Senior Responsible Owner’ early in a crisis; 3) the value of good information exchange to enable effective understanding and decision-making; 4) the criticality of

strategic planning before and during a crisis response; 5) The significant benefit to resilience that results from regular training and exercising. (see section 5, of this statement).

6. The statement is structured in the following way:

<u>section</u>	<u>paras</u>	<u>content</u>
A		Introduction
B		About the MOD: its relationship to the Armed forces, the relevant directorates, executive agencies and single services within the MOD.
C		Military Aid to Civil Authorities and the process for the MOD providing support during civil emergencies.
D		Resilience, Business Continuity, Emergency Planning including the development of pandemic specific plans and biological security.
E		Development of the MOD over the relevant period including structural changes and estate rationalisation.
F		Learning by the MOD including (1) the MOD policy on lesson identification, (2) previous infectious disease outbreaks, (3) specific exercises, (4) lessons identified during the pandemic and (5) the MOD's overall lessons from MACA.
G		Planning for future pandemics including cross government work, MOD specific work on resilience, updated lessons policy and liaison officers and planning.
H		Critical Reflections

B: ABOUT THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

(1) the MOD: Structure and Responsibilities

7. MOD is a government department led by the Secretary of State for Defence. The primary roles of MOD are to protect the people of the United Kingdom, prevent conflict, and be ready to fight our enemies. It includes both (i) a Department of State, responsible for supporting Ministers, developing policy, developing, and delivering

plans, and generating Military Capability, and (ii) a Military Strategic Headquarters, that directs and carries out military operations on behalf of the government.

8. The MOD brings together the UK's three armed services: the Royal Navy, Army, and Royal Air Force. It also includes Strategic Command, the Defence Nuclear Organisation and the Head Office, and a range of Directorates, single Services and executive agencies that provide supporting services to the whole of the MOD. For the purposes of this statement the relevant organisations are the: Directorate Security and Resilience, Defence Science and Technology, the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory, Defence Intelligence, Defence Medical Services and Security Policy and Operations. I set out further detail on these below.
9. The Secretary of State for Defence formally chairs the Defence Council, which is intended to oversee all Defence actions, and whose functions are set out by an Order-in-Council. In practice its functions are discharged through the Defence Board, bringing together Ministers, senior executives, and non-executive directors. Ministers and the Chief of the Defence Staff ("CDS") are the MOD's chief representatives within government for managing a crisis, with specialist expertise drawn from within the MOD if necessary. Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff (Military Strategy and Operations) and the Director General Security Policy may provide strategic guidance to Ministers and other government departments in a variety of ways including through the Cabinet Office Briefing Room ("COBR").
10. For operations within the UK, CDS has appointed Commander Home Command as the Standing Joint Commander (UK) responsible for the planning and execution of civil contingency operations within the UK landmass and territorial waters. Military assistance is provided on the basis that the relevant civil authority retains responsibility for, and control over, the situation and/or emergency (as set out below). Military personnel on UK operations will generally remain under military command unless they have been seconded to work for another organisation in which case a different structure may be adopted.

11. At a national level the Security Policy and Operations Directorate is responsible for coordinating military assistance (prior to 2017 responsibility sat with the MOD Operations Directorate). The Headquarters Standing Joint Commander (UK), based in Aldershot, facilitates detailed planning and support. Local coordination is carried out by the Joint Regional Liaison Officers supported by Royal Navy and Royal Air Force Regional Liaison Officers. The MOD maintains a standing resilience liaison officer network comprising: four Royal Naval regional liaison officers, 18 joint regional liaison officers (all British Army) and nine Royal Air Force regional liaison officers, as well as a network of strategic liaison officers embedded with other government departments. During the pandemic these liaison officers had two roles: first to provide military advice on proposed MACA requests, and secondly, to forewarn MOD of requests which were soon to be made.
12. The MOD will act as lead government department (“LGD”) for a small number of National Security Risk Assessment risks, including an attack on the UK mainland or UK overseas territory, with other government departments acting in a supporting role. Conversely, the MOD will generally act in a supporting role to other government departments in responding to internal and domestic resilience and security challenges when requested.

(2) Relevant Directorates, Executive Agencies and Single Services

13. In this section I set out the key Directorates, Executive Agencies and single Services that play a role in resilience and preparedness. I highlight these as the main parts of the MOD that would have a role in preparedness and resilience in the context of a pandemic. This should not be an exhaustive list.

(a) Directorate Security and Resilience

14. The Directorate of Security and Resilience (“DSR”) replaced the Directorate of Business Resilience in 2017. On behalf of the Permanent Secretary, DSR sets policy and provides guidance on resilience and business continuity issues. In the event of a pan-MOD business continuity disruptive event which could significantly affect Defence, DSR will assess the situation and, depending on the outcome, initiate activity to direct the departmental response. DSR acts as the primary point of engagement with the Cabinet Office on cross-Government resilience risk planning as it applies to MOD.
15. The MOD consults numerous internal policy experts and stakeholders as part of its Resilience and Business Continuity (“R&BC”) policy management and development. During COVID as part of the MOD’s crisis response a COVID Resilience Working Group was stood up as part of the Defence Crisis Management Organisation’s governance structure to monitor internal resilience, where issues could be flagged to Head Office and direction issued to the department. During the pandemic, regular attendees of the COVID Resilience Working Group included TLBs¹ as well other policy experts such as CivHR (Civilian Personnel Issues) and DIO (Facilities Management issues).

(b) Defence Medical Services

16. The Defence Medical Services (“DMS”) maintains military health care services, such as primary health care and rehabilitation in the UK and deployable medical capability for support to operations and overseas activity. It is made up of the Royal Navy Medical Service, Army Medical Service, the Royal Air Force Medical Service, and the Headquarters DMS Group (HQ DMS GP). Capabilities include force health protection, pre-hospital emergency care, deployed hospital care and medical evacuation. DMS

¹ A Top-Level Budget (TLB) Holder is the Service Chief or the Director General (DG) / 3 Star Head of a TLB responsible for the delivery and performance of their Service or organisation. There are currently five TLBs: the four military commands and Defence Nuclear Organisation. The TLB Heads act as Chief Executive Officer of their TLB and are formally responsible for the performance and output of their organisation.

personnel are employed across a range of health care professions, as well as trained non-vocational military medical technicians and assistants.

17. The Surgeon General (“SG”) sets the strategic policy intent and common principles for the DMS in JSP 950 Medical Policy. The SG’s policies which are most likely to be relevant to the Inquiry are in Volume 7 Public Health, Chapter 2 Communicable Disease Prevention Policy (Leaflet 7-2-2) [DW2].
18. DMS personnel played a significant role during the pandemic. DMS personnel have also been involved in other major public health operations, such as Op GRITROCK (Ebola), and most recently the 2022 Monkeypox outbreak.

(iii) Defence Public Health Unit

19. The Defence Public Health Unit (“DPHU”) was created in 2013, following concerns arising from Swine Flu pandemic, that previous structures were overly reactive. The DPHU is a central single point of contact for managing infectious disease notifications, surveillance, policy and advice to SG and the Defence Medical Services.
20. The DPHU covers the following areas:
 - a. Health Protection / Force Health Protection;
 - b. Dental Public Health;
 - c. Strategic Health;
 - d. Senior Public Health Adviser;
 - e. Consultant in Communicable Disease Control / Consultant Health Protection;
 - f. Health Improvement/Screening/Public Health Training; and
 - g. Environmental Health.
21. The DPHU is the central point of a network that has developed over time, the Defence Public Health Network (“DPHN”). The DPHN includes:

- a. distinct single Service public health elements in the Royal Navy, Army, and RAF who each have a single Service Consultant in Public Health; and
 - b. Subject matter expert input from other specialist cadres including Environmental Health, Infectious Diseases, Microbiology, Infection Prevention Control, CBRN, Medical Intelligence and veterinary subject matter experts.
22. Two Defence Consultant Advisors (“DCA”) in Public Health and Communicable Disease provide advice and support across the DPHN. The network works closely within the MOD as well as with UK Health Security Agency (“UKHSA”) Regional Health Protection Teams. The DPHN directly supports the DMS and wider Defence through generation of health protection policy, guidance, infectious disease surveillance, notification and reporting systems, data analysis, various health improvement initiatives and other support.
23. The DPHU and broader DPHN has provided support to past public health emergencies through delivering case and incident management, policy, and Standard Operating Procedure (“SOP”) development, collation of lessons learned and public health advice to SG, the DMS and broader Defence. This includes but is not limited to the Ebola virus outbreaks in 2014 (Op GRITROCK), the 2022 Mpox outbreak, the 2018 Salisbury poisonings and the Zika outbreak in 2015-2016, as well as supporting work during the pandemic.

(c) Defence Science and Technology

24. Defence Science and Technology policy is led by the MOD Chief Scientific Advisor (“MOD CSA”) through Defence Science and Technology (“DST”) in Head Office. The MOD CSA has two main roles in relation to this Inquiry; firstly, the MOD CSA sets the strategy for science and technology and related spend through DST, delegating control of the Science and Technology portfolio to the DST portfolio Head. Secondly, during the pandemic, as a CSA in government the incumbent MOD CSA, Professor

Dame Angela McLean FRS, co-chaired SPI-M-O. This was at the discretion of the Government Chief Scientific Advisor (“GCSA”), Sir Patrick Vallance and was based on her academic background and experience rather than her role within the MOD.

25. DST commissions a portfolio of science and technology research at Dstl (more below) with a focus on defence and security requirements. Dstl respond by producing programmes to meet the commissioned need, drawing from science and technology capabilities from across government, industry, academia, and international partners. This funding lays the groundwork on which the rest of Defence can draw on Dstl expertise into defence systems and develop cutting edge warfighting capability. The requirement for this funding does not include preparation for a pandemic or future pandemics, but it does include scientific research into warfighting in conditions that involve a biological threat. This means that DST investments in defence focused science and technology research will build skills, knowledge and facilities that could be reorientated to help, if called upon, in support of a biological event including a pandemic. Using this foundation Dstl can support MOD in its response to MACA requests.
26. When a significant call for support to operations occurs, a dedicated programme can be established by DST and Dstl to manage requirements and resources.

(d) The Defence Science and Technology Laboratory

27. The Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (“Dstl”) is an Executive Agency of the MOD. The MOD Chief Operating Officer (“COO”) is Dstl’s sponsor, ensuring that appropriate mechanisms are in place for Dstl to operate efficiently and effectively, and the organisation is subject to appropriate corporate governance.
28. Dstl supplies a wide range of specialist science and technology services to MOD, the Home Office and across Government. It conducts critical work that cannot be done outside of government and works in collaboration with industry and academia

worldwide to providing expert research, advice, and operational support to Defence and security leads and decision makers. Dstl's expertise is accessible, subject to capacity, to MOD and other Departments across Government. Currently, 51% of Dstl's science and technology is commissioned by DST under MOD CSA's S&T research portfolio. The rest of Dstl's work is commissioned from elsewhere within MOD (42%) or by other Government departments.

29. Dstl does not have permanent staff and resources assigned to civil emergency operations. Rather, it calls on its wider workforce to work on individual specific taskings as required.

30. For the purposes of the Inquiry's work, I note that:

- a. Dstl undertakes research to understand the scientific and technical hazards posed by biological agents, including toxins, when used as weapons, and the availability of protective measures, including detection and protective equipment and medical countermeasures. Some of these agents are naturally occurring and could also present a public health hazard.
- b. Dstl does conduct science and technology research into viruses of concern. This is in a military context, where the focus is the protection of armed forces against the threat of viruses produced by malign actors at a state/non-state level. The primary purpose of Dstl's work is not preparedness for a future pandemic or other civil emergency. But the work that Dstl produces may be of relevance for such an event.

31. Dstl has no strategic or policy development or decision-making responsibility within MOD. Dstl is tasked to provide science and technology research or analytical support to its customers within MOD and elsewhere across government. Reports prepared by Dstl are advisory and, unless internally commissioned to report on Dstl's activities, prepared for and owned by the customer. Accordingly, the reports cited as being

produced by Dstl for a different government department, will be held by the commissioning department.

32. Between 2009 and Jan 2020 Dstl was not tasked by MOD or any other government department to forecast relevant risks/readiness/planning for pandemic type events/infectious disease events. However, within the relevant period, Dstl (as part of MOD) developed the CrystalCast software which can be (and was) used to combine model forecast predictions during the pandemic. It was developed following discussions between Public Health England (“PHE”) and Dstl in 2015 when it became clear that there wasn’t a modelling tool, visualisation, or clear process for the assessment of biological threats from potential release or uncertain epidemiological prediction.
33. PHE and Dstl collaborated to deliver a programme of work to provide the capability to an agency of the US Department of Defence, the Defence Threat Reduction Agency (“DTRA”), which funded CrystalCast. The work programme ran from 2017 to 2021 and provided the ability to combine epidemiological forecasts and explore the impact of epidemics on an environment. The ability to aggregate models into a single actionable data set would not have existed within the UK Government without this effort.
34. Also, for awareness (c.2015-2020), within the MOD CSA research programme a Biosurveillance pilot project to detect unusual outbreaks of disease within the seasonal flu background was undertaken to provide military and civilian capability. This project showed potential benefit as a tool for early detection of epidemics. The methodology remains a potential solution for surveillance and is a potential future capability for both MOD and wider government.

Key Dstl authored reports for MOD and others

35. Below I set out a list of reports that have been produced by Dstl for the MOD and others and have been identified as relevant to pandemic planning and resilience.

- a. Recommendations for the Design of a Comprehensive End-to-End Civil Alert System (20 April 2012) [DW3]: This paper identifies effective communications strategies that can mitigate the potential impact of disruptive challenges upon the UK population and industry. It presents recommendations for the design of a comprehensive end-to-end civil alert system for the UK. This report was delivered to the Cabinet Office's Civil Contingency Secretariat ("CCS").

- b. Social, Cultural and Behavioural Response to the Spread of an Infectious Disease. Final Report – Base Year 2012-2013 (UK Restricted) (25 September 2013) [DW4]: The aim of this project of work was to deliver a system to model the behavioural response of a population (from a social, cultural, and individual perspective) to the spread of an infectious disease. This report was delivered to DTRA JSTO, which is part of the U.S. Department of Defence.

- c. Emerging and Persistent Infectious Diseases (EPID) and the implication for Defence and National Security (July 2013) [DW5]: This scoping study provides a preliminary view of the implications of EPIDs for UK defence and security, with emphasis on operational capability; socioeconomic impact; the nature of resilience; and the current approaches for bio surveillance. This report was delivered to the MOD, the Cabinet Office, PHE, the Home Office, the Department of Health, and Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs ("DEFRA").

- d. Ecology and evolution of Avian Influenza Virus (AIV) in wild birds in Georgia and establishing the host population structure. (Official) (August 2018) [DW6]: The study investigates H5N8 (commonly referred to as avian influenza, a subtype of the Influenza A virus) in wild bird population in Georgia. Pandemics can occur in humans if Influenza A viruses cross species barriers and is often characterised by high morbidity and mortality. Delivered to the MOD.

(vi) Defence Intelligence

36. The main functions of Defence Intelligence (“DI”) are to provide intelligence collection, coordination, analysis, and assessment to support MOD and wider-government decision-making. In this respect DI works with other parts of the UK intelligence machinery, particularly the intelligence agencies (the Secret Intelligence Service, Government Communications Headquarters, and the Security Service) and the Joint Intelligence Organisation in the Cabinet Office. Mostly, DI’s responsibilities are focused on military threats from outside the UK but where necessary it also covers economic and social threats as part of its long-term forecasting. DI also provides some bespoke and focused support to civil emergencies originating within the UK.

(a) DI’s Formal Warning Products and Processes

37. DI produces a range of formal Warning product. The DI Warning enterprise makes use of a structured framework to assess the expected time available ahead of a strategic shock event occurring. This is expressed in the form of a Warning product. Examples could include the collapse of a foreign government, or the full-scale invasion of one sovereign state by another. Each Warning product has a set of associated diagnostic indicators that analysts would expect to detect in the lead-up to the strategic shock event, or end-state, coming to pass.

38. Prior to 2020 DI did not have formal Warning products relating to pandemics. It initiated one in January 2020, focused on the spread of COVID-19. This built on the existing monitoring of the spread of COVID-19 by DI’s specialist MEDINT team over the preceding weeks.

(b) Medical Intelligence (MEDINT) in DI

39. Prior to the 2014 Ebola virus disease outbreak DI hosted a small medical intelligence (“MEDINT”) function staffed by one officer on loan to DI Counter Proliferation’s

Chemical and Biological Warfare team from DMS. The officer was funded by DMS who provided direct line management. During the 2014-2016 Ebola virus outbreak it was decided that this MEDINT capability would be augmented further with another DMS funded military post. The main customers for DI's MEDINT capability at this time were DMS, SPO, and the ministerial offices in MOD. This second post was temporary and lapsed at the end of the Ebola Crisis, but it was recognised by DI and the Surgeon General that there was significant value in having two personnel in the MEDINT team embedded within DI CP. The post was established permanently in late 2016. Whilst embedded within DI they continued to be directed by DMS and the Surgeon General.

40. The MEDINT team was focused on providing assessment on medical threats and the assessments of medical infrastructure in areas of the world where Armed Forces personnel were likely to be deployed. This was exclusively overseas deployments; there were no requirements for DI MEDINT to assess UK resilience and preparedness for a civil emergency.
41. From January 2020, the MEDINT team began to provide analysis and assessment for MOD and other policy makers in HMG on the spread of COVID 19 across the Globe. At this point the decision was made by DI to expand it temporarily to meet the requirements from MOD and HMG customers. This team remained at the forefront of DI's COVID response throughout the pandemic.

C: MILITARY AID TO CIVIL AUTHORITIES

42. In this section I set out the legal basis of provision of Military Aid to the Civil Authorities ("MACA") (which I referred to in the introduction to this statement), the procedures that are followed for the deployment of MACA and the types of support that is provided by the MOD.

(1) General principles and processes

43. In the UK civil authorities take the lead in planning for, responding to and recovering from disruptive challenges and similar events in the UK and in territorial waters. If civil authorities require assistance in this response, then MACA allows them to request either specific capabilities, or general support held within the MOD.
44. The Joint Doctrine Publication (JDP-02), UK Operations: the Defence Contribution to Resilience, provides guidance and practical understanding for both a military and non-military audience as to how Defence can contribute military support in dealing with natural hazards, major incidents or malicious attacks against the UK and Crown Dependencies. It is the policy document on MACA. Publications dates for the four versions of the JDP 02 were as follows:
- a. First edition: December 2004 [DW 7];
 - b. Second edition: September 2007 and updated in February 2010 [DW 8];
 - c. Third edition: February 2017 [DW 9];
 - d. Fourth (most recent) edition (“JDP 02 Fourth edition”): published in November 2021 [DW10].
45. Much of the information in this section of my witness statement is drawn directly from the JDP 02 and the Inquiry is invited to consider the document as a whole.
46. There are three possible legal bases for a MACA deployment. These are:
- a. the Royal Prerogative for military tasks, where support is provided to complement civil authorities’ capabilities;
 - b. a Defence Council Order under section 2 of the Emergency Powers Act 1964 for tasks that are undertaken ordinarily by the civil authorities but where support has been requested for civilian tasks; or
 - c. emergency regulations made under Part 2 of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (“CCA 2004”).

47. In addition, the Reserve Forces Act 1996 enables Reservists, volunteer members of the Reserve Forces, to support the Regular Forces on MACA tasks.
48. Further detail on the legal basis of for MACA is set out in JDP 02 (Fourth edition), at p.40.
49. For non-military tasks, the mechanism of a Defence Council Order is the most common legal mechanism used to authorise the deployment of Defence resources. MOD's SPO Directorate is responsible for producing Defence Council Orders.
50. A Defence Council Order requires ministerial authorisation and should be signed by two members of the Defence Council on the same day. To justify a Defence Council Order the work must be judged to be both urgent and of national importance. It is then for the Defence Council to provide governance.
51. There is one standing Defence Council Order, dated 17 January 1983 (p.40 JDP 02), which supports activity in response to a disaster when there is an imminent threat to life, a need to alleviate distress or to protect significant property. In these circumstances, local commanders may provide immediate assistance without recourse to higher authority. Commanders must note that activity undertaken under this Defence Council Order is restricted to responding to the disaster.
52. As the JDP 02 (Fourth edition) explains, in the UK the civil authorities take the lead in planning for, responding to and recovering from disruptive challenges and similar events. In this process the UK government exercises a broad coordinating authority, with devolved administrations responsible for conducting specific duties within their geographic boundaries. If civil authorities require assistance in this response, MACA allows them to request support from the MOD (see p.3).
53. Requests from the devolved administrations for Defence assistance must be endorsed by the Secretary of State of the relevant Territorial Office within the UK Government.

54. As explained in the JDP 02 (Fourth edition) (p.39) the MOD does not usually generate forces or hold equipment specifically for resilience tasks. This is because: (a) the requirement is unpredictable in scale, duration, and capability; (b) Defence is often able to support requests through deprioritising other activity; and (c) it would involve using Defence's budget to pay for other government departments' responsibilities. The exceptions to this general rule are limited but might include providing explosive ordnance disposal support to civilian authorities.
55. As there are no dedicated military forces for these tasks, military support is not guaranteed. When military support is provided by the MOD the civil authorities normally have to pay for it, in line with HM Treasury rules.
56. MOD is funded to deliver military activity and is not funded to respond to civil crisis (subject to specific arrangement following a MACA request). Accordingly, the CCA 2004 places no statutory responsibility on the MOD to plan and prepare for civil crises; the statutory responsibility rests with Category 1 and 2 responders. The CCA 2004 placed a legal requirement on these Category 1 and 2 responders to plan, procure, exercise, and generally become more self-reliant in responding to crises within their remit.
57. Consistent with this, the Government has been clear as to the MOD's primary priority in situations such as a pandemic, namely the continuation of core Defence business. For example, the UK Influenza Pandemic Preparedness Strategy, 2011, published by the Department of Health [DW11] explicitly stated that the MOD's priority in any pandemic would be to maintain critical military operations:

“THE ROLE OF THE MILITARY

7.11 During a pandemic, the Armed Forces' priority will continue to be to maintain critical military operations. As their own personnel will be equally vulnerable to illness, they may have little or no spare resource to provide Military Assistance to Civil Authorities (MACA). Pandemic resilience plans should not therefore assume that local military units would provide support or have personnel

available with either the requisite skills or equipment to perform specialist tasks. Where civil capability or capacity to provide an essential service is exceeded due to a pandemic, and if all other options to provide it have been exhausted, then the Ministry of Defence (MOD) would attempt to provide assistance through the normal processes, if it has suitable resources available.”

58. The provision of military assistance is governed by four principles whereby MACA can be authorised:
- a. there is a definite need to act and the tasks the armed forces are being asked to perform are clear;
 - b. other options, including mutual aid and commercial alternatives, have been discounted; and either;
 - c. the civil authority lacks the necessary capability to fulfill the task and it is unreasonable or prohibitively expensive to expect it to develop one; or
 - d. the civil authority has all or some capability, but it may not be available immediately, or to the required scale, and the urgency of the task requires rapid external support from MOD.
59. Notwithstanding the above, under exceptional circumstances, agreed usually at ministerial level, it may be necessary to waive temporarily the above criteria. This may include major events of national and international importance, or for an event that is catastrophic in nature.
60. Requests for support from Defence will follow two broad channels: “top down”, where the request will be driven from central government or devolved nations, or “bottom up”, where the request will be made by civil authorities at the sub-national or local level. Support may be requested during the preparatory, response and/or recovery phases.
61. Support from the armed forces can be requested under MACA to deal with a range of situations including, but not limited to:
- a. natural disasters, helping people in severe weather situations, such as flooding;
 - b. animal disease outbreaks or public health epidemics;

- c. public service-related industrial disputes that affect safety or security, or disrupt transport or communications links;
- d. criminal or terrorist activity, providing specialist expertise in specific circumstances after a terrorist attack; and
- e. explosive ordnance disposal.

62. In response to requests for assistance, Defence may contribute in relation to six main functions. These are:

- a. command and control;
- b. liaison;
- c. planning;
- d. specialist advice and capability;
- e. general and non-specialist support; and
- f. education and training.

(2) Types of support provided by MOD under MACA

63. In this section I set out the different types of support that the MOD can utilise to assist civilian departments and may be relevant to pandemic preparedness. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list, but rather illustrates the types of support that the MOD may provide.

(a) Planning

64. In terms of planning, as explained in the JDP 02 (Fourth edition), the MOD can provide assistance in response to specific events, if requested to do so under MACA arrangements. In these circumstances Defence may deploy specialist planners into government at all levels. Such an undertaking is not designed to take over all planning responsibilities from the civil authority – civil primacy remains – rather, it would be to provide complementary and specialist planning support for a specific set of circumstances and, usually, for a fixed period of time.

65. Defence staff training places great emphasis on the ability to conduct planning in support of military operations. Such skills are readily transferable in terms of planning for, and responding to, disruptive challenges in the UK, with those who have undertaken command and staff training at the Defence Academy being in demand. There are many examples of Defence support in this area.
66. As explained in JDP 02 (Fourth edition) civil authorities are encouraged to seek early assistance from the Armed Forces. Defence planning staff are well-versed, trained and experienced in the principles of planning to meet specific strategic objectives. Moreover, Defence personnel assigned to support the civil authorities with planning will be conversant with the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles (“JESIP”), as these underpin multi-agency emergency services planning. Planning capability is held at every level of military command.

(b) Training

67. Defence conducts resilience training following a MACA request by the civil authorities across a range of scenarios and in a number of formats that include:
- a. tabletop exercises;
 - b. command post exercises;
 - c. field training exercises; and
 - d. study and briefing days.
68. Lead government departments are responsible for their internal resilience training and exercising, but cross-government resilience training and exercising is coordinated and supported by what was the Civil Contingencies Secretariat and is now COBR Unit. Within the SPO Directorate, the UK Operations Team provides the MOD’s input to this. When invited and appropriate, the MOD will support all cross-government resilience exercises from national to local level. At the national level, this includes Tier 1 and Tier 2 exercises, while at the local level this will likely comprise Regional Points of Command (“RpoC”) headquarters or sub-units supporting local resilience forum exercises/training events.

69. A chart on the different types of training the MOD is involved in is at Annex 4A of the JDP 02 (Fourth edition).
70. On an annual basis the MOD directs the HQ Standing Joint Commander (“HQ SJC(UK)”) in its capacity as Defence’s Joint Training Requirements Authority for resilience training to design and deliver an extensive programme of individual resilience training. HQ SJC(UK) is further tasked to oversee the British Army’s HQ Regional Commands delivery of biennial resilience mission rehearsal exercises (“MRXs”), assuring the ability of the British Army’s Regional point of Command to plan and conduct resilience operations in support of the civil authorities. With regards to individual training, in addition to a programme of internally delivered training for Defence resilience practitioners, HQ SJC(UK) directs the attendance of MOD personnel on civil authority training courses, such as the College of Policing’s multi-agency gold incident command (“MAGIC”) course, which is designed to prepare senior emergency services personnel for the challenges of command in response to disruptive challenges in the UK.

(c) UK Standby Battalions

71. The British Army maintains three UK standby battalions (“UKSB”) at extremely high readiness to support UK operations. Assigned geographic areas of responsibility, the UKSBs provide the MOD with a generalist force of choice to support civil authorities in response to a disruptive challenge or similar event. Since they were established in 2011 (initially under a different name in 2011), UKSBs have completed diverse resilience tasks, including industrial action mitigation, flood mitigation activities on a number of operations, and testing haulage drivers in the vicinity of the Channel ports during the COVID-19 pandemic in late 2020. In addition, the UKSBs are assigned to support the police with specific security operations in the UK.

(3) Specific incidents where MACA support has been provided

72. Over the last four years Defence has undertaken 783 MACA tasks in support of civil authorities, although these figures were skewed by a large increase during the pandemic. In 2019 Defence undertook 63 MACA tasks, compared with 303 in 2020. The nature, duration, and scale of the tasks undertaken during the pandemic were also far greater than the 'typical' MACA tasks before then due to the enduring nature of the emergency and the corresponding civil response during the pandemic.
73. Prior to the pandemic, MACA was generally the preserve of a relatively small number of government departments who were responsible for various crisis-related capabilities or public services, i.e. the Home Office for the Police and Fire Service and DEFRA for the Environmental Agency. Prior to 2020, the Department for Health and Social Care was not a significant requestor of military assistance, making a request fewer than a dozen times in the years 2015 to 2020.
74. I note in particular a few of examples where MACA was provided before 2020:
75. **Flooding:** the MOD has regularly utilised the UKSB to provide MACA support to the Environment Agency during periods of localised flooding. Service personnel have deployed at short notice to bolster local flood defences as well as 'warn and inform' residents that they and their properties may soon be at risk. The National Centre for Geospatial Intelligence within DI has also assisted in flood response, generating bespoke products to help civilian responders assess risk and assist local communities. This includes supplying geographic information for the Cocker mouth floods in 2009, flooding in southern England in 2014 (Op PITCHPOLE) and UK flooding 2015/16 (Op SHAKU).
76. **London 2012 Olympics:** the MOD provided support to the civil authorities across a wide range of areas in the build up to, and during, the London 2012 Olympic games. This included the provision of a dedicated air security plan as well as the provision of venue security when the private contractor was unable to meet its commitments. In

total, up to 13,500 personnel, and a number of military assets were deployed, including Royal Navy warships and RAF fast jets.

77. **Whaley Bridge:** in 2019, an RAF Chinook helicopter was tasked to Whaley Bridge under MACA to assist with a collapsing dam at Toddbrook Reservoir amidst fears that their town could be flooded. The heavy lift capabilities of the Chinook were utilised to bolster the dam to prevent it breaching.
78. **Salisbury Incident:** in response to the poisoning of Sergei and Yulia Skripal in Salisbury in 2018, the MOD provided a large degree of support under MACA to civil authorities. This included the provision of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear specialists in both the response and recovery phase in order to contain the spread of any contamination. 42 Engineer Regiment personnel also provided geospatial support in the aftermath.

D: RESILIENCE, BUSINESS CONTINUITY AND PANDEMIC SPECIFIC PLANNING

In this section I set out the key policy documents and the approach of the MOD in relation to resilience and business continuity, emergency planning and pandemic specific planning by the MOD over the relevant period, as well as biological security. (1) Defence Resilience and Business Continuity

79. From 2023 Defence policy on resilience was published in JSP 503, “The Defence Manual of Resilience” [DW12]. From 2012 until 2022 MOD policy on business continuity was set out in JSP 440 The Defence Manual of Security and Resilience [DW 13]. Responsibility for policy on resilience and business continuity arrangements within the MOD during the relevant period sat with the Directorate of Defence Security (2009 - 2010), Defence Business Resilience (2010-2017), and the Directorate of Security and Resilience (2017 to present) (“DSR”).

80. As explained above, DSR sets policy and will provide guidance on resilience and business continuity issues as and when relevant. In the event of a pan-MOD business continuity disruptive event which could significantly affect Defence, DSR will assess the situation and, depending on the outcome, may initiate activity to direct the departmental response. Internal governance bodies responsible for overseeing internal resilience and business continuity policies are the Defence Security and Resilience Group (“DSRG”), chaired by Hd DSR, and the Defence Security Resilience Board (“DSRB”), chaired by DG Sec Pol. Both the DSRG and DSRB were instituted in 2018, prior to this there were no pan-defence governance bodies overseeing internal resilience and business continuity activity.
81. The principal external entity which the MOD worked with in relation to the preparedness and resilience functions during the relevant period was the Civil Contingencies Secretariat in the Cabinet Office (the relevant organisation at the time).
82. I include as Annex 1 to this statement, an initial list of key decision-making bodies and decision-making individuals within the MOD with responsibility for the preparedness and resilience functions.

(2) Emergency Planning

83. Much of what the MOD does concerns planning for contingencies and future risks. Over the past 13 years numerous iterations of documents that could be described as emergency plans will have been produced in a vast range of areas that could fall within the definition of resilience and preparedness. These plans will then sit with the relevant part of the MOD that has responsibility for that issue. As the situation and learning changes the plans may be updated multiple times creating numerous iterations of documents. For example, one aspect of military assistance that was provided during

the pandemic was to assist in repatriating civilians stranded abroad.² The MOD is likely to hold tens if not potentially hundreds of iterations of plans to evacuate civilians from different parts of the globe. These may of some limited interest to the Inquiry but, it is not possible in the time provided to seek out all of these iterations. If the Inquiry, consider that these are of relevance then further efforts can be made to locate these documents and provide them to the Inquiry.

84. Documents which may be classed as emergency plans may be one of the following types of documents that are produced by the MOD:
- a. MOD Manuals: administrative guidance and regulations issued to staff in MOD Headquarters;
 - b. Joint Service Publications (“JSP”): a series of instructional and regulatory guidance covering a wide variety of subjects, both administrative and technical;
 - c. Defence Council Instructions (“DCI”) Civilian: applicable to MOD civilian units and staff;
 - d. DCI Joint Service: applicable to units and personnel of all three Services;
 - e. DCI General: applicable to units and personnel both civilian and Service;
 - f. MOD Personnel Instructions: in 1996 these replaced Defence Council Instructions Civilian and Civilian Management Circulars.

85. The most likely to be relevant for the Inquiry’s work are the Joint Service Publications (“JSPs”). For the purpose of preparing this statement we have considered whether any of the are relevant to the terms of the request. JSPs are a series of instructional and regulatory guidance which cover a wide variety of subjects, both administrative and technical. Some of these are relevant to issues of contingency planning, resilience, and business continuity. We consider that the following JSPs are potentially relevant:

² Noncombatant Evacuation Operations (“NEO”) under an Overseas Assistance Request (OAR). A NEO is defined as: an operation conducted to relocate designated non-combatants threatened in a foreign country to a place of safety.

JSP #	Title	year
440	Defence Manual of Security and Resilience [DW13]	2020
939	Defence policy for modelling and simulation [DW14]	2021
950	Medical Policy (already exhibited in full at DW2) including in particular: Volume 2: Clinical Policy Infection Control and Prevention Chapter 10: DMS Infection Prevention and Control Policy Volume 7: Public Health Chapter 2: Communicable Disease Control in the Armed Forces Leaflet 3-3-1, Preventing Malaria in UK Armed Forces Personnel	2021 2022 2020
503	(new JSP 503) The Defence Manual of Resilience. [DW12]	2023

86. That is not intended as an exhaustive list. The volume of materials on this we produce for the Inquiry depends on how far the Inquiry would like us to go in bringing forward the full range of our past and ongoing work on contingency planning.

(3) Implementation and development of a pandemic plan

87. In February 2008 the the Defence Pandemic Flu Implementation Group produced the *Pan-Defence Pandemic Flu Contingency Preparations: A Guide for Defence Personnel* [DW15]. This was a detailed planning guide for defence personnel to prepare for an outbreak of avian influenza, including H5N1 virus, as well as human pandemic flu.

88. In October 2008 the MOD Pandemic Influenza Planning Group produced a framework for MOD Pandemic Influenza preparations: *Mod Pandemic Influenza Framework, Key Tasks And Guidance Notes* (October 2008) [DW16]. This is to be read alongside the ‘*Pan-Defence Pandemic Influenza Contingency Preparations: A Guide for Business*

Managers and Defence Personnel [DW17]. In November 2008 the MOD Pandemic Influenza Coordinator produced the “*Pan-Defence Pandemic Influenza Contingency Preparations MOD Pandemic Communication Overview*” [DW18]. These documents set out the key tasks and provide supporting guidance notes in relation to Defence preparations for a pandemic. The documents were designed around the objectives of maintaining critical Defence Outputs and fulfilling MOD’s duty of care to Defence personnel in the event of an influenza pandemic.

89. Following the 2009 influenza pandemic commonly known as Swine Flu, and now formally named Influenza A(H1N1)pdm09, the MOD undertook a lessons identified exercise [DW19]. There was also a government wide a review commissioned by the Cabinet Office by Dame Deirdre Hine in 2010: *The 2009 Influenza Pandemic: An independent review of the UK response to the 2009 influenza pandemic*. London: Cabinet Office, July 2010.³

90. In November 2010 the MOD published the *Pandemic Influenza: Managing the Defence Response* [DW20] (“2010 MOD Response Plan”). It was circulated on 8 December 2010 [DW21]. The 2010 MOD Response Plan was intended to guide the MOD response to an emerging pandemic influenza. It was produced by the Business Continuity Policy Team, in the DBR. In terms of planning and preparedness it required the establishment of The Defence Pandemic Flu Implementation Group (“DPFIG”). The DPFIG was a 3-star led group responsible for the strategic management of Defence pandemic influenza preparedness and response.

91. The 2010 MOD Response Plan stated that it was to convene in planning mode at least twice a year. Annex A the sets out the terms of reference for the DPFIG. In addition, the 2010 MOD Response Plan required that the Business Continuity Policy Team in the DBR would represent MOD at the cross-Government Pandemic Flu Group

³ This report is not exhibited as it is expected that it will be provided by the Cabinet Office as part of its response.

(“PFIG”), co-chaired by the then Cabinet Office Civil Contingencies Secretariat, and the Department of Health.

92. In February 2012 the MOD produced *Pandemic Influenza: Guidance for Defence: Guidance to support Defence Response Planning* [DW22] (“2012 Pandemic Guidance”). This was prepared by the Business Continuity Policy Team, DBR. Key aspects of the MOD’s lessons which were identified following the Swine flu outbreak were recorded in this report. These included that steps should be taken to ensure that the MOD response would be:

- a. coordinated, internally and across Government;
- b. proportionate and effective, ensuring the continued delivery of Defence critical outputs throughout the pandemic;
- c. effective, as far as possible, in protecting the health of Defence personnel; and
- d. effective at managing the recovery of activities after the pandemic.

93. The 2012 Pandemic Guidance recorded the following lessons as being identified from the Swine Flu pandemic at paragraph 2.10:

- *Uncertainty. There will be little, if any, information about the severity of the illness. Early, accurate and detailed surveillance data gathering will be vital.*
- *Speed. Within local areas, the number of cases and demand for services can be expected to develop with great pace, requiring an agile yet coordinated response.*
- *Local hotspots. The impacts of the pandemic are unlikely to be uniform, with different areas under pressure at different times (and some not at all), which will require a flexible approach, as well as planning for easy access to antiviral medicines.*
- *Profile. Media, public and professional appetites for information are likely to be intense at times, requiring frequent, consistent, and coordinated communications.*
- *Duration. A pandemic wave can be expected to continue for many weeks, requiring robust arrangements to support individuals involved in the response.*
- *Cross-sector. The health sector will be under particular pressure, but the response will span different sectors and organisations, and require close working and mutual support. For example, hospitals may face increases in the numbers of patients, but are at the same time likely to be affected by increased staff sick absence, public transport, supply chain and service disruptions due to*

sick absence, and an increased pressure on staff who are carers for sick, at risk family members.

- *Wider applicability. Plans to cope with staff absences during a pandemic can equally be applied to other significant staff absences, for example those arising from severe weather or the impact of volcanic ash on flights.*
- *Vaccine availability. Planning must reflect the fact that pandemic-specific vaccine will not be available for the first 3-6 months of a pandemic – i.e. at least the first wave.*

94. In 2017 there was some consideration given to reviewing or updating the 2012 Pandemic Guidance. Ultimately, the documents remained unchanged.

(4) Biological security planning

95. The MOD monitors the threat from biological agents and toxins and provides appropriate protective capability. As explained above, Dstl undertakes the Defence scientific research programme, which includes defence against biological weapons. The MOD has access to a panel of appropriately cleared academics that can be called upon to provide independent expert advice when required on issues concerning biological security. Their expertise may also be relevant to pandemics and pandemic planning.

96. The UK Biological Security Strategy (HMG, July 2018) [DW23] (“BSS”) was signed by Ministers from the Home Office, Defra, and DHSC. The MOD, including the Dstl, contributes to the BSS in areas including disease and pathogen detection, analysis and attribution, provision of intelligence assessments and strengthening international efforts to counter the risk of hostile use of biological agents.

97. The UK Biological Security Strategy explains the MOD’s role in biosecurity strategy on page 40 as follows.

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) has responsibility for defending the UK and its interests overseas from deliberate threats. MOD contributes to all four pillars of the UK Biological Security Strategy, with support from the Defence Science and

Technology Laboratory (Dstl). This includes expertise and capabilities for disease and pathogen detection, analysis and attribution; provision of intelligence assessments to support cross-Government risk assessments of potential biological agent use by adversaries; strengthening international efforts to counter the risk of hostile use of biological agents; providing capability to make safe both biological weapons and associated infrastructure; and the ability to deploy resources in extremis as part of Government's response to disease outbreaks or biological agent use.

E: DEVELOPMENT OF THE MOD

(1) Structural changes in the MOD

98. Over the relevant period identified by the Inquiry there have been numerous changes to MOD structures. Some of these changes are set out above in relation to particular Directorates and single Services. In relation to the MOD as a whole organisation the single biggest change to the MOD and its structure was the Review conducted by Lord Levene of Portsoken and the subsequent three-year Defence Reform Programme. In summary, in 2010 Lord Levene was asked to conduct a review into the structures and management of the MOD. In 2011 Lord Levene delivered his report *Defence Reform An independent report into the structure and management of the Ministry of Defence* [DW24] ("Levene Report"). That report had 53 recommendations. The MOD accepted these recommendation and committed to deliver these through a three-year Defence Reform Programme, which completed in 2014.

99. Some of the headline recommendations from the Levene Report were:
- a. Creation of Secretary of State chaired Defence Board, which was to be the primary decision-making body for nonoperational matters.
 - b. The focus of the Service Chiefs should be on running their Service, including the development and generation of forces within their allocated budget, combined with their existing responsibility for the custodianship of their Service, and they should be empowered to perform their role effectively and the

Service Chiefs’ ‘direct’ role in departmental strategy, resource allocation and Defence management should be reduced;

- c. Joint Forces Command should be created, led by a military 4 star to manage, and deliver specific joint capabilities and to take the lead on joint warfare development, drawing on lessons and experimentation to advise on how the Armed Forces should conduct joint operations in the future.

100. In response to this review the MOD also published its first Defence Operating Model: How Defence Works. The current version is version 6, published September 2020 [already exhibited as DW1].

(2) Estate Rationalisation

101. As explained in JDP 02 (Fourth edition) at p.17 and p.118 since 2015, the Defence estate has been further rationalised, with more units in larger, but fewer, UK bases. This has resulted in a reduced military “footprint” across the UK. Consequently, some units may need to travel further to reach any emergency. Once deployed, units may have less estate and infrastructure nearby on which to rely for support. Likewise, it has reduced options for Defence estate to be used by civil authorities for other purposes, such as for establishing rest centers or for the storage or forward-basing of stores. Rationalisation of Defence’s estate will lead to a 30% reduction in built estate by 2040. This may impact longer-term civil authority emergency/major incident contingency plans.

102. The Inquiry’s Rule 9 request also asks for “*how the principal external entities which the MOD works with, in relation the key preparedness and resilience functions, changed and developed over the course of the proposed date range*”. DSR’s main external contact was the Civil Contingencies Secretariat in the Cabinet Office – the functions of which are now carried out by COBR Unit. It will be that office which can address this issue.

F: LEARNING BY MOD FROM PAST SIMULATION EXERCISES AND NEAR PANDEMIC EVENTS**(1) MOD policy on lessons**

103. In this section of my statement I set out the MOD policy on identification of lessons in place during the relevant time. The relevant MOD policy document on the identification of lessons from past events is Defence Lessons Policy (2016DIN03-020) [DW25]. This policy is regularly updated during the relevant period. As I explain further below, this policy has subsequently been revised following the pandemic.
104. Joint Warfare is responsible for the policy and management of the lessons process across the MOD. Joint Warfare is part of the MOD's Strategic Command, also known as STRATCOM. It convenes regular working and steering groups to organise Defence management of lessons.
105. Reviews are conducted both during and after an operation. Lessons are identified and collated for later review and implementation.
106. In 2017 the lessons process was enhanced; the decision was made to employ contractors on a full-time basis to manage the operational lessons in PJHQ and Joint Warfare (four posts). This was subsequently, in early 2019, enhanced by the provision of contracted support (two posts) to SPO Directorate to manage strategic lessons.
107. Defence lessons are recorded in a Defence Lessons Identified Management System ("DLIMS"). The DLIMS is a system which shows the current status of lessons (i.e. whether a recommendation is open or closed), to ensure action is in fact taken.
108. In relation to MACA tasks, as explained in JDP 02 (Fourth edition) p.77, lessons are likely to be identified during all three phases of an operation, namely (1)

preparation, (2) response, and (3) recovery. The lessons process comprises the following.

- a. Collect - Observations are the foundations of the lessons process. HQ SJC(UK) collects observations from all relevant Defence organisations using a local collection tool (master lessons tracker) based on the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (“NATO”) endorsed format of observation, discussion, conclusion, recommendation (“ODCR”). Other media such as first impressions reports, post-operational reports, Microsoft Teams chat rooms, and TED-style talks are used also.
- b. Analyse - Not all observations will be taken forward as an endorsed lesson and recommendations can be rejected by the Senior Person of Authority (“SPA”) of a lesson, this is the DLIMS description for a Senior Responsible Officer (“SRO”).
- c. Action - The observation becomes subsequently a lesson identified, which is then required to be allocated to an appropriate organisation or body that has the authority, and the means, to resolve the highlighted problem or develop the proposed best practice.
- d. Implement - During this phase the allocated organisation and supporting stakeholders will conduct the necessary work to resolve the lesson identified. The leadership of the involved organisations and the associated lessons teams will monitor and track progress to ensure that the lesson identified is fully addressed in a timely fashion.
- e. Validate - Either judged case by case or at a quarterly operational lessons board, validation of a lesson identified is when the analysis and implementation phases are complete. The lesson identified then becomes a lesson learned.

(2) MOD lessons from specific past incidents

109. In this section I set out the process the MOD undertook to identify lessons during the pandemic, as well as lessons the MOD has identified during specific past incidents including disease outbreaks such as Avian and Swine Flu and Ebola.

(a) Lesson identification during the pandemic

110. When the pandemic began in the spring of 2020 there was a lot of work done to bring together lesson learning from relevant past events, to inform pandemic planning. The MOD's Development, Concepts and Doctrine Centre ("DCDC") undertook work to determine lessons learned from relevant past operations. DCDC reviewed over 60 documents held in the DLIMS relating to the following matters: (i) MACAs, Humanitarian Aid & Disaster Relief (identifying lessons that may support pandemic assistance to overseas territories), and (ii) pandemics/epidemics in this century. Those were all reviewed for lessons and lesson-themes that might support the MOD's contribution to the national response to the pandemic. The work of the DCDC and other MOD bodies at this time can be found in the following documents –

- (i) Land Warfare Centre, Lessons Exploitation cell, "*MACA lessons to inform COVID-19 planning*", 13 March 2020 [DW26];
- (ii) Land Warfare Centre, Lessons Exploitation cell, "*MACA – Additional Lessons*", dated 19 March 2020 [DW27];
- (iii) DCDC, "*DCDC Compendium of Past MACA/HADR/Pandemic Lessons to Support MOD'S Response to COVID-19*", 8 April 2020, (also described as the "*compendium of findings*") ("*Compendium Findings*") [DW28];
- (iv) DCDC, "*Rearsight: A Review of Strategic & Op-Level Lessons*", 13 April 2020 [DW29] ("*Rearsight Review*").

111. It may assist the Inquiry if I provide a little more detail on the sources of the Rearsight Review and the Compendium Findings:

- a. The Rearsight Review summarises principal lesson themes from events such as Op OLYMPIC (military support for the 2012 Olympic Games), Op

GRITROCK (Ebola, 2015), Op RUMAN (Hurricane IRMA, 2017), and Op COMET (Commonwealth Games, 2014).

- b. The Compendium Findings pools lessons learned from the following events / military operations: (i) Op FRESCO (military involvement in managing emergency firefighting fleet during the 2002/3 national Fire Brigade Strike); (ii) Op SAOMA (2005 London terrorist attacks); (iii) Op ORETTA (2005 G8 Summit); (iv) Op GIRAFFE (July 2007 Gloucestershire / River Severn floods); (v) Op Australia BUSHFIRES ASSIST (Australian- Observations); (vi) Op PITCHPOLE (2014 floods) (vii) Op OLYMPIC (2012 Olympic Games); (viii) Op COMET (Commonwealth Games, 2014); (ix) Op GRITROCK (Ebola, 2015); (x) Op RUMAN (Hurricane IRMA, 2017); (xii) As well as external reports on learning from the Ebola crisis. The Compendium Findings contains a very detailed listing over 23 pages, of all the lessons identified from these numerous experiences of the MOD. I will not set out here the 23 pages of lessons listed there.

(a) Avian Flu and Swine Flu

112. The learning from Avian Flu and the 2009 Swine Flu pandemic has been discussed above at paragraphs 87 to 94, under the heading “*Implementation and development of a pandemic plan*”. In particular, I quoted at length from the 2012 Pandemic Guidance, which sets out lessons learned from Swine Flu.
113. There were very detailed lessons recorded in 2010. I exhibit to my statement the 2010 lessons learned [DW30]. I will not repeat here the dozen pages of lessons set out in that document.
114. These lessons were considered and discussed at the 20th meeting of the Defence Pandemic Flu Implementation Group, which was held on 15 February 2010 [DW31]. The meeting agreed that the report to VCDS should keep a focus on the serious long

term threat of an avian influenza, as distinct from the experiences of swine flu specifically; that given media concern suggesting the Government might have over-reacted, the Cabinet Office should lead work to better understand whether the reaction to swine flu had been proportionate; and that the MOD needed to feed the vaccination requirements for deployed personnel into the CCC for future planning.

115. The lessons from this then fed into the MOD's 2010 Response Plan [exhibited at DW20] which I have discussed above in the context of the development of pandemic planning.

(b) *Ebola*

116. As regards Ebola, the MOD did play a significant role in Op GRITROCK, the 2013-2016 British, Irish and Canadian participation in the fight against the Ebola virus epidemic in West Africa. Lessons from this experience were captured in a series of peer reviewed journals.

- a. Bricknell, M. Hodgetts, T. Beaton, K. & McCourt, A. (2016) Operation GRITROCK: the Defence Medical Services' story and emerging lessons from supporting the UK response to the Ebola crisis. *Journal of the Royal Army Medical Corps*, 162(3), 169–175 [DW32].
- b. Bricknell, M. Terrell, A. Ross, D. & White, D. (2016) Health protection during the Ebola crisis: the Defence Medical Services approach. *Journal of the Royal Army Medical Corps*, 162(3) [DW33].
- c. Forestier, C. Cox, A. T. & Horne, S. (2016) Coordination and relationships between organisations during the civil-military international response against Ebola in Sierra Leone: an observational discussion. *Journal of the Royal Army Medical Corps*, 162(3) [DW34].

- d. Gibson, C. Fletcher, T. Clay, K. & Griffiths, A.(2016) Foreign Medical Teams in support of the Ebola outbreak: a UK military model of pre-deployment training and assurance. *Journal of the Royal Army Medical Corps*, 162(3), 163–168 [DW35].
- e. Draper, H. & Jenkins, S. (2017) Ethical challenges experienced by UK military medical personnel deployed to Sierra Leone (Op GRITROCK) during the 2014-2015 Ebola outbreak: a qualitative study. *BMC medical ethics*, 18(1), 77 [DW36].

(c) Other diseases outbreaks

117. The Defence Public Health Unit, which I have outlined in an initial section of my statement, contributed public health-specific lessons learned from past near pandemic events which indicated that public health structures were overly reactive. Subsequent work included a public health workforce interoperability review in 2016 which, together with a paper examining optimisation of Defence Preventive Medicine Services [DW37], recommended bolstering centralised public health capacity and introducing the concept of a broader public health network, Defence Public Health Network (“DPHN”) to engender collaborative working, to reduce reactivity and to avoid duplication of effort.
- (a) Structural changes to the DPHU were implemented in 2018 to strengthen central (HQ DMS) public health elements through the creation of two new Force Health Protection (“FHP”) posts. The additional capacity was used to support health protection policy development and to provide advice to Front Line Commands on preventing infections and outbreaks on operations and in the Firm Base.
 - (b) From its conceptualisation in 2016, the DPHN has evolved to include other supporting specialties in a collaborative ‘one health’ approach to planning, policy and responding to incidents. Included in the DPHN are; medical intelligence, microbiology and infectious disease consultants and Infection Prevention Control specialists.

- (c) Defence Public Health has continued to develop infectious disease (“ID”) surveillance systems using reports based on primary care data to generate infectious disease reports which; support exiting ID notification systems, increase situational awareness and completeness of ID reporting and facilitate follow up health protection actions. Weekly syndromic surveillance reporting was introduced for influenza like illness and nonspecific gastrointestinal illness in 2017. This contributed important pre-pandemic learning which recognised that Defence Public Health could achieve a more complete and contemporaneous view of infectious diseases in our personnel by supplementing the requirement for clinicians to manually report suspected and confirmed infectious disease to DPHU and PHE/UKHSA, by running our own primary care reports which capture ID-related Read codes entered during patient consultations. The same methodology was used to monitor Covid-19 cases from 2020 and has evolved further since the pandemic.
- (d) 2016/17 analysis of influenza like illness data leading to a journal article which subsequently informed Defence policy for flu vaccinations: Dermont MA, Elmer T, Influenza syndromic surveillance and vaccine efficacy in the UK Armed Forces, 2017–2018, BMJ Military Health, 2019 165[395-399] [DW38].
- (e) Use of new reporting methodologies to support development of Covid-19 dashboards which informed Defence situational awareness in early 2020.
- (f) Developing links with PHE since the organization stood up in 2013 to strengthen health protection collaboration at the strategic and operational level.

118. In the time available we have not identified any specific lessons recorded on DLIMS relating to the 2006 bird flu outbreak, the 2012 MERS outbreak, and the 2015-2016 Zika virus epidemic. In relation to the 2006 bird flu outbreak there are various documents recording planning by the MOD in relation but no DLIMS records. This may be because the MOD was not the lead Department for these incidents and any lessons records should be held by the Department which led the response.

(g) Other events

119. I also exhibit summaries of lessons identified from events listed here, so the Inquiry can see the detailed analysis and review carried out by the MOD post-event: (i) Op COMET [DW39] (ii) Op PITCHPOLE [DW40].

120. In addition, the MOD conducts an annual review of its performance to support to FCDO during the Core Hurricane Season in the Caribbean. There is extensive joint planning conducted with the FCDO, with MOD Strategic Liaison Officers employed both in Whitehall and in the region. This facilitates the opportunity to learn lessons from previous seasons, enhanced planning, and wider preparations for the following hurricane season.

(3) MOD lessons from exercises

121. In this section I set out the MOD position on lesson identification from government exercises. The lesson identification process for exercises such as 2015 Surge Capacity Exercise, the 2015 Exercise Valverde, 2016 Exercise Alice would be led by the Government department which had responsibility for the planning and operation of that exercise. That was not the MOD for any of the exercises listed in the request. Where Defence has supported other government departments, civil authorities, or a devolved administration, it is not unusual for it to be invited to contribute to lessons events held by that body. The MOD may have participated in any lesson identifying activity, but the records should be held by the lead Government department.

(a) Exercise Winter Willow

122. The MOD participated in Exercise Winter Willow held in January/February 2007. Winter Willow was a level one (Central Government) response on the impact of a flu pandemic sweeping across the UK. It also involved the devolved administrations, other

government departments, regional and local authorities, and the majority of Primary Health Care Trusts (“PCTs”).

123. Defence Pandemic Flu Implementation Group and Director General Support Services – Business Continuity Plan continued work following this in engaging TLBs and Trading Funds concerning the critical actions needed to be put in place to support the MOD’s flu pandemic preparations. This work is outlined above, under the heading “*Implementation and development of a pandemic plan*” (paras 87 to 94).
124. MOD also participated in Winter Willow at regional level with Joint Regional Liaison Officer (“JRLO”) participation. As with a real pandemic, MOD objectives were throughout the exercise the maintenance of critical defence outputs, i.e. maintenance of the deterrent; protection of the sovereignty of the UK and dependent territories; preparation for, and the conduct of, current operations; and maintenance of contingent capability. In practice no requests were made for support during the exercise.
125. Lessons learnt and actions arising out of the Exercise Winter Willow and the Dstl - led Tabletop exercise were assessed and assimilated into the MOD’s overall planning. In parallel to this, Directorate Business Continuity Plan, a previous unit that existed within the MOD, and staff continued to engage with TLBs and Trading Funds concerning the critical actions to put in place to support Departmental pandemic flu preparations.
126. The lessons from Exercise Winter Willow fed into the 2008 “*Pan-Defence Pandemic Flu Contingency Preparations: A Guide for Defence Personnel*” [DW41] prepared by the Defence Pandemic Flu Implementation Group.
127. MOD also participated in Exercise Cygnus, a Tier 1 (national level) pandemic influenza exercise from 18 - 20 October 2016. MOD capacity to assist during a

reasonable worst case scenario influenza pandemic was considered as part of a cross government review of pandemic planning.

(4) Lessons from the pandemic

128. In this section I set out the MOD lessons identified during the pandemic. Early on in the pandemic the MOD came to the conclusion that a better mechanism was required to cope with a developing situation which was unlike anything that had been dealt with previously. As a result, the Defence Lessons Working Group (“DLWG”) was adapted, widening the attendance.

129. Two pan-Defence events were conducted during the pandemic: an Early Exploitation Event in July 2020 (“Early Exploitation Event”); and a Lessons Summit in October 2020 (“Lessons Summit”).

(a) July Early Exploitation Event

130. The Early Exploitation Event was held in mid-July 2020. This was convened with a broad range of stakeholders and subject matter experts at staff level. The aims were to share lessons identified to date at TLB-level across Defence, to be prepared for a resurgence of the pandemic. It was also to ensure that some of the lessons that had been identified had been addressed or were at least in progress. The secondary purpose was to identify unresolved Defence-level issues to be carried forward for detailed analysis at the Lessons Summit planned for October of that year.

131. Participating organisations were requested to brief on observations and lessons identified arising from their participation in the Defence response the pandemic, against a set of themes and subject areas.

132. Results were summarised and reported widely. Thereafter, meetings continued every two weeks, and the transparent collaboration continued as the themes were

moulded in advance of the October Summit. The detail changed shape as more experience was gained, and some subjects that had been dealt with were removed.

(b) October Lessons Summit

133. The 22 October 2020 Lessons Summit was a 3-star summit as outlined in the Lessons Summary [DW42]. The level of attendance for the 22 October 2020 Summit was Senior Officer and above. It was hosted by DG JFD.
134. The summit was split into five working groups each with identified teams:
- a. New Ways of Working – Training, processes, Management of assets, remote access above SECRET.
 - b. People – Leadership and welfare provision, Reservists and Regulars
 - c. Command and Control and Policy – Cross-Government working, Strategic and Operational Command and Control and policy
 - d. Resilience and Continuity Planning – Business Continuity Plan’s policy and planning
 - e. Enablers – Defence support requirements.
135. Joint Warfare laid out the main discussion points before the summit, so that all the 1 and 2* leads and their subject matter expert groups could prepare for the detailed discussions to be held at the Summit. After general opening statements, each group then went into a “deep dive” analysis. The process was undertaken in a transparent manner, in that all participants contributed to and had access to all the themes as they developed. The findings were discussed further and then agreed by summit stakeholders. Results were posted for final discussion in an ODCR (Observation Discussion Conclusion and Recommendation) format, and then closed after a week.
136. The final output of the 2020 Summit identified 32 key strategic lessons with associated recommendations. Each of these were assigned an action officer and a proposed timescale for resolution. These lessons were loaded onto DLIMS so that their

progress to resolution could be tracked. The methodology used for the capture and management of Covid-19 lessons is now held up to be an exemplar for the Defence lessons process. The 2020 Summit captured key strategic issues for the MOD. Other lessons were captured at the operational and tactical level by the Joint Commander (SJC(UK)), working with the Front-Line Commands. These are also being taken forward by the relevant responsible area in Defence. It should be noted that of the 32 strategic lessons captured 20 have been actioned and are now resolved.

137. A more detailed account of the summit's conclusions is contained in the document "*OUTPUT NOTE - DEFENCE COVID-19 LESSONS SUMMIT - 22 OCT 20*" dated 10 December 2020 [DW43]. A further document, "Defence Lessons Summit SPO Strategic Lessons –Key Lessons Identified Sept 20 –Jan 21 (Update 9 Jan 23)" noted detailed lessons in a number of areas [DW44]:

- a. cross-Whitehall working;
- b. the MOD's approach to the National Security Risk Assessment;
- c. the need to improve core Risk Management and Information Management;
- d. issues concerning Delegated Authorities in Doctrine;
- e. that doctrine should reflect the reality and inevitability of strategic compression;
and
- f. comments on HMG Crisis Architecture adapted at start of COVID-19.

(5) The MOD's overall learning from involvement supporting other areas of Government

138. Over the last 10-12 years of supporting other areas of Government through MOD MACA requests, the MOD has identified the following five key lessons.

- a. *Strategic Liaison Officers* – the early deployment of these personnel to our cross-Whitehall partners has several benefits. It demonstrates Defence support early and aids a better and swifter understanding of the situation. The Strategic

Liaison Officers are then able to shape any demand and ensure other government departments adhere to the MACA principles.

- b. *Governance* – in responding to any crisis, it is key to set out clear governance structures early. It is important to know who is ‘supported’ (i.e. who is the Lead Government Department for the general civil emergency) and who is ‘Supporting’. A clear articulation of who holds the Senior Responsible Owner (“SRO”) position is also key.
- c. *Information Exchange* – in complex and challenging emergencies, it is vital to be able to exchange information in an effective way. Challenges remain when working with cross-Whitehall partners, as we continue to operate with a multitude of information systems, which are often not compatible.
- d. *Defence Capabilities* – The MOD has learnt the importance for cross-Whitehall partners to understand how Defence can support, and equally important, areas where it is not appropriate for Defence to be considered part of the response. An example is that Defence personnel should not normally be used in public order roles, where the police have primacy.
- e. *Training and Exercising* – The MOD has learnt the value of training and exercising should not be underestimated. Where this is done in a cross-Whitehall context, it allows Departments to get a much better understanding of how each other operates, identify key risks, agree common planning assumptions, and work together to deliver required outcomes. It also helps to build important personal working relationships with our cross-Whitehall colleagues.

G: PLANNING FOR FUTURE PANDEMICS

139. There is work in hand to develop the UK's planning for future pandemics led by the Cabinet Office. From a Defence perspective departmental planning is led by DSR and CT & UK Ops and this includes:
- a. Cross governmental resilience work;
 - b. MOD specific resilience policy;
 - c. Resolving Lessons Identified which are relevant to resilience;
 - d. Use of Liaison Officers and Planning expertise to assist departmental and wider HMG on planning.
140. I set out more detail on each of these areas below.

(1) Cross Governmental Resilience

141. In 2021 the UK Government published its Integrated Review into its Security, Defence, Development and Foreign policy intent out to 2030 [DW45]. As part of this review the UK Government recognised the importance of National Resilience and made a commitment to publish a National Resilience Strategy. Along with all other Government Departments, Defence, through the Directorate of Security and Resilience and the Counter Terrorism and UK Operations team, engaged with the Cabinet Office on the development of the Government's Resilience Framework. The UK Government Resilience Framework (December 2022) [DW46] includes the following on the Armed forces:

“93... the Armed Forces are facing pressure as risks multiply and diversify both at home and overseas, and they cannot be the first port of call whenever an emergency hits. The armed forces will continue to play a vital supporting role to the civil authorities in resilience but will not be asked to take on an enhanced role.

94. ... the need to meet increased persistent overseas threat means that requests for military assistance will need to continue to meet a high bar for authorisation. Utilising the Armed Forces in domestic resilience tasks comes with a cost: both financial for the requesting UK Government department or Devolved Administration, and to the Armed Forces in the military capability diverted from its primary role of protecting the UK's national interests.

95. The UK Government will continue to work towards maximising the effectiveness of civilian organisations, with a view to reducing reliance on the Armed Forces. Therefore, a more strategic application of MACA will be required in the future as requests for MACA should be an instrument of last resort and only used when:

- *There is a definite need to act and the tasks the Armed Forces are being asked to perform are clear;*
- *Other options, including mutual aid, commercial alternatives and the voluntary sector have been discounted;*
- *The civil authority lacks the necessary capability to fulfil the task and it is unreasonable or prohibitively expensive to expect it to develop one; or*
- *The civil authority has all or some capability, but it may not be available immediately, or to the required scale, and the urgency of the task requires rapid external support from the MOD.*

96. The military will remain an ultimate guarantor of national security and resilience in emergencies, however, utilising our Armed Forces for non-emergency, routine tasks where the military do not play a specific and defined role should be seen as an indication of policy failure, inadequate resilience planning or chronic underinvestment. There will be a shift to deliver some MACA through locally based Reserves and the UK Government will retain existing MACA thresholds and encourage adherence to them.

97. Reserve service personnel already participate in the full spectrum of the UK Armed Forces, including recently in operations in support of the UK Government's COVID-19 response. In the future, as a part of Defence's Integrated Operating model, it is envisaged that the Reserves will play a greater role in resilience operations and MACA. Key to this will be an enhanced relationship between Defence and the employers of Reservists who may be asked to release them for military duties at shorter periods of notice.

(2) MOD Resilience Policy

142. Separate to the UK Government commitments in the Integrated Review on National Resilience, the Directorate of Security and Resilience had, in 2019, identified a need to improve Defence's policy on internal resilience and planning activity.
143. This work was interrupted by the pandemic, but was restarted in late 2020, incorporating lessons learned from COVID.
144. In May 2021, a proposal was presented to the Defence's Executive Committee on the development of a Defence Resilience Framework. The Resilience Framework set out a series of measures to improve resilience within Defence, by assuring the delivery of critical outputs, formalising risk identification, and management and introducing a resilience culture by putting resilience on a functional and professional footing in Defence.

145. The first step in delivering on this Defence Resilience Framework was to extract Resilience and Business Continuity policy from JSP 440 (The Defence Manual of Security and Resilience) [DW13], and publish it in its own dedicated JSP, with expanded policy direction and guidance.
146. The MOD's new JSP 503 Defence Manual of Resilience. The new JSP 503, "The Manual of Defence Resilience" (re-using the same document reference as the previous JSP 503 Business Continuity that was disestablished in 2012) was published in January 2023 part 1 and part 2 [DW12].
147. During 2023 work will focus on developing the resilience function, a Defence Board Risk on Resilience, and assurance procedures.
148. The aim of the new JSP 503 is to ensure the Defence Enterprise can maintain the delivery of its most important outputs in the face of acute risks. Chronic risks, while requiring a robust Departmental response, should be mitigated through wider policy changes or "business as usual" mitigations and are not covered by this JSP. This document builds on the lessons learned from COVID-19, the war in Ukraine, the objectives set out in the Integrated Review 2021, and the Government's Resilience Framework.
149. The MOD's aim is to make resilience a mainstream issue running through business planning and operational activity, in the way security and health and safety have been. Designing in resilience from the outset is more effective and more efficient than adding resilience planning at the end.
150. The policy set out in this new JSP 503 is intended to direct and guide Defence to maintain and improve delivery of its capability, outputs, activities, and objectives in the face of sudden disruption.
151. Defence is developing a small number of strategic management plans setting out how it will manage the most severe threats/risks (e.g. National Power Outage,

etc.). These plans will sit within, and be subordinate to, JSP 503 The Manual of Defence Resilience. One of these strategic management plans relates to pandemics and is in the late stages of development. Once published it will be reviewed annually by the existing Resilience and Business Continuity Working Group.

(3) MOD Updated Lessons Policy

152. In March 2021 the MOD issued a Defence Instructions and Notices (“DIN”) titled “Defence Lessons Policy” (reference: 2021DIN03-007) [DW47] (“2021 Lessons Policy”), which was the latest policy to be issued. The purpose of this document is to describe the Defence wide lessons structure and its supporting processes and enablers. It sets out the ownership, governance, methodology and activity required to progress lessons from observations to exploitation for learning, in order to maximise and enhance operational capability.
153. The 2021 Lessons Policy sets out seven principal characteristics of an effective lessons systems, the building of an organisational culture of lesson learning, and detailed systems for governance for lesson learning.
154. The 2021 Lessons Policy also states that responsibility for all aspects of Defence Organisational Learning was transferred from VCDS to Comd STRATCOM in April 2021. The overarching direction on Organisational Learning, which contains Defence Lessons, is VCDS Organisational Learning Strategy and Road Map [DW48]. This sets out the systems and processes to capture knowledge systematically and ensure that sharing and learning from it is integrated into routine business. Whilst Director Joint Warfare (“DJW”) retains the leadership role for pan-Defence lessons policy and coherence activities, the overall responsibility for Defence Organisational Learning was transferred back to Head Office in 2022.
155. The 2021 Lessons Policy describes the work of the following bodies:
- a. Defence Organisational Learning Strategy Programme Board;
 - b. Defence Organisational Learning Working Group;

- c. Joint Warfare Development Board;
- d. Defence Lessons Working Group;
- e. Lessons Technical Working Groups; and
- f. Defence Wide Lessons Teams.

156. The policy also has a detailed description of the Defence process of lesson learning, and the Defence lessons information and knowledge management, including the information systems to be used.

(4) Liaison Officers and Planning

157. As explained in JDP 02 (Fourth edition), a number of recent operations, most notably Defence support to the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020-21 under Operation Rescript, have highlighted the need for Defence to be prepared to field a wider range of liaison officers and planners at all levels: central and devolved government, sub-national bodies and agencies, and local responders. As such a network of liaison officers is maintained, trained, and held at readiness for commitments such as Op TEMPERER;⁴ however, in most circumstances such augmentation will be designed to suit the requirements of a specific operation.

H. CRITICAL REFLECTIONS

158. The clearest and most comprehensive source of critical reflection on the MOD's involvement in the pandemic is set out in the report produced following the investigation conducted by Defence Operational Capability ("DOC") into the MOD response to the pandemic during the period January to July 2020. DOC is part of Defence's learning and development process and contributes to the MOD's strategic lessons. It is designed to assure, challenge, and improve Defence outputs, acting as an internal consultancy service.

⁴ Op TEMPERER is the UK government's plan to support the police following a major disruptive event.

159. The DOC Assessment 20/03, *The Defence Response to Covid-19, January 2020 to July 2020* (dated 31 March 2021) [DW49] (“DOC Assessment”) sets out the Defence response to the pandemic and offers critical reflections on how the MOD responded to that unprecedented event. This DOC Assessment has been subject to Ministerial sign off and the Inquiry is invited to consider this document as the most comprehensive analysis on the MoD’s response to the pandemic and what lessons can be learnt from that response. In particular, chapter 5 of the DOC Assessment sets out key lessons for the future.

STATEMENT OF TRUTH

I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true. I understand that proceedings may be brought against anyone who makes, or causes to be made, a false statement in a document verified by a statement of truth without an honest belief of its truth.

Signed:

Personal Data

Dated: 12/04/2023

ANNEX I: KEY MOD DECISION MAKERS FOR RESILIENCE PLANNING

<u>role</u>	<u>name</u>	<u>time</u>
Dir DBR/Dir Sy & Res (SCS 2)	Mark Preston	2009-2015
	Vincent Devine	2018 – 2021
Hd DBR/Hd DSR (SCS 1)	Deana Rouse	2012 - 2013
	Carol Bernard	2013 - 2014
	Paul Fyfe	2014 - 2016
	Paula Hothersall	2016 - 2017
	Iain Harrison	2017 - 2019
DSR-Resilience AH (G7)	Georgina Wild	2015 - 2018
	James Cutler	2018 - 2019
	Ben Bogaert	2020 - 2021

ANNEX 2: SELECT ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS IN MOD DOCUMENTS

Acronym/ or abbreviation	Full title
AFs	Armed Forces
CDSPD	Chief of Defence Staff Planning Directive
COBR	Cabinet Office Briefing Room
cPAP	Continuous Positive Airway
CR & R	COVID Recovery and Response
CSF	COVID Support Force
DE & S	Defence Equipment & Support
DHSC	Department of Health & Social Care
DIN	Defence Instruction Notice
DMP	Defence Management Plan
DMS	Defence Medical Services
DBS	Disclosure Barring Service
DLUHC	Dept for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
DSTL	Defence Science & Technology Laboratories
FCDO	Foreign Commonwealth & Development Office
FE	Force Elements
HCDC	House of Commons Defence Committee
HGV	Heavy Goods Vehicle
HMG	Her Majesty's Government
HO	Head Office
JDP	Joint Doctrine Publication
JRLO	Joint Regional Liaison Officer
IRG	Immediate Resupply Groups
LFD	Lateral Flow Device
LGD	Lead Government Department
MACA	Military Aid to the Civil Authorities
Medevac	Medical evacuation

Acronym/ or abbreviation	Full title
MHCLG	Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Govt
MOD	Ministry of Defence
MTU	Mobile Testing Unit
NHS	National Health Service
NHSE	NHS England
OGDs	Other Government Departments
PHE	Public Health England
PM	Prime Minister
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
RPoC	Regional Point of Command
RRP	Recovery Response Plan
SAGE	Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies
SASB	Scottish Ambulance Service Board
SCAS	South Central Ambulance Service
SJC UK	Standing Joint Commander (UK)
SofS	Secretary of State
SP	Service Personnel
SPO	Security Policy and Operations
VQRFs	Vaccine Quick Reaction Forces
WAST	Welsh Ambulance Service Trust

UK COVID-19 INQUIRY

**EXHIBITS TO WITNESS STATEMENT OF
DAVID PETER WILLIAMS CB**

<u>Exhibit</u>	<u>Document</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>Date</u>
DW1	Defence Operating Model: How Defence Works [as first published]	MOD	-.12.12
DW1	Defence Operating Model: How Defence Works [version 6, published September 2020]	MOD	-.09.20
DW2	JSP 950: Volume 7 Public Health, Chapter 2 Communicable Disease Prevention Policy	DMS	-.05.22
DW2	Infection Prevention and Control Lft 2-10-2 (v2.0 Jun 21)	DMS	-.06.21
DW2	Leaflet 3-3-1, Preventing Malaria in UK Armed Forces Personnel	DMS	-.06.20
DW3	Recommendations for the Design of a Comprehensive End-to-End Civil Alert System	Dstl	20.04.12
DW4	Social, Cultural and Behavioural Response to the Spread of an Infectious Disease. Final Report – Base Year 2012-2013 (UK Restricted)	Dstl	25.09.13
DW5	Emerging and Persistent Infectious Diseases (EPID) and the implication for Defence and National Security	Dstl	-.07.13
DW6	Ecology and evolution of Avian Influenza Virus (AIV) in wild birds in	Dstl	-.08.18

<u>Exhibit</u>	<u>Document</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>Date</u>
	Georgia and establishing the host population structure		
DW7	JDP 02, UK Operations: the Defence Contribution to Resilience, First edition	MOD	-.12.04
DW8	JDP 02, Second edition JDP 02, Second edition Addendum	MOD	09.07 02.10
DW9	JDP 02, Third edition	MOD	-.02.17
DW10	JDP 02, Fourth edition, as first published	MOD	-.11.21
DW11	UK Influenza Pandemic Preparedness Strategy	UK Department of Health	-.-.11
DW12	JSP 503 (first version), The Manual of Defence Resilience Part 1	MOD	-.01.23
DW12	JSP 503, The Manual of Defence Resilience Part 2	MOD	-.01.23
DW13	JSP 440 The Defence Manual of Security and Resilience	MOD	-.01.22
DW14	JSP 939 Defence policy for modelling and simulation	MOD	-.11.21
DW15	Pan-Defence Pandemic Flu Contingency Preparations: A Guide for Defence Personnel	Defence Pandemic Flu Implementation Group	-.02.08
DW16	Pan-Defence Pandemic Influenza Contingency Preparations MOD Pandemic Influenza Framework, Key Tasks And Guidance Notes	MOD	-.10.08
DW17	Pan-Defence Pandemic Influenza Contingency Preparations: A Guide for Business Managers and Defence Personnel	MOD	-.10.08
DW18	Pan-Defence Pandemic Influenza Contingency Preparations MOD Pandemic Communications Overview	MOD	-.11.08

<u>Exhibit</u>	<u>Document</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>Date</u>
DW19	The 2009 Influenza Pandemic: An independent review of the UK response to the 2009 influenza pandemic.	MOD	07-07-10
DW20	MOD Response Plan	MOD	09-11-10
DW21	Pandemic Influenza Managing the Defence Response	MOD	8-12-10
DW22	Pandemic Influenza: Guidance For Defence: Guidance to support Defence Response Planning	MOD	-.02-12
DW23	UK Biological Security Strategy	HMG	-.07.18
DW24	Defence Reform An independent report into the structure and management of the Ministry of Defence	Lord Levene	-.-.11
DW25	Defence Lessons Policy (2016DIN03-020)	MOD	-.-.16
DW26	MACA lessons to inform COVID-19 planning	MOD Land Warfare Centre, Lessons Exploitation cell	13.03.20
DW27	MACA – Additional Lessons	MOD Land Warfare Centre, Lessons Exploitation cell	19.03.20
DW28	DCDC Compendium of Past MACA/HADR/Pandemic Lessons to Support MOD'S Response to COVID-19	MOD Development, Concepts and Doctrine Centre	08.04.20
DW29	Rearsight: A Review of Strategic & Op-Level Lessons	MOD Development, Concepts and Doctrine Centre	13.04.20
DW30	Swine Flu Lessons Identified	MOD	09.07.10

<u>Exhibit</u>	<u>Document</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>Date</u>
DW31	Minutes of the 20 th meeting of the Defence Pandemic Flu Implementation Group	MOD Pandemic Flu Implementation Group	15.02.10
DW32	Operation GRITROCK: the Defence Medical Services' story and emerging lessons from supporting the UK response to the Ebola crisis. Journal of the Royal Army Medical Corps, 162(3), 169–175	Bricknell, M. Hodgetts, T. Beaton, K. & McCourt, A.	--.16
DW33	Health protection during the Ebola crisis: the Defence Medical Services approach. Journal of the Royal Army Medical Corps, 162(3)	Bricknell, M. Terrell, A. Ross, D. & White, D.	--.16
DW34	Coordination and relationships between organisations during the civil-military international response against Ebola in Sierra Leone: an observational discussion. Journal of the Royal Army Medical Corps, 162(3)	Forestier, C. Cox, A. T. & Horne, S.	--.16
DW35	Foreign Medical Teams in support of the Ebola outbreak: a UK military model of pre-deployment training and assurance. Journal of the Royal Army Medical Corps, 162(3), 163–168	Gibson, C. Fletcher, T. Clay, K. & Griffiths, A.	--.17
DW36	Ethical challenges experienced by UK military medical personnel deployed to Sierra Leone (operation GRITROCK) during the 2014-2015 Ebola outbreak: a qualitative study. BMC medical ethics, 18(1), 77	Draper, H. & Jenkins, S.	--.17
DW37	Defence Preventive Medicine Services	MOD	30.03.18
DW38	Influenza syndromic surveillance and vaccine efficacy in the UK Armed Forces, 2017–2018, BMJ Military Health, 2019 165[395-399]	Dermont MA, Elmer T	--.19
DW39	Op COMET Lessons Identified	MOD	14.11.17
DW40	Defence Operational Capability Operational Lessons Report 14/3 Operation PITCHPOLE.	MOD	29.04.14

<u>Exhibit</u>	<u>Document</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>Date</u>
DW41	Pan-Defence Pandemic Flu Contingency Preparations: A Guide for Defence Personnel	Defence Pandemic Flu Implementation Group	-.-.08
DW42	Lessons Summary document - 32 Strategic Lessons – Lessons Summit	MOD	22.10.20
DW42	COVID-19 - Improve core Risk Management (and Information Management)	MOD	02.02.23
DW42	COVID-19 - Delegated authorities	MOD	02.02.23
DW42	COVID-19 - Defence Lessons Summit - Reality of Strategic Compression	MOD	02.02.23
DW42	COVID-19 - HMG Crisis Architecture adapted at start of COVID-19	MOD	02.02.23
DW42	Cross Defence Contingent Stock Level Review	MOD	02.02.23
DW42	Cross Defence Resilience and Business Continuity (R&BC) Review, DLIMS #54878	MOD	02.02.23
DW42	Systematic approach to Resilience and Business Continuity planning, DLIMS #54879	MOD	02.02.23
DW42	Relating Resilience and Business Continuity Plans to Defence Outputs, DLIMS #54880	MOD	02.02.23
DW42	Revision of Defence Resilience and Business Continuity policy, DLIMS #54881	MOD	02.02.23
DW42	Enhanced proactivity with horizon scanning, DLIMS #54885	MOD	02.02.23

<u>Exhibit</u>	<u>Document</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>Date</u>
DW42	Enhanced KSE and tracking for Regulars in FPrep & FGen, DLIMS #54902	MOD	02.02.23
DW42	COVID-19 - Improve core Risk Management (and Information Management), DLIMS #54963	MOD	02.02.23
DW42	COVID-19 - Delegated authorities, DLIMS #54964	MOD	02.02.23
DW42	COVID-19 - Defence Lessons Summit - Reality of Strategic Compression, DLIMS #54965	MOD	02.02.23
DW42	COVID-19 - HMG Crisis Architecture adapted at start of COVID-19, DLIMS #54966	MOD	02.02.23
DW42	Relating Resilience and Business Continuity Plans to Defence Outputs, Lesson ID #54880	MOD	02.02.23
DW42	Revision of Defence Resilience and Business Continuity policy, Lesson ID #54881	MOD	02.02.23
DW43	Output Note - Defence Covid-19 Lessons Summit - 22 Oct 20	MOD	10.12.20
DW44	Defence Lessons Summit SPO Strategic Lessons –Key Lessons Identified Sept 20-Jan 21 –[updated]	MOD	09.01.23
DW45	Integrated Review	MOD	-.-.21
DW46	Resilience Framework	HMG	19.12.22
DW47	Defence Lessons Policy, ref 2021DIN03-007	MOD	-.03.21
DW48	VCDS Organisational Learning Strategy and Road Map	VCDS	-.03-21

<u>Exhibit</u>	<u>Document</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>Date</u>
DW49	Defence Operational Capability Assessment 20/03 The Defence Response to COVID-19	DOC	31.03.21
Also disclosed but not exhibited:			
DW50	COVID-19 Lessons Development Summary from Joint Warfare	Defence Lessons Working Group	18.11.20
DW51	Transcript, joint message to all staff from CDS and the Perm Sec	MOD	23.03.20
DW52	JSP 375 Management of Health and Safety in Defence - Directive and Guidance	MOD	-.10.20
DW52	JSP 375 Chapter 1 Emergency and Disaster Planning	MOD	-.10.20