



NOTICE OF DETERMINATION
CORE PARTICIPANT APPLICATION
MODULE 5 - DR DARREN MANN

Introduction

1. In my [Opening Statement](#) on 21 July 2022, I explained that Modules would be announced and opened in sequence, with those wishing to take a formal role in the Inquiry invited to apply to become Core Participants for each module. On 24 October 2023 the Inquiry opened Module 5 and invited anyone who wished to be considered as a Core Participant to that Module to submit an application in writing to the Solicitor to the Inquiry by 17 November 2023.
2. The Provisional Outline of Scope for Module 5 provides that this module will consider and make recommendations regarding the procurement and distribution to end-users across the four nations of the United Kingdom of key healthcare related equipment and supplies, including PPE, ventilators and oxygen. Further modules will be announced and opened in due course, to address other aspects of the Inquiry's Terms of Reference.
3. On 6 November 2023 the Inquiry received an application from Dr Darren Mann for Core Participant status in Module 5.
4. I made a provisional decision not to designate Dr Mann as a Core Participant in Module 5, thereby declining Dr Mann's application ("the Provisional Decision"), on 13 December 2023. Dr Mann was provided with an opportunity to renew the application in writing by 4pm on 21 December 2023.
5. The Applicant did not renew the application by the prescribed deadline. Accordingly, this Notice sets out my final decision on the application.

Application

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

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

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

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

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

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

7. In accordance with the approach set out in my Opening Statement and the Inquiry's [Core Participant Protocol](#), I have considered whether the application fulfils the requirements set out in Rule 5(2) in relation to the issues set out in the Provisional Outline of Scope for Module 5.

Summary of Application

8. The application is made by Dr Mann on the basis of parts (a) and (b) of Rule 5(2) of the Inquiry Rules 2006. Between April 2020 to April 2023, Dr Mann held the following positions within the Cabinet Office and DHSC PPE Cell: (i) Medical Director to the UK Government's national PPE Programme (reporting directly to the Chief Operating Officer); (ii) Lead for Technical and Regulatory Assurance; and (iii) Deputy Chair of the Cross-Government PPE Decision Making Committee. During this time Mr Mann's work involved advising on the safety, effectiveness and suitability of PPE.

9. Between April 2022 to April 2023, Dr Mann was part of the Dissolution Unit within DHSC responsible for product compliance assessment for contracts under commercial dispute (and on occasion suspected criminal activity).

Decision for the Applicant

10. I have considered with great care everything that is said in Dr Mann's application. Having done so, in my discretion, I consider that Dr Mann does not meet the criteria set out in Rule 5 for designation as a Core Participant in Module 5 and, therefore, I have decided not to designate Dr Mann as a Core Participant in Module 5.
11. I am not satisfied that the criteria in Rule 5(2)(a) or (b) are met. While the Applicant held a significant role as the Deputy Chair of the Cross-Government PPE Decision Making Committee, and had some direct involvement in the procurement of PPE during the pandemic within Government, that involvement is not sufficiently significant to satisfy the criteria in Rule 5(2)(a). Similarly, the interest that the Applicant may have in important aspects to be explored by Module 5 are not sufficiently significant to require Core Participant status to be granted. Having regard to the provisions of Rule 5(2)(a) and (b), I have decided to exercise my discretion not to designate Dr Mann as a Core Participant in Module 5.
12. I have taken into account the fact that there are a number of ways in which the Applicant can participate in Module 5 without being a Core Participant. It is also not necessary for an individual or organisation to be a Core Participant in order to provide evidence to the Inquiry. The Applicant may have relevant information to give in relation to matters being examined in the Inquiry and I have asked the Module 5 legal team to liaise with the Applicant to make sure the concerns it raises are reflected in the Inquiry's investigation.
13. For all of those reasons, having considered all of the information provided by Dr Mann, in light of the Provisional Outline of Scope for Module 5, I consider that Dr Mann did not play a direct and significant role in relation to the matters sought to be investigated in Module 5, nor does Dr Mann have a significant interest in an important aspect of the matters to which Module 5 relates. I have therefore decided that Dr

Mann should not be designated as a Core Participant in Module 5 and I confirm that this is my final decision.

14. I will keep the scope of Module 5 under review. My decision not to designate Dr Mann as Core Participants in Module 5 does not preclude it from making any further applications in respect of any later modules. Dr Mann may wish to consider applying for Core Participant status in relation to future modules likely to deal more directly with the matters which have been referred to in the application. I will consider any future applications Dr Mann may wish to make on their merits at the time they are made.

Rt Hon Baroness (Heather) Hallett DBE

Chair of the UK Covid-19 Inquiry

12 January 2024