



Inquiry report security check Protocol

Introduction

1. The Prime Minister has invited the Chair to publish the Inquiry's reports, further to section 25(2) of the Inquiries Act 2005 (the 2005 Act).
2. Wherever the Inquiry has considered sensitive material as part of its work, it will facilitate a security check of its reports prior to their publication. This is to enable it to satisfy itself that none of the content should be restricted from publication in accordance with the provisions of section 25(4)-(6) of the 2005 Act.
3. This Protocol sets out the parameters and mechanism to be adopted for any such security check.

Purpose and mechanism for the security check

4. Following discussion with the relevant department or agency aimed at identifying any security requirements, the Inquiry will invite a limited number of security subject matter specialists (the checkers) from them to undertake a security check. These specialists should not usually be taking any active part in their department's involvement in the Inquiry as a Core Participant.
5. The security check will be undertaken only for the purpose of raising concerns relating to the matters set out in section 25(4)-(6) of the 2005 Act. In particular, its purpose is to highlight any **harm or damage** which might arise relating to **national security, international relations, the economic interests of the UK, disclosure of commercially confidential information and death or injury**.
6. The checkers will inspect the report at the Inquiry's premises during normal working hours over a timeframe to be agreed. This is likely to be one day only.
7. The checkers will **not** be provided with a copy of the report to take away. The security check will take place after the report has been finalised and before it is submitted for printing.
8. The checkers will be provided with all sections of the report for inspection that contain information which the Inquiry considers could conceivably be regarded as raising a security issue. They will not be provided with sections of the report that the Inquiry is certain is not of relevance to the security check. By way of an example, any Executive Summary or Recommendations are unlikely to form part of the security check. The Inquiry will notify the checkers of any sections from the report that it is not providing to them for the security check. Should they have concerns about not having sight of any of these sections, the Inquiry will discuss these concerns and seek to agree how

9. those parts may be dealt with. The Inquiry will make the final decision as to any sections of the report that will not form part of the check. A record will be kept of the sections of the report that are provided for the security check.
10. The checkers will identify to the Inquiry any passages that they consider give rise to security risks. If they consider that text needs to be amended or removed, wherever possible they will provide an alternative form of wording that they consider would allow the Inquiry to make the same comment in its Report while removing the security risk identified.
11. Upon receipt of this advice, the Inquiry will decide whether the text requires amendment and, if so, whether to amend the text as suggested or in some other way. Any revisions to the text other than those recommended by the checkers will be subject to further security checking in accordance with this Protocol. Any consequential changes to text in other parts of the report will also be subject to a further security check.
12. If the checkers have outstanding concerns during the further security check, these should be identified in the same way. Should the Inquiry not agree to the proposed amendments at this stage, discussions will be held between them and the Module Lead Solicitor or Solicitor to the Inquiry to seek to resolve the issue that has arisen.
13. For the avoidance of doubt, the Chair will make the final decision about the text to be included in the report. The Inquiry will notify the government department or agency concerned of her final decision in respect of any disputed text at least 72 hours (excluding weekends and bank holidays) before the final submission of the report to the printers.

Confidentiality of the report

14. The checkers will not share any content of the report with any other individuals. They will undertake that they will not reveal the contents of the report to anyone without the Inquiry's express written consent by each signing a confidentiality agreement.
15. Should the checkers consider that input from further named individuals is necessary to enable them to perform the security check, for example to check specific background details, then they must obtain the express written consent of the Inquiry before doing so. Any such requests for approval to discuss information with further named individuals will be as restricted as possible in their number and scope and confined to the need to make the security check effective.
16. Should the checkers need to take any notes regarding the contents of the report in order to obtain input from further named individuals, they will notify the Inquiry of this need and will allow the Inquiry to take and retain a copy of these notes for its records.