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**From:** NR  
**Sent:** 14 June 2021 17:19  
**To:** Brennan, Mike; NR DfE Permanent Secretary Support; Godfrey, Katrina (DfE – Perm Sec); Gordon, Alexander; TEO HOCS (JP); McCormick, Andrew (TEO); McMahon, Denis; Meharg, Tracy; TEO First Legislative Counsel; Pengelly, Richard; May, Peter; NR (DfE); Widdis, Hugh; Boyle, Colum; Browne, Mark (Permanent Secretary)  
**Cc:** TEO HOCS (JP); Stewart, Chris (TEO); Pearson, Karen; NR NR  
**Subject:** Covid-19 Inquiry - Record Retention and Civil Service Support note from HOCS 14.6.21  
**Attachments:** COVID-19 INDEPENDENT INQUIRY - RECORD RETENTION.pdf

Colleagues,

Please see the attached letter from Darren Tierney, Director General for Propriety and Ethics which has been issued to Whitehall Perm Secs.

I think most of this applies equally to us in the NICS despite the different jurisdiction and civil service issues here however it has not yet been formally agreed as to whether NI is part of the UK wide inquiry or whether we will have our own local NI inquiry. FM and DFM had agreed in principle subject to seeing the Terms of Reference and a decision by the Executive in due course.

Re. the issues of legal support, you will know that DSO did provide support directly to individuals during RHI, and so when it comes to the Covid -19 inquiry it is reasonable to assume that to support them and where needed, Departments can call on the services provided by DSO to advise and assist them and their serving and former officials called upon as witnesses. Similarly pastoral and welfare support would be provided by NICS HR as was the case in RHI.

As ToR/scope is developed, TEO will lead in the discussions with Cabinet Office but will liaise closely with you as more information emerges.

In the meantime I suggest that you now build planning for this inquiry into your board level discussions and governance discussions with relevant ALBs and pay particular attention to the issue of securing information as outlined in the CO letter.

Many thanks

Jenny