Independent Inquiry relating to Afghanistan (IIA)

HQ PM(A) Update: June 2025

SO2 Witness Manager

Maj Matt Benn-Edwards has joined the RMP Inquiry team as the SO2 Witness Manager. He is here to provide support to all RMP witnesses that are requested to provide evidence to the Inquiry. Initially he will be supporting witnesses through the process of providing written evidence and, should witnesses be called to provide oral evidence, Matt will be on hand to provide support through that process, too.

Matt can be contacted via the multiuser mailbox during normal working hours and will soon be contactable via phone. We hope to be able to provide this phone number in the July edition of this newsletter.

Chair's Rulings on 'Green' Hearings

The Inquiry has published the **Chair's Ruling on the approach to 'Green' Hearing Restriction Orders**.

In June 2024, the Inquiry published Counsel to the Inquiry (CTI)'s original Note setting out a proposal as to how the Inquiry could receive oral evidence from certain confidential witnesses. CTI proposed holding Restricted Closed Hearings which protects their identity and strictly limits disclosure of the hearing bundle and attendance at any hearing.

In May 2025, the Chair received a further CTI Note with regard to specific confidential witnesses whom it was proposed to call in strictly controlled conditions now known as the 'Green' Hearings.

During these 'Green' Hearings, the Inquiry anticipates receiving oral evidence relating to allegations of misconduct by UK Special Forces in Afghanistan, including in particular, "*…evidence regarding an occasion during a Deliberate Detention Operation ("DDO") when an individual was shot in the head whilst they slep*t".

In response to the CTI Note, the Inquiry received detailed submissions from Core Participants and the Media. The Chair's analysis of these submissions and his decision as to the applicable general principles and approach to 'Green' Hearings is set out in his OPEN Ruling on Approach to 'Green' Hearing Restriction Orders.

The Inquiry also received an Application for 'Green' Hearing Restriction Orders and the Inquiry has published the Chair's **OPEN Ruling on Application for a 'Green' Hearing Restriction Orders**.

The Ruling protects the witnesses' identities and strictly restricts disclosure of evidence and attendance at the 'Green' hearings. In making this ruling, the Chair has applied the principles and approach set out in the OPEN Ruling on Approach to Green Hearing Restriction Orders' of 21 June 2025.

An Inquiry spokesperson said:

"The evidence the Inquiry anticipates hearing will include an occasion during a Deliberate Detention Operation when an individual was shot in the head whilst they slept. These 'Green' Hearings demonstrate the Inquiry's strong commitment to protecting its witnesses and their evidence."

Inquiry Statement - ITS1

On the 29th May 2025, the Inquiry published a statement regarding the ITS1 server. The statement can be read on the Inquiry website: **HERE**.

Disclosing Information

If you have any information that you believe is relevant to the Inquiry's Terms of Reference, you may either contact us via the RMP Inquiry team group mailbox ***or*** you can make direct contact with the Inquiry team using the contact details at this link: https://www.iia.independent-inquiry.uk/providing-information-to-the-inquiry/. If you have any relevant material to share with the Inquiry and wish to remain anonymous, you can use the IIA SecureDrop system. Further information around this can be found using the same link as above.

The Inquiry continue to reach out to individuals who they require evidence from with Rule 9 requests. A Rule 9 evidence request is made under the Inquiries Act 2005 and is a legal notification sent to either individuals or organisations instructing them to provide relevant information or material to a Statutory Inquiry. **We must highlight that the Inquiry does have the power to compel evidence under section 21 of the Inquiries Act 2005.**

If you are approached by the Inquiry please speak to the RMP Inquiry team at this email address: ARMYPM-IIAGroupmailbox@mod.gov.uk. This will ensure that the right support is in place and enables us to act as a single point of contact, as well as ensuring that the agreed processes and protocols in place for the Inquiry to interact with Core Participants, is adhered to.

If you are approached to give evidence, this is the opportunity for you to provide your honest thoughts and opinions to support this vital work.

If you have any information that does not fall within the Inquiry's Terms of Reference then we request that you report this to the Police.

The Defence Serious Crime Command (DSCC) is independent of the Chain of Command and responsible for investigating serious crime committed by persons subject to service law, in the UK and abroad. The Victim Witness Care Unit (VWCU) forms part of the DSCC and acts as a central point of contact for victims and witnesses of serious crime whilst providing support and guidance where required.

To find out more visit:

1. Defence Serious Crime Unit - Reporting a crime
2. Contact the VWCU

Communications

All previous editions of this newsletter can be found on the Regimental Headquarters website under the 'Newsletters' section.

Please continue to monitor your inboxes to ensure that you are up to date with Inquiry related correspondence. If you wish to discuss anything about the Inquiry, please reach out to the RMP Inquiry team.

If you would like to receive this newsletter on a different email address, or if you would like to opt out of receiving this newsletter, then please contact SO1 Policy and Communications IIA via the group mailbox.

If you are aware of anyone that is affected by the IIA, and if they are not already on our communications distribution list, please inform us and we will add them.

The Media

Several personnel have been contacted by the media in relation to RMP legacy investigations, which is likely to continue as the Inquiry progresses. As all personnel, both serving and retired, are subject to the Official Secrets Act and it is advised that you refer any enquiries to the MOD Press Office who will engage and ensure all enquiries are handled appropriately. Their contact number is: +44207 2187 907.

If you are contacted by the media, you should inform both us (using the group mailbox) and the MOD press office, using the following email address: DDC-PR-News@mod.gov.uk.

You may wish to consider the amount of career detail you post on your social media profile(s), which could be used by journalists to make contact. Further information can be found at the following link to assist you in securing your social media accounts: https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/guidance/social-media-how-to-use-it-safely

Welfare

Your welfare throughout the proceedings remains of upmost importance to us and we will make ourselves available on any day of the week, or location, that suits you in order to provide you with the support you require.

We encourage you to reach out to the following individuals and organisations for support, should you need it:

Army Operational Legacy Branch (AOLB):

ArmyPers-APSG-AOLB-0MAILBOX@mod.gov.uk

RMP Regimental Secretary:

Col Jeremy Green, Reg-Sec@RHQRMP.onmicrosoft.com

Adjutant General's Corps Headquarters:

Assistant Corps Secretary Maj (retired) Ben Culleton, AGCRHQ-0GroupMailbox@mod.gov.uk

The Veterans Gateway:

http://www.veteransgateway.org.uk/

RMP Inquiry team:

ARMYPM-IIAGroupmailbox@mod.gov.uk

Inquiry Welfare page:

https://www.iia.independent-inquiry.uk/support/

Useful Links

DefNet:

https://modgovuk.sharepoint.com/sites/intranet/SitePages/An-update-on-the-Independent-Inquiry-relating-to-Afghanistan.aspx

Defence Connect:

Independent Inquiry relating to Afghanistan | Defence Connect (mod.uk)

Inquiry website:

https://www.iia.independent-inquiry.uk/

Inquiry Terms of Reference:

https://iiaweb-prod.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/2023090_Terms_Of_Reference_IIA.pdf

MOD Inquiry SharePoint landing page (MODNet users only):

https://modgovuk.sharepoint.com/sites/IntranetMOD/SitePages/The-Independent-Inquiry-relating-to-Afghanistan.aspx?web=1

Feedback

We are very keen to hear your feedback regarding this newsletter. Is there something we can add that will make this process easier for you? Is there a section, not already included, that you would like to see? Would you like to see profiles of those in the RMP Inquiry team so that you can get to know us? Please don't hesitate to contact SO1 Policy and Communications IIA with your suggestions via the group mailbox.