



## **STATEMENT OF APPROACH – ARCHIVING**

### **The National Archives**

1. The Inquiry will transfer all documents that it has disclosed to core participants throughout the lifetime of the Inquiry to The National Archives, as well as administrative records. This will constitute “the Inquiry record” and ensure that all the relevant evidence is retained.
2. The redactions applied to the evidence will remain in place since the General Restriction Order and other Restriction Orders made by the Chair continue in force beyond the end of the Inquiry.
3. This means that the identities of anonymous witnesses will not be transferred to The National Archives and there is no risk of personal data being exposed by redactions being lifted.

### **Safeguards for lawful access to unredacted evidence**

4. On 2 September 2024 the Paymaster General told Parliament that he had written to the National Police Chiefs’ Council on 9 August 2024 and confirmed that the Government would make evidence available in the event of police investigations following publication of the Inquiry Report.
5. The Inquiry will transfer the evidence gathered (including the unredacted versions of evidence) to the Cabinet Office (as the Inquiry’s sponsor department) in order for this material to remain available after the closure of the Inquiry, should any UK police force wish to access it. The reason for this is that the police would need to be able to access identifying information to assist with any criminal investigations.



6. The unredacted evidence will only be accessible by the Cabinet Office team responsible for records, who will only view and access material transferred by the Inquiry for the purposes of verifying that the transfer is complete and complying with lawful requests.
  
7. The Infected Blood Compensation Authority (IBCA) has statutory powers under the Victims and Prisoners Act 2024 to require the provision of information to IBCA. The *Statement of Approach on Use of Inquiry Evidence for the Infected Blood Compensation Scheme* explained that where a claim cannot otherwise proceed and the claimant provides explicit consent, IBCA are able to use their statutory powers under the Victims and Prisoners Act 2024 to make a specific request to the Inquiry for available evidence to support an application. After the closure of the Inquiry and where a claim cannot otherwise proceed and the claimant provides explicit consent, IBCA will be able to use their statutory powers to make a specific request to the Cabinet Office for available evidence to support an application.
  
8. The police or IBCA will only be able to view and access material held by the Cabinet Office team responsible for records by complying with these safeguards:
  - a. any request must be in writing.
  
  - b. requests must be specific and only for the minimum necessary information required.
  
  - c. requests involving information supplied by anonymous witnesses must be accompanied by assurances that anonymisation will not be undermined through the way the information is processed by the police or IBCA.



9. The Cabinet Office will not archive the evidence transferred for the purpose of complying with lawful requests and will destroy the evidence when there is no longer any reasonable prospect of receiving lawful requests.

**Inquiry website**

10. The Government accepted the Inquiry's recommendation that the Inquiry website is maintained online. While it is usual at the conclusion of a public inquiry for its website to be transferred to The National Archives for preservation, the transfer does result in some loss of functionality as The National Archives does not currently have the capacity to maintain a website's search engine. The Government is therefore ensuring that the Inquiry's website is maintained with full functionality after the closure of the Inquiry so that all information uncovered by the Inquiry is easily available to the public.

Issued by the Chair on 25 February 2026