

THE BSE INQUIRY

SECOND WITNESS STATEMENT
RT HON STEPHEN DORRELL MP

1. I have been asked by the Inquiry to clarify my awareness of developments and involvement in discussion of those developments in the period between the SEAC meeting on 1st February 1996 and that on 8th March 1996. The Inquiry has referred me to the oral evidence of Sir Kenneth Calman [T134 (Vol T14 Tab 4)] and Mr Hogg [T137 (Vol T14 Tab 7)].
2. I have recently been shown a minute from Dr Metters to Dr Wight dated 8th February 1996 [YB96/2.8/5.1] describing a Top of the Office (TOTO) meeting which took place on 7th February. I am not able to recollect whether I was in fact present at that meeting nor, if I was present, what was said at the meeting.
3. I do not recall being told in February, by Sir Kenneth Calman or anyone else, that there was a "real possibility" that SEAC were about to confirm a link between BSE and recent cases of CJD. Given that SEAC's deliberations were ongoing at that time, I would not have expected anyone to have done so. My own recollection is that even after 8th March, it was by no means certain what conclusion SEAC would reach and that it was only after the weekend of 16th and

17th March that SEAC came to a decided view about the new cases. I was interested in SEAC's actual conclusions, rather than speculation about what those conclusions might be.

4. I have been asked to comment on a passage in Mr Hogg's oral evidence [T137 (Vol T 14 Tab 7) pages 43 to 44]. I would have seen Mr Hogg on a number of occasions in March 1996, but I do not recall him raising the subject of BSE with me.
5. The contents of this witness statement are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Issued on behalf of the witness by:
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