

Stakeholder Update

July 2022

The Hillsborough investigations final report

As you are aware, following the findings of the Hillsborough Independent Panel (HIP) Report, the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) and Operation Resolve launched investigations into the full circumstances surrounding the Hillsborough disaster.

The Hillsborough investigations were set up on a scale not previously seen before and have included the recovery of a huge amount of documentation; both that examined by the HIP and new material not previously seen.

The IOPC has a statutory function to secure and maintain public confidence in the handling of complaints, conduct matters, and death or serious injury matters involving the police. A key aspect of this is to ensure that the handling of these matters, including investigations and outcomes, is as open and transparent as possible. One way we aim to do this is by making information about our investigations available to the public.

The Hillsborough investigations final report aims to produce the most detailed account of police actions before, during, and after the disaster. The report will cover all of the investigative work carried out by the IOPC and Operation Resolve and will be split into chapters that cover all of the Terms of Reference for the investigation.

Included in those final report chapters are matters that have never been subject to investigation before. This includes our criminal investigation into the role that West Midlands Police (WMP) played in the aftermath of the disaster. The role of WMP will be covered in the final report under the following chapter headings:

- The WMP investigations - Introduction and overview
- The WMP investigations - Gathering evidence for the Taylor Inquiry
- The WMP investigations - Criminal investigation (IOPC)
- The WMP investigations - Complaints and conduct investigations
- The WMP investigations - Supporting the Popper Inquests

In addition, the final report will contain further new information from the investigation of more than 150 IOPC and Operation Resolve complaint and conduct matters.

Work is continuing to ensure that all of the documents and images referred to in the final report are both accurate and correctly referenced. This process involves detailed analysis to ensure that the material relied upon within the report is identified and properly described. It will also allow the reader to search for and read the relevant documents/images referenced on the final report website.

If you would like to be reminded of the full scope of what will be contained within the final report, a copy of the Terms of Reference is available on the Hillsborough section of the IOPC website (www.policeconduct.gov.uk/hillsborough).

Update on the Salmon/representations process

In our December 2021 update we mentioned that, prior to the publication of the final report, the IOPC will follow the Salmon process. You will recall that this is a procedure that public inquiries apply to the publication of reports where individuals or organisations are criticised, to ensure that they are given an opportunity to respond to those criticisms if they have not been made aware of them before. Whilst our Hillsborough investigations are not public inquiries, we do consider that we should run a Salmon process for affected individuals and organisations.

It is only at the conclusion of this process that the report can be finalised. With such a high profile and sensitive investigation as Hillsborough, it is imperative that we get things right first time. Not applying a Salmon process could lead to legal challenge and could cause delays to the publication of the final report.

While we cannot, at this time, be any more specific about how long the Salmon process may take, we will provide you with more accurate information and anticipated timescales as soon as we can.

Website update

We advised in the last update (December 2021), that once the report has been finalised it will be published on a standalone Hillsborough investigations website, and made available in print and other formats on request. Alongside the report, we intend to publish as much of the supporting and reference material as possible, for example, a witness statement or a decision made by the police at the time. The website will also include the history of our Hillsborough investigation along with lessons that have been learned from the investigation.

We are pleased to report that the discovery phase of the website is now complete. Some families and complainants took the opportunity to participate in an online survey. It was really useful to hear their opinions about how the website could best present the report and the associated documentation as users of the site.

In addition, to ensure that we captured as many views as possible from other potential users of the website, we also held workshops and focus groups with a wide range of stakeholders including our internal colleagues, the general public, members of the media and academics, and some representatives from the policing community. Now this phase is complete, the next steps include looking over all the suggestions and deciding what is achievable and what should be actioned as part of the website build.

To find out more about our work or to request this report in an alternative format, you can contact us in a number of ways:

Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC)
Hillsborough PO Box 1245 Warrington WA1 9FW
Tel: 0161 246 8503
Email: hillsborough@policeconduct.gov.uk
Website: www.policeconduct.gov.uk

We welcome telephone calls in Welsh
Rydym yn croesawu galwadau ffôn yn y Gymraeg

Published July 2022

© IOPC 2022

OGL This is licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0
except where otherwise stated.

This does not include material on this site as belonging to third parties.
Authorisation to use such material must be obtained from the copyright holders concerned.