



Minister's Office Block B,
Castle Buildings
Stormont Estate
Ballymiscaw
Belfast
BT4 3SG
Tel: 028 90528121
private.office@dojni.x.gsi.gov.uk

Our ref: SUB/820/2014

Ms Dolores Kelly MLA
Room 386
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont
BT4 3XX

24 June 2014

Dea Dolores

During Topical Questions on 10 June 2014 you raised queries in relation to my commitment to ensuring that legacy inquests are held, in particular regarding the provision of Coroners Investigators services to the Senior Coroner. With regards to the latter, I made a commitment to come back to you with more detail.

A substantial amount of work in determining the exact specification of the Coroners Investigators role for the Stalker-Sampson series of inquests has been on-going for some time. Progress has been hindered by a lack of clarity regarding exact requirements; equality issues in terms of ensuring the recruitment process does not compromise Article 2 independence requirements; determining the means by which Coroners Investigators can be recruited or procured and the ability to demonstrate effective and efficient use of resources through the development of a business case.

The Senior Coroner is presently seeking advice from Counsel on what is required of Coroners Investigators. In the meantime, a business case has been developed in order



to carry out a short scoping exercise to inform the substantive business case that is required to secure the services of the Coroners Investigators. It is envisaged that this exercise can progress once advice from Counsel has been received.

I would like to assure you that I appreciate that the Senior Coroner requires these services urgently, but there is a continued need to ensure they are secured through an open and transparent recruitment or procurement process that does not in turn create further issues.

I trust that this information is helpful and I am happy to provide further information as required.

DAVID FORD MLA
Minister of Justice

Copied to:

The Speaker
Chair of the Justice Committee
Members
Assembly Business Office
Assembly Library