

THE CRANSTON INQUIRY

Chair of the Cranston Inquiry says significant progress has been made in mission to find out the truth

Today [24 October], the Cranston Inquiry held its Preliminary Hearing with Sir Ross Cranston, Chair of the Inquiry, reporting on progress to date and calling for ‘commitment and full co-operation’ for the next stage of the Inquiry’s work.

The independent Inquiry was set up to investigate the events of 24 November 2021, when at least 27 people lost their lives crossing the Channel. It is looking into who the deceased were, and when, where and in what circumstances they came by their deaths. It is also exploring what further lessons can be learned and considering recommendations for the future.

Sir Ross praised ‘the huge amount of work’ completed by the Inquiry team so far, as he set out the detailed and specific protocols the Inquiry will follow in its pursuit of the truth. A ‘challenging timetable’ for the remainder of the investigation was also announced, with the Full Hearings due to commence on 3 March 2025.

The Full Hearings will see witnesses answer questions put by Counsel to the Inquiry. Further details of the Full Hearings will be made available on the Inquiry’s website in due course.

Sir Ross reiterated his call for ‘commitment and full cooperation’ from the involved parties to meet this timeline. Over the coming four months the Inquiry will continue the process of disclosing documents to Full Participants, finalising witness statements and preparing for oral evidence at the Full Hearings in line with the protocols set out by the Inquiry.

In his statement, Sir Ross said:

“Over the past seven months, my team and I have established the procedural framework for the Inquiry and have made a significant amount of progress in our investigation.

...There is but one purpose to the whole exercise: to find out the truth... [Our] task... is to identify those who so tragically died, to examine the circumstances of their deaths, and to make recommendations to reduce the risk of a similar event occurring.

Looking ahead to the next stage of the Inquiry, Sir Ross said;

“...Our Full Hearings will take place in March next year... so the [next] steps... must be completed in just over 4 months. That is a challenging timetable, but with commitment and full co-operation from Material Providers and a vast effort on the part of my team, the Full Hearings will start on 3 March.”

The next steps for the Inquiry include disclosing documents, finalising witness statements and preparation for oral evidence at the Full Hearings.

Anyone wishing to assist the Inquiry should, please, get in touch with the Solicitor to the Inquiry. Full contact details are available on [the website](#).

A recording of the Preliminary Hearing and transcript will be available on the Inquiry's website.

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