



Department for Transport

Iain Stewart MP
Chair of the Transport Select Committee
House of Commons
London
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From the Secretary of State
The Rt Hon Mark Harper MP

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11 January 2024

Dear Iain,

Inquiry into the Channel incident of 24 November 2021 (Cranston Inquiry) – Chair and Terms of Reference

On 09 November 2023 I laid a written ministerial statement before the House (HCWS27), announcing the establishment of an independent, non-statutory Inquiry into the circumstances of the tragic mass-casualty incident that occurred on 24 November 2021.

It is crucial that we move swiftly to support the independent Inquiry in its work. I am therefore today announcing the Inquiry Chair and Terms of Reference.

The Inquiry will be chaired by Sir Ross Cranston, who will bring great experience and expertise to the role. Sir Ross has had a distinguished judicial career, with experience sitting in the Queen's Bench Division of the High Court, and as the judge in charge of the Administrative Court. Sir Ross is also a former Solicitor General for England and Wales. The Inquiry will now be known as the Cranston Inquiry.

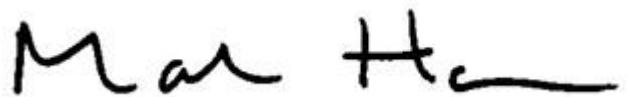
The Terms of Reference, a copy of which has been placed in the Libraries of both Houses today, enable the Inquiry to focus on investigating this individual incident, with the aim of ensuring the rights of those affected are upheld and allowing the survivors and family members of the deceased to be heard. Crucially, it will also examine the circumstances in which the deceased lost their lives and what lessons can be learned to prevent incidents like this in the future.

In conducting this Inquiry, Sir Ross will consider the investigation already carried out by the Marine Accident Investigation Branch into the incident.

The Department will provide support and ensure the Inquiry has the resources that it needs to investigate this incident. Sir Ross and his team will now proceed with the important work of establishing the Inquiry's processes and procedures.

I am placing a copy of this letter in the House of Commons Library.

Yours ever,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Harper".

The Rt Hon Mark Harper MP

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR TRANSPORT