



**INDEPENDENT INQUIRY
RELATING TO
AFGHANISTAN**

Financial Report

1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025

Background

- ▶ The Independent Inquiry relating to Afghanistan was established on 15 December 2022. The Inquiry has been examining and gathering evidence in relation to its Terms of Reference to investigate matters arising from the deployment of UK Special Forces to Afghanistan between mid-2010 and mid-2013. The Inquiry is chaired by Lord Justice Sir Charles Haddon-Cave.
- ▶ Over the financial year 2024-25, the Inquiry has held numerous CLOSED hearings where it has heard evidence from UK Special Forces and associated witnesses. The hearings have been in CLOSED for reasons of national security, but whenever possible the Inquiry has posted a summary of the evidence heard at these hearings on its website in accordance with its commitment to openness and transparency.
- ▶ In addition, the Inquiry held four days of OPEN hearings where evidence was heard from the former Secretary of State for Defence, Sir Ben Wallace, and Mr Alan Pughsley QPM. Mr Pughsley is an expert witness who prepared a report for the Inquiry regarding the Royal Military Police investigation known as Operation Northmoor. The report is soon to be published. Recordings of the hearings, as well as transcripts and adduced evidence are available on the Inquiry website.

- ▶ The Inquiry work progressed on forensics under the supervision of a national senior forensic expert, who provided the Inquiry with expertise around crime scene reconstruction and investigation. The Inquiry engaged experts in ballistics, blood pattern analysis, pathology and clinical trauma to examine the available evidence (including imagery) from UKSF Deliberate Detention Operations; their important work continues.
- ▶ The Inquiry continued its work on ITS1. In December 2023, evidence was heard in OPEN regarding allegations that an IT server used by UK Special Forces had been forensically wiped as part of a cover-up to obstruct Operation Northmoor. For the purposes of the Inquiry, the IT Server is referred to by the cypher 'ITS1'. Having secured drives containing terabytes of ITS1 data from UKSF locations, a phased, methodical and highly sophisticated approach was taken by the Inquiry team to explore technical options and allow a forensic examination of the relevant data.
- ▶ Our [November 2025 Update](#) offers more information about the Inquiry's progress.

We urge anyone who has got any information or material, (no matter how small they think it may be) to please get in touch as soon as possible.

The Secretary of State for Defence has reiterated the commitment by his predecessor, who formally granted authorisation to all personnel to disclose potentially relevant material to the Inquiry.

We recognise you may be concerned about the implications of coming forward – please read our [Get in Touch](#) page for more details on the systems and dispensations in place to support you.

Note on financial figures

- ▶ These figures are intended to give an overview of the level and elements of expenditure over the course of the Inquiry's work. Every attempt has been made to ensure that the figures presented are accurate.
- ▶ The figures are not the equivalent of company accounts. However, further financial information about the Inquiry can be obtained from the relevant financial reports from the Ministry of Defence as the Inquiry's sponsor department. The Inquiry has followed the sponsor department's guidance on VAT treatment.
- ▶ If errors are discovered after publication, the Inquiry will republish a corrected version.
- ▶ The financial year runs from April to March. These figures are intended to show when the work that was charged for was carried out. In some cases, this will be different to when the invoice was raised or when the amount was paid to the supplier.
- ▶ For any queries about this report, please email: enquiries@iaa.independent-inquiry.uk

Explanation of financial categories

Salaries and professional fees

- ▶ This section lists the salaries of the Chair, employed civil servants, the majority of whom comprise the Inquiry Secretariat, the Solicitor legal team to the Inquiry, as well as the professional fees of Counsel, specialist advisers and expert witnesses.

Core Participant legal fees

- ▶ This section shows the costs of legal representatives for the Afghan families whose fees are paid by the Inquiry under the Costs Protocol relating to legal representation at public expense. The Ministry of Defence and the Royal Military Police, as the other Core Participants, fund their own costs.

IT costs

- ▶ This section shows the costs of IT equipment used by the Inquiry, including both software and hardware.

Document management

- ▶ This section relates to document management costs which allows the Inquiry to share non-classified information with Core Participants in a secure and controlled manner.

Communications

- ▶ This section shows costs relating to communications which covers media monitoring and videography.

Website

- ▶ This section covers costs relating to the hosting, maintenance, translation and development of the Inquiry website.

Hearings

- ▶ This section shows all fees related to venue hire, audio visual services, transcription, translation and other services related to holding hearings. These costs cover both OPEN and CLOSED hearings and include relevant travel, accommodation and subsistence costs.

Other costs

- ▶ Travel costs.
- ▶ Stationery and office equipment costs.
- ▶ Welfare support costs.
- ▶ Non-hearing related expenses paid to Inquiry staff.

Financial Year 2024-25

Salaries and professional fees	
Chair to the Inquiry*	£452,018
Secretariat	£1,237,821
Solicitors	£2,602,294
Counsel	£3,243,640
Advisers and Expert Witnesses	£699,681
Salaries subtotal	£8,235,454
Core Participant legal fees	£336,895
IT costs	£7,782
Document management	£10,272
Communications	£1,590
Website	£1,097
Hearings	£178,279
Other costs	£11,828
Total expenditure	£8,331,179

* To note HM Courts and Tribunal Service covered the Chair's salary costs in this period. From April 2025, the sponsoring department (MOD) covered the cost.



Inquiry Chair, Lord Justice Sir Charles Haddon-Cave