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Government Legal Department

Piers Doggart
Independent Inquiry Relating to Afghanistan

By Email

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Your ref:

Our ref:

06 August 2025

Dear Piers,

Re: Independent Inquiry Relating to Afghanistan – DAS Update

We write to provide the Inquiries with updates we have received from the DAS.

1. DAS File Upload

As the Inquiry is aware, DAS periodically upload additional documentation to their system. On 23 July 2026 DAS completed a large upload of documents, primarily legacy files across two IT systems

Following discussions with DAS yesterday, 5 August 2026, we can now provide the following update to the Inquiry:

1. Prior to the upload DAS in its totality was 93 million unique records.
2. The upload DAS has completed is 159 million unique records, which have already been de-duplicated.
3. This brings the new size of DAS to 253 million unique records.
4. Of these 159 million new unique records, 97 million unique records relate to the Terms of Reference period, 2010 to 2013 and 21 million records relate to 2014.
5. None of these files have been searched or read, they have only been assessed on the metadata to determine the date of the file, which has proven to be inaccurate in the past.

Neither AIRU nor DAS were aware of the quantity of documents, nor that they would include any documents prior to 2014, let alone in this volume. AIRU Director Nick Gurr's statement as part of R9.54 has been updated to reflect this update.

Elizabeth Mackie - Head of Division

Sam Littlejohns - Deputy Director, Team Leaders Defence, Security & General Public Law



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2. DAS Folders and Additional Images

DAS made AIRU aware of additional folders that may include relevant material that were not captured by the search terms in the first instance. AIRU then instructed DAS to investigate the back-end folder structure and DAS found the parent folders for some of these DSTL file path folders, and provided their contents to AIRU. We are reviewing the documents that were contained in these folders and will update the Inquiry, by Rule 9 number, on the relevant documents found, if any.

In another instance, AIRU instructed DAS to run targeted searches for these additional image files. DAS provided AIRU with a tranche of image files which were not previously identified which have now been reviewed by AIRU. 130 documents have been deemed relevant. We are currently reviewing the relevant images for third party equities and will serve those that do not require further permissions as soon as possible.

As a result of this improved understanding of the file structure and their contents, DAS and AIRU have created an improved search methodology which is intended to return higher volumes of search material. This will be applied to all searches going forward by locating the parent folder structures and folder numbers for our records to assist searches in future.

We understand that this is a significant and unexpected increase in documentation. We would be grateful to discuss with the Inquiry the potential implications of any of these points.

Yours sincerely,

MOD Corporate Legal Team