



The Independent Commission for Reconciliation and Information Recovery

What we can do for you



An Easy Read guide
February 2025





Who we are

1



What the Commission does

3



Our powers

5



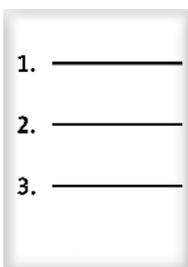
What happens when you ask us for an investigation

8



Who can ask for an investigation?

9



Three stages of an investigation 11



What the words mean

16

We use some words in this document that you might not know these are explained at the back.



How to contact us

18



Contacts who could help you

19

Who we are



We are the ICRIR which is short for the Independent Commission for Reconciliation and Information Recovery.

We call ourselves the **Commission**.

Our team

Chief Commissioner: Sir Declan Morgan



Sir Declan is responsible for leading the Commission and producing our final reports.

Chief Executive Officer and Commissioner: Louise Warde Hunter



Louise makes sure the organisation is well run.



Commissioner for Investigations: Peter Sheridan

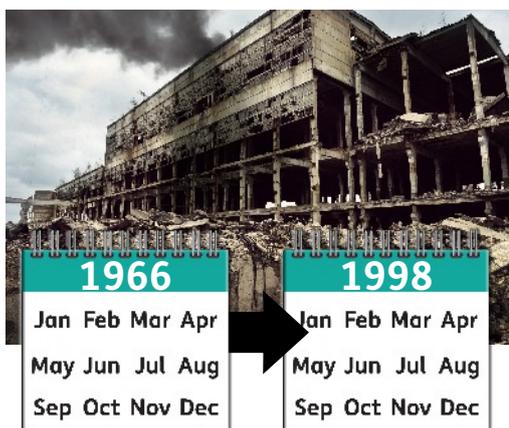
Peter is in charge of how our investigations are carried out. He can ask for people to be **prosecuted**.

Prosecuted means it goes to court. A prosecution lawyer then tells a court about the evidence and how it shows the person is guilty.

What the Commission does



We provide information to victims, survivors and their families about deaths and serious harm that happened because of the **Troubles/Conflict**.



Troubles/Conflict is the name we give to the violent period that happened mostly in Northern Ireland, but also in Great Britain, between 1966 and 1998.



We look closely at records about what happened during the **Troubles/Conflict**.

Promoting reconciliation



The main aim of the Commission is to 'promote reconciliation'. We know that reconciliation means different things to different people.



We promote reconciliation through our investigations by:

- finding out the truth about what happened, and where possible who was responsible for a death or serious harm as a result of the Troubles/Conflict.



- telling people about what we found.



- supporting **Requesting Individuals** during their investigation.

Requesting Individual is the name given to a person who asks the Commission to carry out an investigation.

Our powers



An individual must ask the Commission to investigate.



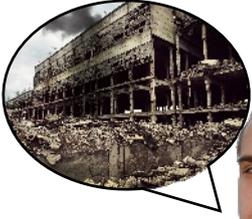
The Commission has a lot of powers to help it investigate events that happened during the Troubles/Conflict.



We can:

- require the government to provide us with all the information it holds, even when this is secret information.
- arrest people, interview suspects, and get search warrants as well as use other powers that police officers have.





- require **witnesses** to provide information.

Witnesses are people who have information about an event. If they do not give us that information, they can be fined.



- ask a **prosecutor** to look at the case to decide if someone could be prosecuted.

A **prosecutor** is a lawyer who shows evidence in court.



We do all of our work making sure we are:

- following the rules to make sure people's human rights are protected.



- being guided by the Belfast-Good Friday peace agreement



- finding out as much as possible about Troubles/Conflict incidents.

What happens when you ask us for an investigation



When a person contacts the Commission asking for an investigation, we call them a **Requesting Individual**.



We speak to the Requesting Individual and explain what we can and cannot do.



The Requesting Individual can ask a support organisation or support person to help them with this.



When we finish the investigation we write a report.

Who can ask for an investigation?



A **close family member** of a person who died can ask for an investigation into an incident involving death. There is a list of who a close family member is at the end of this document.



If there are no close family members, any family member can make a request.



More than one person can ask for an investigation into the same death or an event that caused serious harm.

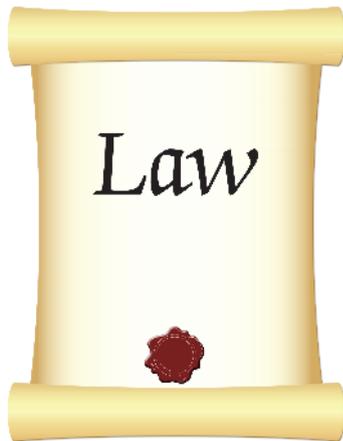


You can get help to make a request from someone you choose.



A person can ask for an investigation into something that happened that caused **serious harm**, either physically or mentally.

Serious harm includes total blindness or deafness, being paralysed, or having severe psychiatric damage.



Serious harm is set out in law. If you need help or would like an explanation of what this means, contact the Commission.

Three stages of an investigation

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

There are three stages to an investigation:

Stage 1. Support

Stage 2. Looking for information

Stage 3. What we found

Stage 1 - Support



When a person contacts the Commission, they can speak to a member of the Support team.

We call this person the **Case Support Worker**.



They will be with the requesting individual all the way through the process.

The Case Support Worker will:



- explain how the Commission works to the Requesting Individual.



- make sure any questions they have about what happened in the past are given to investigators.



- keep the Requesting Individual up to date with information about their investigation.



- offer the Requesting Individual additional support if they want it.

Stage 2 – Looking for information



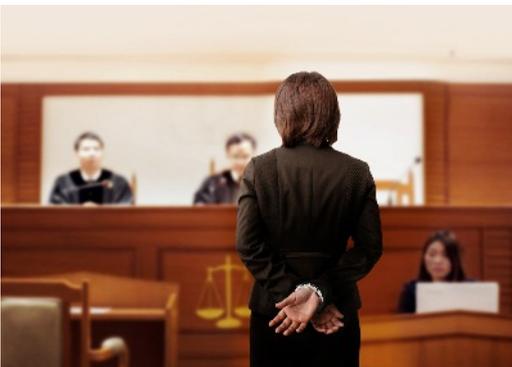
When a Requesting Individual decides they want to continue with an investigation and we accept their request, our investigators start the next stage.



Investigators will look for information to find out what happened to cause a death or serious harm.

There are three types of investigation:

1. Liability



This type of investigation might end with the people the Commission believes were responsible for the death or serious harm being prosecuted in court.



2. Culpability

This type of investigation might end up with the people or organisations the Commission believes were responsible for the death or serious harm being named in a report. No one will be prosecuted in court in this type of investigation.

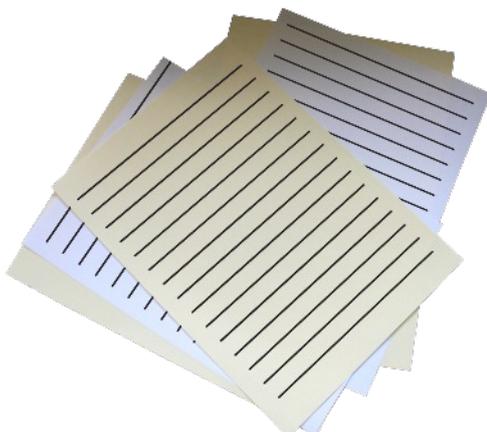


3. Focused

This type of investigation tries to answer the specific questions the Requesting Individual has asked. No one will be prosecuted in court in this type of investigation.



All investigations are carried out to a high standard.



Each type of investigation provides something different. This depends on the evidence that is found.



Stage 3 – What we found

When an investigation is finished, the Chief Commissioner and his team write a report about what they found during the investigation. It answers the Requesting Individual's questions where possible.



The requesting individual might want to have a press conference or event to let people know about what the report says.



The requesting individual does not need to have an event or press conference and can receive the report in way that they would prefer.



The Commission always puts the final report on its website, even if there has not been a press conference or event.

What the words mean

We use some words in this document that you might not know the meaning of.

Case Support Worker – a team member who will be with you for the whole investigation and help explain any parts of the process you do not understand.

Close family member – can be a person's husband or wife, civil partner, **co-habitee**, child, parent, brother or sister, stepchild, stepbrother or stepsister, stepmother or stepfather, half-brother or half sister.

Co-habitee – when 2 people live together as a couple but are not married.

Investigation – looking for information about a death or serious harm that occurred during the Troubles/Conflict.

Prosecuted – it goes to court. A prosecution lawyer then tells a court about the evidence and how it shows the person is guilty.

Requesting individual – the name given to a person who asks the Commission to carry out an investigation.

Serious harm – this can include total blindness or deafness, being paralysed, or having severe psychiatric damage.

Support person – someone you choose to help you with your request for an investigation.

Troubles/Conflict – the violent period, mostly in Northern Ireland, but also in Great Britain, between 1966 and 1998 when over 3500 people were killed and many thousands injured.

Witness – somebody who has information about an event.

How to contact us



For more information you can visit our website at:

www.icrir.independent-inquiry.uk



Email us at:

info@icrir.independent-inquiry.uk



Call us on:

028 90 362006



Write to us at: **ICRIR, The**

Vantage, 32-36 Great Victoria

Street, Belfast, BT2 7BA

Contacts who could help you

Lifeline

0808 808 8000

SAMARITANS

Crisis Support and Intervention

Lifeline NI and Samaritans provide counselling, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, for anyone who needs support.



Call Lifeline NI:

0808 808 8000



or use Deaf and Hard of Hearing
textphone:

18001 0808 808 8000.



Call Samaritans:

0808 808 8000



Victims and Survivors Service (VSS)

The VSS delivers services and support to victims and survivors of the Troubles/Conflict. It funds and works in partnership with community-based organisations.



Email:

enquiries@vssni.org



Call:

028 9027 9100



Website:

www.victimsservice.org

Credits

This paper has been designed and produced for ICRIR. It includes material from the Inspired Easy Read Collection and cannot be used anywhere else without written permission from Inspired Services Publishing Ltd.

Ref ISL252 24. February 2025.

www.inspiredservices.org.uk



It meets the European Easy Read Standard. © European Easy-to-Read Logo: Inclusion Europe. More information at:

www.easy-to-read.eu



Speaking Up Together -
making Easy Read information.