

RESTRICTION ORDER PURSUANT TO SECTION 19 OF THE INQUIRIES ACT 2005
FOR THE CLOSED HEARING ON 20 MARCH 2026
(CLOSED ANONYMITY HEARING)

The Chairman has the power under section 19 of the Inquiries Act 2005 (“the Act”) to make orders restricting attendance at a hearing and on the disclosure or publication of evidence and documents given, produced or provided to the Inquiry.

Any threat to break such an order, or any breach of it, can be certified to the High Court or Court of Session under section 36 of the Act, which will deal with it as though the breach had occurred in proceedings before that court, and may be punishable by a fine or committal to prison.

PREAMBLE

The purpose of the hearing on 20 March 2026 (“the Closed Anonymity Hearing”) is to consider sensitive information relating to anonymity applications to be made by (i) His Majesty’s Government (“HMG”) and (ii) the Police Service of Northern Ireland (“PSNI”). Consideration of CLOSED applications will be heard separately from an OPEN applications. It has been submitted on behalf of the Applicants that there is a risk of harm or damage, in particular death or injury, to individuals seeking to be anonymised should the sensitive information in support of their applications be made public.

In exercise of the power under section 19 of the Act, **IT IS ORDERED THAT:**

1. There will be no reporting or public broadcast (whether delayed or otherwise) of the Inquiry Closed Anonymity Hearing.
2. Attendance at the Closed Anonymity Hearing shall be strictly limited to the individuals listed at paragraph 3 of this Order. Prior to, or in the course of the hearing, the Chairman shall decide which of the individuals and organisations listed in paragraph 3 it is necessary to be present at the hearing, or any part of the hearing.

3. Attendance at all, or part, of the Closed Anonymity Hearing is restricted to the following:
 - a. The Chairman of the Inquiry;
 - b. Counsel to the Inquiry, who hold Developed Vetted (“DV”) security clearance;
 - c. The Solicitor to the Inquiry, who holds DV security clearance;
 - d. Inquiry personnel and court staff who hold DV security clearance and whose attendance is necessary for the proper functioning of the hearing;
 - e. HMG legal representatives and personnel who hold DV security clearance, who represent the interest of those to whom the sensitive information relates and whose attendance is necessary to enable the applications to be argued and determined; and
 - f. PSNI legal representatives and personnel who hold DV security clearance, who represent the interest of those to whom the sensitive information relates and whose attendance is necessary to enable the applications to be argued and determined.

4. Material prepared for and/or used at the Closed Anonymity Hearing (“the Closed Anonymity Material”), shall be held securely by all attendees. To the extent permissible under section 19, a gist of the Closed Anonymity Material will be prepared for Core Participants not mentioned in paragraph 3, their legal representatives, the media and the public (“the Closed Anonymity Material gist”). The content of the Closed Anonymity Material gist will be determined by the Chairman, following submissions from those listed at paragraph 3e and 3f.

5. A separate, closed index of the Closed Anonymity Material shall be kept by the Inquiry and will be available only to those listed at paragraph 3 of this Order.

6. To the extent that it is necessary to produce an audio recording and transcript of the Closed Anonymity Hearing, this shall be prepared by an individual holding DV clearance. The identity of that person to be agreed between the relevant parties. Any audio recording and transcript shall be included within the definition of Closed Anonymity Material.

7. Unless express permission is given by the Chairman, or the Solicitor to the Inquiry acting on his behalf, the matters discussed during the Closed Anonymity Hearing must not be published in any form or otherwise disclosed to any individual who is not permitted to be present at the hearing, pursuant to paragraph 3 of this Order.

8. This Order remains in force for the duration of the Inquiry and at all times thereafter, unless otherwise ordered.
9. The Chairman may vary or revoke this Order by making a further order during the course of the Inquiry. Representatives for His Majesty's Government and the Police Service of Northern Ireland will be notified in advance, and with sufficient notice to make representations, of any intention on the part of the Inquiry to modify or vary the terms of this Order.

PENAL NOTICE

10. The High Court and the Court of Session have the power to imprison or fine for any breach of this Order.
11. Any breach of this Order by any means whatsoever shall be notified in writing to the Solicitor of the Inquiry immediately upon identification of the breach.

Rt. Hon. Lord Turnbull

Chairman of the Omagh Bombing Inquiry

16 March 2026