

POLICING DURING MINERS' STRIKE: INDEPENDENT REVIEW

CALL FOR EVIDENCE

This is a general call for evidence on the impact of policing on affected communities in Scotland during the period of the miners' strike from March 1984 to March 1985. Evidence is sought from affected individuals and representative groups. The evidence gathered in this exercise will help inform the report and any recommendations made by the Independent Review to the Cabinet Secretary for Justice, Humza Yousaf MSP.

Responses are requested by Friday 30 November 2018 and should be accompanied by the Respondent Information Form below in order to ensure that your response is handled appropriately. Please make your response in no more than 2,000 words.

I. Policing during Miners' Strike: Independent Review

I.1. Role of the Review Group

On 7 June 2018 the then Cabinet Secretary for Justice, Michael Matheson MSP made a statement to the Scottish Parliament, confirming the establishment of an Independent Review, to be led by John Scott QC Solicitor Advocate.

The Review Group is completed by an advisory panel comprising Jim Murdoch (Professor of Public Law at Glasgow University), Kate Thomson (former Assistant Chief Constable) and Dennis Canavan (former MP and MSP).

The remit of the Review is to investigate and report on the impact of policing on communities in Scotland that were affected by the 1984/85 miners' strike.

It is envisaged that the Review will:

- provide an interim report to Ministers which sets out initial findings by January 2019; and
- carry out further necessary engagement and provide a final report by June 2019, which sets out lessons learned and makes recommendations for any further action required.

It is not expected that the Review will deal with individual cases or specific events¹, but will:

- consider matters that fall under the devolved remit of Scottish Ministers;
- take full account of previous investigations into the events of the time; and
- review the appropriate documents that are available.

See the [Cabinet Secretary's June 2018 statement](#) and accompanying [news release](#), and the dedicated web-page for the Review - <https://beta.gov.scot/groups/independent-review-policing-miners-strike/>.

I.2. Background

The 1984 to 1985 miners' strike is widely regarded as having been one of the UK's most significant industrial actions of the post-war era, with the policing of the dispute – especially at certain flashpoints – having been an aspect of particular concern. The consequences of the dispute, including its policing, have been long-lasting.

¹ Dealing with challenges to individual convictions is a matter for the High Court of Justiciary or the Scottish Criminal Cases Review Commission. Anyone who believes that they have suffered a miscarriage of justice should contact the [Scottish Criminal Cases Review Commission](#).

In 2016 the UK Government considered the case for establishing an Inquiry or independent review into the events that occurred in June 1984 at one of the strike's main flashpoints, Orgreave Coking Plant in South Yorkshire. In October 2016, however the then Home Secretary, Amber Rudd MP, announced that there was not sufficient basis to instigate either a statutory inquiry or an independent review.

In November 2016 the Cabinet Secretary for Justice Michael Matheson wrote to Ms Rudd to convey the Scottish Government's view that the UK Government should commission and appoint an independent UK-wide investigation into any political interference during the dispute. The UK Government decided not to commission such an investigation.

In September 2017 Mr Matheson confirmed, in answer to a Parliamentary Question, that the Scottish Government was actively considering a way forward as regards commissioning an inquiry into issues around the policing of the 1984-85 miners' strike in Scotland.

1.3. Review activities

In addition to the Call for Evidence, the Review Group will engage proactively with those affected and other stakeholders, via face to face discussions, focus groups and/or public meetings. In consultation with representative groups and interested parties, public meetings in former mining communities will be arranged to take place later this year. In consultation with representative groups and interested parties, similar meetings will take place involving those who were involved in policing the strike.

The dedicated website will be updated with information about the Review's meetings and other activities.

1.4. CONTACT

The email address for the Review is: minersstrikereview@gov.scot.

2. Responding to the Call for Evidence

The Review Group does not wish to be prescriptive by setting a series of questions for you to answer, but instead seeks to be informed by your experience and views of the policing of the miners' strike in Scotland, bearing in mind the scope of the remit above. The Review Group is interested also in any continuing effects on communities.

The Review Group is seeking to gather as much information about the experience of communities – **if you were a miner, part of a mining community, a police officer or in some other way affected by, or involved in the strike**, the Group would like to hear about your experience.

For all respondents – Did you have any experience of any previous strikes or industrial disputes? If so, please specify and outline any relevant differences. How were you affected by the 1984/85 strike at the time? Were you directly involved? If so, in what way? Do you think that there are any continuing effects on communities? If so, please specify.

Even non-mining communities were affected by the strike, for example, in the re-allocation of policing resources. If you were part of such a community, please outline the effects of the strike where you lived.

If you were a **miner**, did you choose to strike or to work? What pressures affected you at the time? Were you arrested? Were you convicted of any crime or offence related to the strike? Did you lose your employment? If so, were you able to secure employment elsewhere?

(NB the Review is not expected to deal with the convictions of individuals although it can consider convictions in the context of their continuing effects on communities.)

If you were a **police officer**, were the tactical and operational decisions and subsequent response to the miners' strike similar to your previous experience, in particular any previous experience of public order policing? If they were different, did that surprise or concern you? Do you think the policing of this strike had (or has) any continuing effects on community relations?

This is not a definitive or exhaustive list of questions and the Review Group welcomes evidence on all aspects of the impact of the miners' strike that fall within its remit. We realise that some affected groups may be harder to reach with a Call for Evidence like this. The Review Group has already reached out to some of these groups through Group members and their contacts and is prepared to consider any suggestions for more informal engagement with the Call for Evidence if it would allow access to more and better information.

Responses to this Call for Evidence are requested by **Friday 30 November 2018** and you are reminded to ensure that you include a completed Respondent Information Form with your response. The Group is aware that this does not allow much time for responses to be formulated and submitted, but the Group is anxious to try to meet the demanding timescale set for an interim report and the completion of the whole Review. The Review Group will be able to consider recommendations for additional consultation, review or evidence-gathering.

You can complete your response on-line at: <https://consult.gov.scot/justice/policing-during-miners-strike-independent-review/>.

Alternatively, you can send it to:

Head of Secretariat
INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF POLICING DURING THE MINERS' STRIKE
St. Andrew's House
Regent Road
EDINBURGH EH1 3DG

Or by e-mail to: minersstrikereview@gov.scot

RESPONDENT INFORMATION FORM

Please Note this form **must** be completed and returned with your response.

Are you responding as an individual or an organisation?

- Individual
 Organisation

Full name or organisation's name

Phone number

Address

Postcode

Email

The Review would like your permission to publish your consultation response. Please indicate your publishing preference:

- Publish response with name
 Publish response only (without name)
 Do not publish response

Information for organisations:

The option 'Publish response only (without name)' is available for individual respondents only. If this option is selected, the organisation name will still be published.

If you choose the option 'Do not publish response', your organisation name may still be listed as having responded to the consultation in, for example, the analysis report.

We will NOT share your response out with the Review Group. Following the conclusion of the Review Group's work however there may be a further consultation undertaken by the Scottish Government who may wish to contact you again in the future. The Scottish Government require your permission to do so. Are you content for Scottish Government to contact you again in relation to a consultation exercise on this issue?

- Yes
 No