

The Fingerprint Inquiry | Scotland

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The Fingerprint Inquiry completes its oral hearings

The public inquiry into the circumstances surrounding the Shirley McKie fingerprint case has finished hearing evidence at Maryhill Community Central Hall, Glasgow.

The Fingerprint Inquiry, chaired by Sir Anthony Campbell, was set up to look at the steps which were taken to identify and verify the fingerprints associated with the case of *HM Advocate v McKie* in 1999. The Inquiry will determine the consequences of steps taken, report on findings of fact and make recommendations.

Sir Anthony Campbell is now reviewing the evidence before drafting his Report.

In bringing the oral hearings to a close, the Chairman said that before he finalises his report he will be giving anyone he identifies as possibly being the subject of criticism in the report an opportunity to respond to that. He also intends to give those who are likely to be affected directly by any of his recommendations an opportunity to comment.

It will therefore be some time into 2010 before the report is completed and published.

The Inquiry website www.thefingerprintinquiryscotland.org.uk contains links to the daily hearings' progress reports, the transcripts of each day's proceedings, the Inquiry witness statements and documents referred to in evidence, and other detailed information.

Notes to editors

1. The Fingerprint Inquiry is a public judicial inquiry set up under the Inquiries Act 2005. The Inquiry's terms of reference are:
 - To inquire into the steps that were taken to identify and verify the fingerprints associated with, and leading up to, the case of *HM*

Advocate v. McKie in 1999.

- To determine, in relation to the fingerprint designated Y7, the consequences of the steps taken or not taken.
 - To report findings of fact and make recommendations as to what measures might now be introduced, beyond those that have already been introduced since 1999, to ensure that any shortcomings are avoided in the future.
2. By law (the Inquiries (Scotland) Rules 2007) the Chairman must not include any significant or explicit criticism of a person in the Inquiry Report unless the Chairman has sent that person a “warning letter” and given the person a reasonable opportunity to respond. There is no statutory requirement to invite comments on draft recommendations.
 3. The oral hearings began in June 2009. 88 witnesses assisted the Inquiry, and of these 64 gave oral evidence during some 250 hours of hearings over 57 days.

For assistance with media enquiries, please contact:

Media contact:

Christina Kelly

Head of Public Relations

Golley Slater

Telephone 0131 272 2733 / 0784 1598129

Email: press@thefingerprintinquiry.com