

Witness Name: Carmel Vega

Statement No.: 1

Exhibits: 1

Dated: 31st January 2019

THE INDEPENDENT INQUIRY INTO CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

Witness Statement of Carmel Vega

I, Carmel Vega, will say as follows:-

1. On behalf of the Attorney General's Office I undertook a digital search of our archives for any material relating to your requests. This involved a search of the electronic records management system for files with titles containing terms relevant to the request. The results are set out below:

No records were found relating to the prosecution or contemplated prosecution of Victor Montague.

No records were found relating to the prosecution or contemplated prosecution of Thomas Driberg.

No records were found relating to the decision not to prosecute Sir Peter Hayman.

2. One file was found relating to PIE. It concerned the conviction of Charles Napier in 2014 for 30 counts of indecent assault and one count of indecency towards a child whilst employed as a teacher. The matter was referred to this office for consideration of whether the sentence he received was unduly lenient. The original file has been requested from this office's archives and will be available for collection if required.

3. This office has conducted three searches in connection with the Dickens Dossier. The first search followed a request on 9th July 2014, pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act 2000. It requested the following material:

- a Did the department ever receive any information or allegations in relation to the Dickens Dossier? If so, please provide a copy of the information and a summary of the allegations.
- b Did the department investigate the information/allegations in relation to the Dickens Dossier? If so, please describe the scope of the investigation, any outcome of the investigation and confirm whether any information was passed to an external body.

- c Did the department compile any reports in relation to the Dickens Dossier? Please provide a copy of any reports.
- d Did the department communicate with the Home Office or any other central government department or agency about the Dickens dossier? If so, please provide a copy of any communication.
- e Has the department lost or deleted any documentation in relation to the Dickens Dossier? If so, please provide titles and descriptions of those documents.

Following this request, this office conducted a search of the electronic records management system for files with titles containing terms relevant to the request. No material was found. However, the office concluded that information may have been held in files that were not readily identifiable using this search method. It was concluded that a full search would have required the manual recovery and inspection of a large number of documents, which would have exceeded the cost limit allowed by the Freedom of Information Act 2000. As a result, no further search was undertaken.

4. The second search followed a request on 14th July 2014, pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act 2000. It requested the following material:

- 1. All correspondence between Geoffrey Dickens MP and ministers between 1st March 1982 and 1st April 1984.
- 2. The dates of all meetings between Geoffrey Dickens MP and ministers between 1st March 1982 and 1st April 1984.
- 3. All records relating to meetings between Geoffrey Dickens MP and ministers between 1st March 1982 and 1st April 1984.

Following this request, this office conducted a search of the electronic records management systems for files with titles containing terms relevant to the request. No material was found and the search confirmed that Ministerial diaries were only retained for 5 years. Again, this office recognised that files may not have been readily identifiable using this method. It would have required the manual recovery of and inspection of a large number of files and this would have exceeded the cost limit. As a result, no further search was undertaken.

5 The third search occurred as a result of your letter. This office conducted a search of electronic records management system for files including the term "Geoffrey Dickens" and "dossier". Following the search for "Geoffrey Dickens" the files relating to the aforementioned FOI requests were recovered. Those files contain the original FOI requests, internal email correspondence relating to the FOI request and the letters sent in response to the FOI requests. They are available for collection if required.

- 1. Following the search for "dossier", one file was identified. It concerned the disclosure of a parole dossier in the case of Northumberland County Council v Lindsay and Lindsay. This file was destroyed on 17th November 1999

Statement of Truth

I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Signed: **DPA** _____

Dated: 5.2.2019