



INDEPENDENT INQUIRY CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

NOTICE OF DETERMINATION CORE PARTICIPANT APPLICATION

1. On 2 May 2019 the Inquiry invited anyone who wished to be designated a core participant in the investigation into Child Protection in Religious Organisations and Settings to make an application to the Solicitor to the Inquiry by 13 June 2019.
2. On 13 June 2019 an application was made by **PR-A5** and **PR-A6** for core participant status in this investigation.
3. I made a provisional ruling declining the application on 5 July 2019. PR-A5 and PR-A6 were provided with an opportunity to renew their application at a preliminary hearing on 23 July 2019.
4. I have now had the opportunity to carefully consider the following:
 - a. The written application made by PR-A5 and PR-A6 for core participant status dated 13 June 2019;
 - b. Additional written information provided by PR-A5 and PR-A6 on 17 July 2019;
 - c. Oral submissions made on their behalf by Thomas Beale on 23 July 2019.
5. I have reminded myself of the statutory criteria that govern the determination of core participant status, in Rule 5 of the Inquiry Rules 2006. PR-A5 and PR-A6 rely on the provisions in Rule 5(2)(a) and (b), which direct me to consider whether a person has played a direct and significant role in matters to which the Inquiry relates or whether a person has a significant interest in an important aspect of the matters to which the Inquiry relates.
6. The application by PR-A5 and PR-A6 is made on the basis that they experienced sexual abuse over a number of years whilst they were young girls within a Jehovah's Witnesses congregation in England and Wales.



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7. In their renewed application PR-A5 and PR-A6 accepted that the investigation will be thematic in nature and will not be examining individual case studies. They submitted that the way in which the Jehovah's Witnesses responded to their allegations of child sexual abuse was "*systemic of the way in which religious organisations respond to allegations of child sexual abuse*" and that as a result they would be able to provide crucial evidence to the Inquiry's examination of the nature and adequacy of current child protection practices, policies and procedures within religious organisations and settings.
8. In my provisional determination dated 5 July 2019, I set out my provisional view that PR-A5 and PR-A6 did not meet the criteria in Rule 5(2) of the Inquiry Rules 2006 for designation as core participants because this investigation will focus upon organisational structures and child protection practices and not upon individual cases.
9. I consider that I have not had placed before me any material to cause me to change my provisional view that PR-A5 and PR-A6 do not have a significant interest and have not played a direct role in the broader and overarching themes of this particular investigation. I note that the renewed application was based upon the need for this Inquiry to consider the practices and procedures within the Jehovah's Witnesses, and the way in which they respond to child sexual abuse allegations. I have taken into consideration the fact that core participant status has been granted to the group *Ex-JW Advocates Opposing Crimes Against Children* which works with former elders within the Jehovah's Witnesses and victims and survivors of child sexual abuse within the Jehovah's Witnesses.
10. I am therefore not satisfied that PR-A5 and PR-A6 fulfil the criteria in Rule 5(2) of the Inquiry Rules 2006 or that there are other good reasons to designate PR-A5 and PR-A6 as core participants in this investigation.
11. As I made clear in my provisional determination, it is not necessary for an individual or organisation to be a core participant in order to provide evidence to the Inquiry.



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The Inquiry will in due course consider whether it wishes to make formal requests for witness evidence from PR-A5 and PR-A6.

12. I will keep the scope of the investigation and the designation of core participants under review as the Inquiry progresses and further invitations to apply for core participant status may be made as the investigation proceeds. My decision not to designate PR-A5 and PR-A6 as core participants in this particular investigation does not preclude them from making future applications in respect of any investigation. I will consider any future application which PR-A5 or PR-A6 wish to make on its merits.

Professor Alexis Jay OBE
Chair, Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse

7 August 2019