

7th December 2020

Stakeholder Update

News and information from the Manchester Arena Inquiry for the week ahead

This week, the Manchester Arena Inquiry will sit from Monday 7th December to Thursday 10th December and will begin a new chapter of evidence. Chapter 8 relates to the planning and preparation for the attack and will examine matters including the device and its construction, financing and Greater Manchester Police's investigation after the attack. It will also look at evidence in relation to the movements of Salman Abedi, and others, in the lead up to the attack, up to and including 22nd May 2017. Most of that evidence will be adduced through Temporary Detective Chief Superintendent Simon Barraclough, who was the Senior Investigating Officer for Operation Manteline, the criminal investigation into the attack.

The SIO's evidence will be interposed at relevant points by specialist expert evidence relevant to the police investigation. We will hear from Bob Gallagher, Forensic and Digital Investigations Manager at Greater Manchester Police, who took control of the scene on the evening of the attack. Lorna Hills (née Philp), the Principal Case Officer in Forensic Explosives from The Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (an executive agency of the Ministry of Defence), will give evidence on how the bomb was constructed, although care will be taken to ensure this evidence does not stray into that which should not be given in open session. The inquiry will also hear from forensic scientist Paul Ryder this week.

Restricted Hearings

At present there is no proposal to hold a restricted session, however, it is possible that part of Lorna Hills' evidence may require one. If required, this will be either Monday, 7th December or Thursday, 10th December. As set out in the Chairman's ruling of 31 July 2020, where it is necessary for operationally sensitive material to be adduced in order for relevant evidence to be fully explored, this will be done in a restricted session with the media and CPs present but not the general public. It will not be broadcast on the livestream.

The week at a glance

Mon: Chf Sup Simon Barraclough, Bob Gallagher, Lorna Hills (nee Philip)
Tue: Chf Sup Simon Barraclough, Paul Ryder
Wed: Chf Sup Simon Barraclough
Thur: Chf Sup Simon Barraclough

Prince William

On 1st December, Prince William, The Duke of Cambridge, held a meeting via video link with the families affected by the Manchester Arena Attack. The Inquiry adjourned briefly while the families participated in the call.

Covid-19

The Manchester Arena Inquiry, will continue to operate in-person hearings with limited attendance in our covid-secure venues as Manchester (re) enters Tier 3 restrictions.

Follow the Inquiry

The Inquiry sits Mon-Thur from 0930hrs. The YouTube livestream begins 10 mins later as it is operating on a delay.

Twitter: @mcrinquiry

Youtube: Manchester Arena Inquiry

Website: www.manchesteraarenainquiry.org.uk