

House of Commons: Written Statement (HCWS277)

Department for Transport

Written Statement made by: **Secretary of State for Transport (Heidi Alexander)**
on 16 Jul 2026.

Initial Response to the Cranston Inquiry

On 5 February 2026 Sir Ross Cranston published the Cranston Inquiry's report into the tragic events of November 2021 when at least 30 people died attempting to cross the Channel in a small boat. Government has today published an interim response to the report.

Our deepest sympathies remain with the survivors and the loved ones of those who lost their lives. I wish to express my sincere thanks to Sir Ross for undertaking this Inquiry with great care and diligence and to all of those that participated.

Search and rescue in the channel looks very different today than in 2021. Many crucial changes have been made including closer working with France, additional people and assets, and the adoption of new technologies, but it is important that we continue to learn and improve wherever possible, including learning lessons from the Cranston Inquiry's report.

Of the 18 recommendations made by the Inquiry, 15 were principally operational in nature and three were focused on policy matters. This interim response focuses on the 15 operational recommendations which have all been accepted in full. The response also sets out the actions that have already been taken, and additional actions that will be taken, against each recommendation.

The Department for Transport and His Majesty's Coastguard, part of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA), are dedicated to delivering our vital maritime search and rescue responsibilities and will continue to seek opportunities to learn and improve.

The Department is conducting a review of the MCA which will consider its functions, form, governance, and performance. It will report to Ministers this year and inform Government's response to the outstanding recommendations of the Cranston Inquiry.

I have laid a copy of the interim response in both Houses of Parliament.