

House of Commons: Written Statement (HCWS278)

Home Office

Written Statement made by: **The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Shabana Mahmood)** on 16 Jul 2026.

Consultation on the future of the Undercover Policing Inquiry

Today I am launching a consultation on the future of the Undercover Policing Inquiry (UCPI). This Government is committed to delivering justice and to ensuring that public inquiries are able to provide answers, accountability and recommendations within a reasonable timeframe.

The UCPI was established in 2015 to examine undercover policing in England and Wales since 1968. Sir John Mitting, the current Chair of the Inquiry, will retire in 2027. His retirement provides an opportunity to consult those affected, core participants and others with an interest in the Inquiry on how its remaining work should best be taken forward. I am grateful to him for his work on the Inquiry.

The Terms of Reference of the Inquiry are broad. In addition to examining the role of undercover policing in the prevention and detection of crime, the Inquiry is required to examine the motivation for and scope of undercover police operations, their effect on individuals and the public, the extent of government awareness of such operations, and the adequacy of the legal, policy and judicial framework governing undercover policing. The Inquiry is also tasked with reviewing the extent of the duty of disclosure in criminal proceedings involving undercover police operations and the scope for miscarriages of justice where disclosure was inadequate.

The Terms of Reference envisaged the Inquiry concluding within three years. It has made real progress in investigating the Metropolitan Police's Special Demonstration Squad and produced an interim report on Tranche 1 of its work (relating to period 1968-82) and will publish an interim report concluding its work on the Special Demonstration Squad next year. More than a decade after it was established, the Inquiry remains ongoing. As at the end of March 2026, the Inquiry has spent £137m. Ministers remain concerned about the length and cost of the Inquiry and the delay in providing outcomes to those affected.

The consultation will seek views on the future structure, scope and format of the work needed to bring the remaining matters the Inquiry is set to investigate to a conclusion. It is not a re-opening of evidence, nor a call for new factual material about undercover policing or individual cases. Respondents will be invited to focus on how the Inquiry's remaining areas of work should be prioritised and delivered.

Respondents to the consultation might wish to share their views on alternative ways the inquiry might discharge its remaining areas of work. They might wish to consider fairness to victims and those who were affected by undercover policing, bearing in mind transparency and public confidence, proportionality of cost and duration as well as the ability of different approaches to deliver meaningful recommendations. The consultation has been published on the [gov.uk website](https://www.gov.uk) and will close on Thursday 20th August 2026.

We plan to announce our decision on the future of the Inquiry, informed by this consultation in Autumn 2026.