



# 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 6 November 2019 an application was made by the **Methodist Church of Great Britain ('the Methodist Church')** for core participant status in this investigation. This notice sets out my determination of the application.
3. The Inquiry has published a [definition of scope](#) of investigation and an [update note](#) which provides further information about the themes that will be examined and structure of the investigation. This investigation is thematic in nature and is examining the nature and adequacy of current child protection policies, practices and procedures within religious organisations and settings within England and Wales.
4. Applications for core participant status are considered under Rule 5 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 which provides:

*(1) The chairman may designate a person as a core participant at any time during the course of the inquiry, provided that person consents to being so designated.*

*(2) In deciding whether to designate a person as a core participant, the chairman must in particular consider whether –*

*a. The person played, or may have played, a direct and significant role in relation to the matters to which the inquiry relates;*

*b. The person has a significant interest in an important aspect of the matters to which the inquiry relates; or*

*c. The person may be subject to explicit or significant criticism during the inquiry proceedings or in the report, or in any interim report.*

*(3) A person ceases to be a core participant on –*



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- a. the date specified by the chairman in writing; or*
- b. the end of the inquiry.*

5. In determining the application, the matters listed in Rule 5(2) must be considered, but the list is not exhaustive and I may also take into account other relevant matters.
6. This application has been lodged more than four months after the deadline for core participant applications in this investigation. However I have a discretion pursuant to Rule 5(1) to designate a core participant “at any time” during the course of the Inquiry. The Inquiry has asked the Methodist Church to provide a witness statement as part of this investigation. During the course of preparing its corporate statement and taking legal advice, the Methodist Church decided it would be helpful if it were to be designated core participant status in the investigation. Bearing in mind that explanation and that it is some months before the investigation hearing will take place, I am satisfied that the delay should not stand in the way of my considering the application.
7. The Methodist Church is a religious organisation and the application is put on the basis that it has a significant interest in the nature and adequacy of current child protection policies, practices and procedures in religious organisations, including its own, and has experience of internal reform of such policies.
8. The application is put on the basis that the Methodist Church has completed a review of all past safeguarding concerns between 1950-2014 and been engaged in a process with the intention of updating and improving safeguarding policies, including by adopting a program of supervision and a new training model. It anticipates that the Inquiry’s recommendations will likely shape the safeguarding requirements which it will meet in the future.
9. Having regard to the provisions of Rule 5(2), I am satisfied that the Methodist Church has played a direct or significant role in relation to the matters under investigation and/or has a significant interest in the matters under investigation.



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10. As set out in the update note, this investigation will focus upon organisational structures and child protection practices. It will look at whether there are common issues across religious organisations and settings and how they can be met and overcome.

11. I understand that the Methodist Church will be able to assist the Inquiry by providing evidence about its own internal review, and the past failings it has identified. In addition, it has relevant evidence about external auditing processes, the vetting and barring framework and the safeguarding challenges faced by small religious organisations. I am therefore satisfied that the Methodist Church should be designated as a core participant in the Child Protection in Religious Organisations and Settings investigation.

12. Applications for designation as the recognised legal representative of a core participant are governed by Rules 6 and 7 of the Inquiry Rules 2006, which provide as follows:

*6(1) Where -*

- (a) a core participant, other than a core participant referred to in rule 7; or*
- (b) any other person required or permitted to give evidence or produce documents during the course of the inquiry,*  
*has appointed a qualified lawyer to act on that person's behalf, the chairman must designate that lawyer as that person's recognised legal representative in respect of the inquiry proceedings.*

*7(1) This rule applies where there are two or more core participants, each of whom seeks to be legally represented, and the chairman considers that -*

- (a) their interests in the outcome of the inquiry are similar;*
- (b) the facts they are likely to rely on in the course of the inquiry are similar; and*
- (c) it is fair and proper for them to be jointly represented.*



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*(2) The chairman must direct that those core participants shall be represented by a single recognised legal representative, and the chairman may designate a qualified lawyer for that purpose.*

*(3) Subject to paragraph (4), any designation must be agreed by the core participants in question.*

*(4) If no agreement on a designation is forthcoming within a reasonable period, the chairman may designate an appropriate lawyer who, in his opinion, has sufficient knowledge and experience to act in this capacity.*

13. I am satisfied that the Methodist Church has appointed Maria Strauss of Farrer & Co LLP as its qualified lawyer in relation to this investigation. I therefore designate Ms Strauss as the Methodist Church's recognised legal representative in accordance with Rule 6(1) as I am required by that rule to do.

14. If the Methodist Church wishes to make an application for an award under section 40(1)(b) of the Inquiries Act 2005 for expenses to be incurred in respect of legal representation, it should submit an application to the Solicitor to the Inquiry by 4pm on 21 November 2019. Such applications by core participants will be determined in accordance with the Inquiry's Costs Protocol on Legal Representation at Public Expense.

**Professor Alexis Jay OBE**

**14 November 2019**

**Chair, Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse**