Parliamentary Briefing:
The Future of the Undercover Policing Inquiry

On 16 July 2026 the Home Office launched a public consultation into 'the Future of the Undercover Policing Inquiry (UCPI)'. This briefing sets out the concerns of survivors of the abuses under investigation and offers suggestions for how MPs can help ensure justice. For more information please contact info@campaignopposingpolicesurveillance.com

Background
Set up in 2015, the UCPI has revealed police misconduct and corruption on a scale that has far outstripped what anyone expected at the outset, leading to a steady stream of apologies from the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS). It has also revealed a culture of lies and cover ups on the part of the state parties that is clearly deeply ingrained. Originally set to conclude in 2018, hundreds of state applications for anonymity and secrecy have created massive delays. The Inquiry did not even start hearing evidence until November 2020.

The current Chair, Sir John Mitting is retiring in 2027 and a new Chair has not been appointed. Costs and delays are now being used as an argument to curtail the Inquiry even though it has not completed its terms of reference.

The fact that the Home Office so woefully underestimated the scale and extent of what the Inquiry has to do cannot be an argument for limiting investigations or shutting the Inquiry down. On the contrary, it highlights the public interest in gaining a proper understanding of what went wrong.

What remains to be investigated
The Inquiry has so far only examined a single undercover unit, the Special Demonstration Squad (SDS), which operated within Metropolitan Police Special Branch (MPSB) from 1968 to 2007. Three major areas remain outstanding: Tranche 4 (T4), Tranche 5 (T5) and Module 3.

T4 is set to investigate the National Public Order Intelligence Unit (NPOIU), a political policing unit that operated on a national level from 1999 to 2011. High-profile NPOIU officers, including the infamous Mark Kennedy as well as 'Marco Jacobs', 'Lynn Watson', and their managing officers are expected to give evidence during this tranche.

T5 covers other undercover policing activity in England and Wales.
This covers covert operations that fall outside the remit of the SDS and NPOIU, and includes investigating deceitful sexual relationships that occurred in undercover operations linked to criminal investigations (see Ruling 47).

These Tranches are of critical importance. They examine undercover operations conducted under modern legislation, such as the Human Rights Act (1998) and the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (2000) – the regulatory frameworks that are supposed to protect the public today – yet we already know that these Tranches include cases of sexual misconduct, officers committing criminal offences and acting as *agents provocateurs*, miscarriages of justice, and abuses related to the policing of minority groups and racist criminal gangs; and we may not yet know the worst of it. It is important to note that some of the worst misconduct uncovered by the Inquiry to date only emerged as a result of evidence being disclosed to civilian Core Participants, unveiling the web of lies told by the police. None of the relevant evidence in T4 and T5 has so-far been disclosed.

Module 3 deals with current and future undercover policing practices. Its primary goal is to provide recommendations for the future, to ensure modern policing operates within lawful parameters. It is essential to ensuring these kinds of abuses never happen again.

Concerns about the Home Office Consultation
Core Participants are deeply concerned that no attempt was made to consult with us before launching the 'public consultation', and no consideration was given to taking a trauma informed approach. Victims in T4 and T5 have patiently waited more than 10 years for answers, and the launch of this Home Office consultation threatening the future of the Inquiry is cruel and has caused considerable distress. Previous requests to meet with the Home Office sponsor unit in 2024 were refused and this consultation was sprung on us in the middle of evidential hearings giving us just five weeks to respond, in the summer holidays.

Announced the day after the Public Office (Accountability) Bill cleared the Commons, supporters of the 'Hillsborough Law' have expressed grave concerns that the consultation cites their Law as an excuse to reduce the UCPI's statutory powers, before the Bill has even passed. The consultation has received submissions from Pete Weatherby KC.

More than 2500 people have written to the Home Office to raise concerns about the nature of the multiple-choice consultation questionnaire, complaining that it is too limited in scope, fails to provide sufficient information, and does not ask questions or invite responses that reflect the priorities of survivors of the abuses under investigation.

Nowhere does the Home Office ask whether a Chair or panel should be appointed or whether the Inquiry should be funded to complete its terms of reference as originally planned. Indeed, the consultation appears to assume the Inquiry will *not* be continuing in its current form, creating alarm that the Home Office is simply seeking validation for a decision it has already made.

What survivors are asking
- The UCPI must be fully resourced to fulfil its terms of reference, including T4, T5 and Module 3.
- A replacement Chair supported by an expert panel must be appointed as a matter of urgency to ensure continuity and avoid further delay.
- Steps must be taken to ensure candour and openness from the state parties under investigation. There must be a clear process to ensure prompt disclosure of evidence to Core Participants, and to prevent the delays caused by excessive secrecy that have plagued the process to date.

How you can help
Make it clear to the Home Office that this Inquiry matters and it cannot simply be shut down.

1. **Support Early Day Motion 811** (tabled on 14 September 2026)

2. **Table questions in the House**. Possible examples include:
   i. To ask the Home Secretary, what steps she is taking to ensure that the Undercover Policy Inquiry is able to complete its Terms of Reference.
   ii. To ask the Home Secretary, what assessment she has made of the potential impact on victims and survivors if the Undercover Policy Inquiry does not complete Tranche 4, Tranche 5 and Module 3.
   iii. To ask the Home Secretary, what steps she is taking to ensure candour and openness from the state parties under investigation as part of the Undercover Policy Inquiry.
   iv. To ask the Home Secretary, what steps she is taking to ensure the prompt disclosure of evidence to Core Participants in the Undercover Policing Inquiry.
   v. To ask the Home Secretary, if she will meet with the Core Participants of the Undercover Policing Inquiry and their legal representatives regarding their concerns about the consultation on the Inquiry's future.