

MINUTES OF THE RECONVENED 57TH COMMISSION MEETING

HELD AT 2.30 PM ON 22 SEPTEMBER 2003

AT THE OFFICES OF THE NIHRC, TEMPLE COURT, BELFAST

Present: Brice Dickson (Chief Commissioner)
Tom Donnelly
Christine Eames
Harold Good
Tom Hadden
Chris McGimpsey

Apologies: Margaret-Ann Dinsmore
Kevin McLaughlin

In attendance: Paddy Sloan (Chief Executive)

- 1.0** The agenda of the reconvened meeting was to complete unfinished business from the two previous meetings of 8 and 15 September. However, the development of an action plan in response to ongoing criticism of the Commission was given priority and moved to the top of the agenda, for consideration before other business.
- 2.0** Commissioners discussed the rationale for producing an action plan and its potential impact. There were mixed views around the table as to its likely influence on the Commission's most ardent critics. It was agreed that the importance of restoring public confidence and relationships with political parties was paramount.
- 3.0** Use of the term 'mistake' in reference to the correspondence associated with the Holy Cross case was discussed. Not all Commissioners felt it to be either appropriate or necessary to do so, though this was the recommendation from staff, agreed to by the Chief Commissioner.
- 4.0** There followed discussion regarding the position of the two Commissioners who have 'withdrawn' from the Commission. The Chief Executive expressed concern that their position be regularised, in particular with respect to the receipt of all documentation. A Parliamentary Question on the issue has resulted in the NIO expressing the position with regard to their remuneration. The Chief Commissioner stated he would keep under review the propriety of releasing documentation to non-participating Commissioners.
- 5.0** It was agreed that for the time being the two Commissioners in question should continue to be provided with all Commission papers, as has been the case since their withdrawal.
- 6.0** Commissioners then considered the latest draft of an action plan.

- 7.0** Various amendments were noted to each paragraph and the Chief Commissioner agreed to edit the paper accordingly and circulate it again to all Commissioners for further comment, prior to release.
- 8.0** The meeting closed at 4.30 pm, as it was no longer quorate. It was agreed that all outstanding business would be dealt with at the next scheduled Commission meeting on 13 October 2003.