

Part 1: Preface

- 1.1 On 22 July 2014 the Secretary of State for Home Affairs, the Rt Hon Theresa May MP, announced, in a written statement laid before the House of Commons, that an Inquiry under the Inquiries Act 2005 was to be held into the death of Alexander Litvinenko. I was appointed to chair the Inquiry.
- 1.2 The Terms of Reference for the Inquiry, upon which I was consulted prior to my appointment, are to be found at Appendix 3 to this Report. I was invited by the Secretary of State to complete the Inquiry by December 2015. I opened the Inquiry on 31 July 2014. The oral hearings were completed on 31 July 2015, and my Report was duly delivered to the Secretary of State in January 2016.
- 1.3 The Inquiry has been completed substantially within the budget prepared by the secretariat, and adopted by the Secretary of State in setting a budget cap.
- 1.4 I am indebted to Counsel to the Inquiry, Robin Tam QC, Hugh Davies QC and Andrew O'Connor QC, and to the Solicitor to the Inquiry, Martin Smith, and his assistant, Abigail Scholefield, for their invaluable assistance in the collation, analysis and presentation of the evidence, and in the preparation of this Report.
- 1.5 I must also record my appreciation of the work of the Inquiry secretariat, Lee Hughes CBE, Secretary to the Inquiry, his deputy Frances Currie, Press Officer Mike Wicksteed and Paralegal Amy Nicholls. They have organised the administration of the Inquiry in a most efficient and professional manner.
- 1.6 I am indebted to the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, who authorised his officers to continue to provide the investigative and evidential services that had been provided to me as Assistant Coroner charged with the conduct of the inquest into the death of Alexander Litvinenko following the establishment of the Inquiry. I place on record my appreciation of the work of the officers of the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) who carried out an exemplary investigation into the death of Mr Litvinenko, and who provided the greatest assistance to me in providing investigative and evidential services in the course of the Inquiry. I should in particular pay tribute to the work carried out by Commander Ball, Detective Inspector Craig Mascall, Detective Chief Inspector Mike Jolly and all members of the Operation Avocet team.
- 1.7 I was greatly assisted by Solicitors and Counsel for the Core Participants who took part in the Inquiry: Ben Emmerson QC, Adam Straw and Elena Tsirlina for Marina and Anatoly Litvinenko; Richard Horwell QC, Saba Naqshbandi, Jenny Leonard and Prit Mandair for the MPS; Neil Garnham QC, Robert Wastell, Paul Bishop and Catherine Turtle for the Secretary of State; and David Evans QC, Alasdair Henderson and Simon Ramsden for AWE plc.
- 1.8 My conclusions on the central issues in this Report are to be found at Parts 8, 9 and 10. Those Parts of the Report, and the conclusions they contain, are based on the totality of the evidence that I have heard – that is, both the ‘open’ and the ‘closed’ evidence. The conclusions are mine and mine alone.