



# Inquiries Act 2005

## 2005 CHAPTER 12

### *Inquiry proceedings*

#### **19 Restrictions on public access etc**

- (1) Restrictions may, in accordance with this section, be imposed on—
  - (a) attendance at an inquiry, or at any particular part of an inquiry;
  - (b) disclosure or publication of any evidence or documents given, produced or provided to an inquiry.
- (2) Restrictions may be imposed in either or both of the following ways—
  - (a) by being specified in a notice (a “restriction notice”) given by the Minister to the chairman at any time before the end of the inquiry;
  - (b) by being specified in an order (a “restriction order”) made by the chairman during the course of the inquiry.
- (3) A restriction notice or restriction order must specify only such restrictions—
  - (a) as are required by any statutory provision, [<sup>F1</sup>[<sup>F2</sup>assimilated enforceable] obligation] or rule of law, or
  - (b) as the Minister or chairman considers to be conducive to the inquiry fulfilling its terms of reference or to be necessary in the public interest, having regard in particular to the matters mentioned in subsection (4).
- (4) Those matters are—
  - (a) the extent to which any restriction on attendance, disclosure or publication might inhibit the allaying of public concern;
  - (b) any risk of harm or damage that could be avoided or reduced by any such restriction;
  - (c) any conditions as to confidentiality subject to which a person acquired information that he is to give, or has given, to the inquiry;
  - (d) the extent to which not imposing any particular restriction would be likely—
    - (i) to cause delay or to impair the efficiency or effectiveness of the inquiry, or

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*Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Inquiries Act 2005, Section 19. (See end of Document for details)*

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- (ii) otherwise to result in additional cost (whether to public funds or to witnesses or others).
- (5) In subsection (4)(b) “harm or damage” includes in particular—
- (a) death or injury;
  - (b) damage to national security or international relations;
  - (c) damage to the economic interests of the United Kingdom or of any part of the United Kingdom;
  - (d) damage caused by disclosure of commercially sensitive information.

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#### **Textual Amendments**

- F1** Words in s. 19(3)(a) substituted (31.12.2020) by [The Inquiries and Coroners \(Amendment\) \(EU Exit\) Regulations 2018 \(S.I. 2018/1252\)](#), regs. 1(1), **2(a)**; 2020 c. 1, Sch. 5 para. 1(1)
- F2** Words in s. 19(3)(a) substituted (1.1.2024) by [The Retained EU Law \(Revocation and Reform\) Act 2023 \(Consequential Amendment\) Regulations 2023 \(S.I. 2023/1424\)](#), reg. 1(2), **Sch. para. 57(2)(a)**

**Changes to legislation:**

There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Inquiries Act 2005, Section 19.