



# **Inquest into the death of Alexander Perepilichnyy**

**Coroner: His Honour Judge Nicholas Hilliard QC**

24 May 2018

Dear Interested Persons

## **Inquest into the death of Alexander Perepilichnyy**

I am writing on behalf of the Coroner to provide an update about the hearing that is scheduled at the Old Bailey for 29 May. The Coroner has the position of Mrs Perepilichnaya at the forefront of his mind and very much regrets the distress that any delay to the inquest inevitably causes to her.

By way of background, Interested Persons will be aware that at the conclusion of the hearing on 13 April, the Coroner indicated that he had completed his enquiries into matters that were drawn to his attention about the United States and that he had been informed that the review announced by the former Home Secretary into the 14 deaths allegedly linked to the Russian state, including that of Mr Perepilichnyy, would be concluded by the end of April. In the circumstances, the Coroner confirmed that a further hearing would be listed for 29 May in order to consider oral closing submissions from Interested Persons.

Interested Persons were notified earlier this month that the hearing scheduled for 29 May could no longer be used for closing submissions. This was because the Home Secretary's review had not yet concluded and due to ongoing negotiations with the Government of the United States about the disclosure of information relevant to the Coroner's investigation. Interested Persons were informed that the 29 May hearing date would therefore be used, if required, to consider any public interest immunity applications lodged by Her Majesty's Government in regards to these matters.

It is with considerable regret that the Coroner has reached the view that it will not be possible, in the time available, to conclude the outstanding enquiries and to consider any

public interest immunity applications that may be made to him as a result. These are the concluding steps in this investigation and they are important ones. The Coroner is frustrated that it is not possible to progress these matters at this time, but understands there are matters outside of his control that have prolonged both the UK government's review into the 14 deaths and also the ongoing discussions regarding the US report. As a matter of fairness to Interested Persons, it is important that they have sufficient time to consider properly any matters arising and to make submissions about them. In the circumstances, as that will not be possible before next Tuesday, the Coroner has decided to vacate the 29 May hearing. A copy of this letter will be posted on the website of the Chief Coroner to ensure that the public is aware of the reasons that the hearing cannot currently proceed.

The Coroner wishes to ensure that the outstanding matters are addressed swiftly and without further delay. A further hearing will therefore now be scheduled for **10am on 27 June 2018**. It is anticipated that this will consider any public interest immunity applications that may be lodged. All parties will be required to work to tight deadlines to meet this timetable. Interested Persons will be informed separately about the agenda for the hearing and the deadline to lodge written submissions.

The Coroner is acutely aware of the impact that the continued delay to the conclusion of the inquest will have on Mrs Perepilichnaya and her family. He is grateful for their patience and forbearance whilst these final outstanding matters are addressed.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tim Suter', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

**Tim Suter**

**Solicitor to the Inquest**