

1 Wednesday, 19 December 2018.

2 (10.30 am)

3 THE CORONER: Mr Skelton, just two things. Number one is
4 there isn't a copy.

5 Secondly, we will have a break, how long can the
6 stenographers go for? All right, thank you very much.

7 Conclusions

8 THE CORONER: These are my conclusions and my findings as to
9 the facts relating to the death on 10 November 2012 of
10 Alexander Perepilichnyy.

11 In particular, I am required to determine the answer
12 to four statutory questions, pursuant to section 5.1(a)
13 and (b) of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009, who the
14 deceased was, and how, when and where he came by his
15 death. That statement of the legal position, and the
16 considerable interest that there is in these Inquest
17 proceedings, should not obscure the primary fact that
18 they concern the death of a husband and father.

19 Before I took over this Inquest my predecessor,
20 Richard Travers, her Majesty's senior coroner for
21 Surrey, ruled on its scope and I saw no basis to disturb
22 his ruling. Initially he considered that it should
23 include (a) the medical cause of death, (b) the direct
24 circumstances in which the medical cause arose, ie the
25 sequence of events directly leading to the death,

1 including the finding of the body and attempts at
2 resuscitation, (c) the nature and extent of the
3 toxicological analyses, (d) the reliability of those
4 toxicological analyses.

5 On 10 May 2016 he expanded the scope to include:

6 "Proportionate background information as to who may
7 have had the motive to murder Mr Perepilichnyy, such
8 evidence shall include information in respect of the
9 alleged fraud against Hermitage Capital Management and
10 any connection with that incident and Mr Perepilichnyy."

11 Unless otherwise indicated, my findings are based on
12 the application of the civil standard of proof, namely
13 the balance of probabilities. I have not sought to
14 resolve every conceivable issue which has been raised
15 before me, but only those which in my judgment have
16 an impact on the questions I have to answer and of
17 course in any investigation into human affairs, there
18 will always be some matters which remain unresolved.
19 All the more so where, as here, the central figure has
20 died and we have to proceed without their account from
21 the witness box.

22 The senior coroner for Surrey opened the coronial
23 investigation into Mr Perepilichnyy's death on
24 12 November 2012. That investigation was suspended
25 pending the completion of a criminal investigation by

1 Surrey police, headed by Detective Chief Inspector,
2 subsequently Detective Superintendent, Ian Pollard.
3 Following the conclusion of the police investigation,
4 which did not result in any criminal proceedings, the
5 senior coroner recommenced his investigation.

6 In February 2017 I was nominated to take on the
7 position of coroner by the Lord Chief Justice, following
8 the judgment of the High Court which upheld the
9 application by the Home Secretary to withhold certain
10 sensitive material from use in the Inquest on the
11 grounds of public interest immunity (PII). I am acutely
12 conscious that the Inquest proceedings, some reporting
13 of them and the time they have taken have been the cause
14 of much distress to Mrs Perepilichnaya and her family.
15 Aspects of the investigation have inevitably, and
16 understandably, attracted public attention. It is
17 important that the proceedings are reported accurately
18 and fairly, so that distress is not compounded. Some
19 information has proved difficult to obtain, or has come
20 to light at a late stage, and delays have resulted.
21 That is always to be regretted.

22 Where the passage of time may have had an impact on
23 the accuracy or reliability of evidence that I have
24 received, I have made allowance for that.

25 My findings are based on my assessment of the

1 evidence adduced during the Inquest hearings which took
2 place over 12 days between 5 to 23 June 2017, and four
3 days from 10 to 13 April 2018. Concluding oral
4 submissions were made by interested persons (IPs) on
5 21 September 2018, and final written submissions were
6 received on 19 October 2018. I should make it clear
7 that my conclusions are not based on the material that
8 was the subject of the Home Secretary's PII certificate
9 which was upheld by the High Court, or that was the
10 subject of the later certificate before me.

11 I have the advantage of having seen the material
12 which attracted PII. As a result, I am able to say that
13 its central features were replicated in evidence which
14 was given openly in the Inquest proceedings. Nothing in
15 the PII material which went beyond what is publicly
16 available would assist me in determining how
17 Mr Perepilichnyy died. Anything which could have any
18 significant bearing on that question was aired in public
19 during the Inquest. There is nothing in the material
20 which is inconsistent with or which undermines the open
21 evidence that I have relied upon to reach my factual
22 findings, or to come to my conclusions and nothing in
23 the material prevents me reaching any conclusion.

24 I shall put on the Chief Coroner's website a list of
25 the names of the IPs who participated in the Inquest and

1 the names of the witnesses from whom I received written
2 and in most cases oral evidence. I am grateful to the
3 IPs and their legal teams for the assistance which they
4 have provided to me throughout my investigation, with
5 the different resources available to them they have
6 helped me to ensure that all relevant matters have been
7 pursued as thoroughly as is now feasible. I have taken
8 account of and carefully considered all the points that
9 they have made at different stages. That is what I say
10 by way of introduction.

11 Section 2. Mr Perepilichnyy's life and background.

12 Mr Perepilichnyy was born in Ukraine on
13 15 July 1968. He met his future wife, Tatiana in Moscow
14 when they were students there and they married in the
15 early 1990s. They had two children. The family lived
16 in Moscow initially, and at the time of his death
17 Mr Perepilichnyy retained property and business
18 interests there. The family first obtained a visa to
19 live in the United Kingdom in June 2010. They had
20 rented a property in Virginia Water, Surrey from
21 1 August 2010 to 31 July 2011, before moving to the
22 St George's Hill Estate in Weybridge.

23 Mrs Perepilichnaya told me that they came to the
24 United Kingdom for their children's schooling, and
25 because she always felt at home in London. In

1 an earlier statement for these proceedings she said that
2 another reason was to develop business opportunities in
3 the UK. I have also received evidence that
4 Mr Perepilichnyy fled Russia in fear for his life or his
5 safety.

6 In the years and months prior to 10 November 2012
7 Mr Perepilichnyy was said to have been in good health.
8 He had no underlying medical conditions and most
9 importantly he had no heart complaints. He was given
10 a clean bill of health in the month before he died. He
11 was pursuing a number of life insurance applications
12 over the summer of 2012 and was required to have
13 a medical check up by one of the potential insurers.

14 Blood tests were conducted, and he was referred to
15 Dr Brian O'Connor, a consultant physician, who saw him
16 in September and October 2012. Dr O'Connor reached the
17 conclusion that although he had a benign condition
18 called Gilbert's syndrome and some asymptomatic
19 gallstones, he had:

20 "No illnesses which would in any way impact on his
21 life expectancy."

22 Dr O'Connor also noted that Mr Perepilichnyy had
23 recently lost weight because he had been more active and
24 changed his diet. He was a tall man, measuring
25 1.86 metres at the time of the post mortem examination.

1 Mrs Perepilichnaya described how he had been quite
2 overweight for a long time, weighing over 112 kilograms,
3 but in 2012 he had made a New Year's resolution to
4 increase the exercise he took and to go on a strict
5 diet.

6 In a call to reassure insurance brokers on
7 21 June 2012, Mr Perepilichnyy said that he weighed
8 98 kilograms. At the post mortem examination he weighed
9 93 kilograms.

10 Although Mrs Perepilichnaya felt that he was
11 unhealthily slim and looked older, she told me that her
12 husband never complained about his health and had said
13 that he felt great. In written evidence, his brother in
14 law, Mr Ruslan Gursky, said that he had recently lost
15 weight and had become more active, and of course we know
16 that Mr Perepilichnyy was out jogging when he died.

17 Elmira Medynska, with whom Mr Perepilichnyy had
18 developed a personal relationship in 2012, told me that
19 she did not notice a significant loss of weight over the
20 time that they had spent together. She had, however,
21 only met him for the first time in May 2012 and had been
22 with him on three trips leading up to a visit to Paris
23 between 8 and 10 November 2012. I am satisfied on all
24 of the evidence that he had lost a significant amount of
25 weight in 2012, as part of an effort to increase his

1 fitness.

2 Mr Neil St Clair-Ford, a chauffeur working from
3 a house on the St George's Hill Estate close to where
4 Mr Perepilichnyy lived, told me that he had seen him out
5 running about a dozen times. He had seen him running up
6 a steep hill, really struggling by the time he got to
7 the top, with his head bowed and holding his knees and
8 gasping for breath. It was at or near the top of the
9 same hill that Mr Perepilichnyy was found on
10 10 November 2012.

11 I do not have a comprehensive picture of what
12 Mr Perepilichnyy did for a living. After he died, the
13 Swiss authorities told Surrey police that he had said
14 that his main activity from 2007 to 2010 concerned
15 financial businesses and real estate investments,
16 including being partner in an investment company called
17 Financial Bridge.

18 In documents produced by European Financial Group
19 Bank (EFG) he was described as semi-retired because he
20 did not work in the UK at all, but travelled abroad to
21 oversee his business activities.

22 A more detailed account of Mr Perepilichnyy's
23 commercial activities is set out in a due diligence
24 within EFG's client information profile dated
25 December 2009. This reveals that he had investments in

1 a number of businesses and was involved in private
2 equity and real estate investment in Russia and Ukraine.
3 Some of his business appears to have been conducted
4 through offshore entities. He was director of a number
5 of companies, confirmed in the less contentious parts of
6 his brother in law, Mr Rishat Ismagilov's most recent
7 statement to me. Liz Kaye, Mr Perepilichnyy's client
8 officer at the bank, told me that over the course of
9 their working relationship between 2009 and his death,
10 her understanding was that the majority of his work was
11 to do with food production, specifically the milk and
12 vegetable business.

13 In the call he made to reassure insurance brokers
14 in June 2012, Mr Perepilichnyy said that he was CEO and
15 owner of a food company. I am satisfied that
16 Mr Perepilichnyy was, for example, a director of
17 a company called Baikonur Worldwide Limited and was at
18 least very closely connected with a company called
19 Quartel Trading Limited. He provided bank statements
20 for these companies to Hermitage Capital Management,
21 hereafter Hermitage, as part of an investigation into
22 payments said to be connected to an alleged \$230 million
23 fraud, and in particular for the benefit of Mr Stepanov,
24 the husband, or former husband, of the person in charge
25 of the Moscow tax office, who is alleged to have

1 authorised a \$230 million tax refund.

2 Mrs Perepilichnaya said that her husband did not
3 discuss his work with her. She was unable to name all
4 of his companies, or to describe what they all did,
5 either in her evidence to me or when she spoke to Surrey
6 Police in late November 2012. But she was aware that he
7 had a food business in Ukraine, amongst a variety of
8 commercial interests, and knew that he had an office in
9 Moscow and factories in Russia and Ukraine.

10 After Mr Perepilichnyy's death, Mrs Perepilichnaya
11 provided Surrey Police with a computer which he was said
12 to have been using. However, the basic searches of this
13 computer by Surrey Police did not shed significant light
14 on his work, and the police thought that it may have
15 been used as a family computer instead. Surrey Police
16 also identified an entry in Mr Perepilichnyy's telephone
17 contacts of "Macbook", followed by what appeared to be
18 a password. However, Mrs Perepilichnaya has not been
19 able to identify any other computer belonging to her
20 husband.

21 Mr Bill Browder, the CEO of Hermitage, a company
22 that used to invest in Russia, said that his colleagues
23 were told by Mr Perepilichnyy that he had managed the
24 funds of a number of wealthy Russians. Regardless of
25 the precise nature of his work, it is apparent that

1 Mr Perepilichnyy was a very wealthy man, as
2 Mrs Perepilichnaya acknowledged. They resided in the UK
3 with tier 1 investor visas, which required an investment
4 of £1 million into the UK. According to disclosures
5 made to EFG in October 2011, Mr Perepilichnyy reported
6 millions of pounds of assets in property, and earnings
7 of more than £1 million each year. Since July 2011, the
8 family had been renting a house on the St George's Hill
9 private estate, and according to Mrs Perepilichnaya were
10 looking to buy a property in the UK at a potential cost
11 of more than £7 million.

12 It is clear that Mr Perepilichnyy travelled a great
13 deal. Mrs Perepilichnaya said that he travelled between
14 two and four times each month. Analysis of his travel
15 by the police corresponds with her assessment, or with
16 more frequent travel. However, whilst there is evidence
17 that Mr Perepilichnyy took 33 flights to Kiev in Ukraine
18 between September 2009 and his death, and 35 flights
19 out, he does not appear to have taken any direct flights
20 to or from Russia since November 2009. Even if he may
21 have returned to Russia through a land border with
22 Ukraine, the absence of direct flights is striking for
23 someone who had family, property and business interests
24 there and who travelled extensively.

25 Mrs Perepilichnaya described her husband as

1 a workaholic, someone who worked all the time and did
2 not relax. However, after moving to England he had
3 stopped working such long hours and had started to see
4 more of his family. She recalled that he was very
5 positive and absolutely normal in the weeks before he
6 died, perhaps even more relaxed than usual. He was
7 described as a lovely, gentle and very intelligent man.

8 Section 3. The events of 8 to 10 November 2012.

9 Mr Perepilichnyy visited Paris between 8 and
10 10 November 2012. He stayed at the Bristol Hotel with
11 Elmira Medynska. The booking was made in his own name
12 and on his own credit card, although he registered at
13 the hotel with his previous UK address. I am satisfied
14 that nothing can be inferred from this about any
15 concerns for his physical safety. It may well be that
16 he simply did not wish any communications from the hotel
17 to come to his current address. The hotel's response to
18 enquiries from Surrey Police was unclear as to whether
19 Mr Perepilichnyy's booking was from 7 or 8 to
20 10 November. However, I have heard evidence from
21 Ms Medynska that they stayed together at the hotel from
22 the 8 to 10 November. The police timeline, taken in
23 part from Mr Perepilichnyy's mobile telephone data,
24 showed that he was in France from 8 November, having
25 been taken to Heathrow by a taxi driver.

1 The same timeline shows bookings for restaurants in
2 the city, and one significant purchase at a well known
3 boutique. Material I have obtained from the French
4 police investigation into Mr Perepilichnyy's death also
5 confirms that he arrived on an Air France flight on
6 8 November at around 8.30 in the morning.

7 During the Inquest hearings in June 2017, it was
8 suggested by Mr Browder and put to some of the witnesses
9 that Mr Perepilichnyy had booked into two different
10 hotels, and that I should infer from this that he was
11 concerned about his security. The only evidence put
12 forward to support this suggestion is that his credit
13 card records include payments to more than one hotel.
14 The bill from the Bristol Hotel was for more than
15 £1,850. There was another bill for £240 at the Hotel
16 Meurice. Ms Medynska told me that they had stayed at
17 the Bristol Hotel, and although she was questioned about
18 expenditure at the Hotel Meurice, she did not remember
19 going there with him. Whatever the purchase was for,
20 there is no basis to suppose that it was for
21 accommodation.

22 Most of the evidence about Mr Perepilichnyy's time
23 in Paris comes from Ms Medynska. Surrey Police only had
24 limited contact with her in 2013, and she did not tell
25 them much at that time. She told them that she was

1 aware that he was a businessman, although he never
2 talked to her about his work or his problems. In her
3 oral evidence to me five years later Ms Medynska gave
4 much more detail about their time together. I am
5 satisfied that she was giving an honest account as best
6 as she could remember it some years later. She said
7 that she and Mr Perepilichnyy had been at a restaurant
8 specialising in Japanese and Chinese food the night
9 before he died. She thought that he ate sushi rolls and
10 tempura, "Something like that". She could not recall
11 clearly whether he ate fish or not, and said that he
12 might have had prawns or sashimi. They were also
13 drinking white wine. Whilst at the restaurant he had
14 sent some food back, perhaps fried tempura, because he
15 did not like the taste and was irritated about the
16 quality of the food. It might have happened once or
17 twice.

18 At the end of the evening, at about 11 pm or
19 midnight, he told her that he wanted some fresh air,
20 apparently because he was not feeling well. Whilst he
21 felt better on the walk back to the hotel, when he got
22 back to the room he went in to the bathroom for about
23 an hour, and she heard the sound of him vomiting three
24 times.

25 When Mr Perepilichnyy came out of the bathroom, she

1 said that he was clean but "a little bit red". He did
2 not tell her what had happened. He said that he didn't
3 need a doctor when she asked. She also described him
4 having red eyes and a red face. She told French police
5 that his upper body was also red, however she told me
6 that she did not see his neck because of his dressing
7 gown.

8 The next morning he did not say how he felt, but he
9 was in a good mood and smiling. She thought that he
10 looked better, albeit with very red eyes. They ate
11 breakfast together, she thought Mr Perepilichnyy ate
12 eggs and perhaps some bread with orange juice and hot
13 chocolate. In evidence to me she said that
14 Mr Perepilichnyy had seemed stressed. His hands were
15 shaking over lunch on one of the days, she thought
16 8 November.

17 On the afternoon of 9 November it appeared as if he
18 was "somewhere else whilst they were shopping". One
19 possibility is of course that he was simply not very
20 interested in the shopping.

21 She also described how he sat facing the restaurant
22 at dinner on 9 November. She thought that this was
23 unusual, although it may be that he was only taking what
24 she regarded as the better seat for himself. She also
25 described how, when he took telephone calls on their

1 trips, he did so away from her, we cannot know now how
2 candid he was with whoever he was talking to about where
3 he was and who he was with. She said that in Nice he
4 seemed to have a heated telephone conversation. She did
5 not describe him being threatened or in fear, and
6 accepted that he was just a businessman who might have
7 had some business troubles.

8 There were a large number of Russian guests staying
9 at the Bristol Hotel at the same time in November as
10 a result of two particular events. One of which was
11 a visit by the Russian Secretary of State, Mr Medvedev,
12 from 11 to 13 November 2012. This must surely have been
13 a coincidence. It is unrealistic to suppose that either
14 the delegation or Mr Perepilichnyy had chosen that hotel
15 because the other was there.

16 Ms Medynska did not make any reference to them or
17 describe any interaction with them. At no stage did
18 Mr Perepilichnyy change their hotel. At all times he
19 was content to be out in public with her in restaurants
20 and shops. They walked back from the restaurant in the
21 evening of 9 November. If someone had made contact in
22 Paris with Mr Perepilichnyy about matters which were to
23 lead to his death shortly thereafter, the stay
24 nonetheless continued uninterrupted. Given the
25 toxicological evidence that has now been obtained, it is

1 possible in theory at least that Mr Perepilichnyy was
2 administered a poison in Paris which became actively
3 toxic on the afternoon of 10 November 2012, when he was
4 back in the UK.

5 It is possible too that the vomiting episode was
6 related to poisoning, deliberate or otherwise. However,
7 the sense of the expert evidence was that the sickness
8 was likely to be the result of innocent food poisoning.
9 No harm of any kind came to Ms Medynska.

10 I should say that the French police have conducted
11 their own investigations in to the case and my team have
12 liaised with them. I am grateful for the cooperation we
13 have received. Given the time that has elapsed since
14 Mr Perepilichnyy's death, I do not think that further
15 investigations in Paris by me would be likely to produce
16 anything of value now.

17 Mr Perepilichnyy went to the airport with
18 Ms Medynska. He flew back to London. I have made
19 enquiries of a passenger who the French police believe
20 may have sat next to him on the flight. Unsurprisingly,
21 he could not remember anything of significance.

22 Having arrived back in the UK at about 10.30 am,
23 Mr Perepilichnyy exchanged messages with his taxi
24 driver. Mrs Perepilichnaya texted him at 11.17 am,
25 asking him to buy cream for a Ukrainian soup that she

1 was making for him, known as green shi. He sent
2 a message back at 11.18 am saying that he was already
3 home. There is a cash transaction on his bank card in
4 Weybridge at 11.16 am.

5 My understanding of what happened over the next five
6 hours or so is based almost exclusively on
7 Mrs Perepilichnaya's evidence. The first record of her
8 account in any detail is in a typed note of a meeting
9 with Surrey Police family liaison officers (FLOs) on
10 29 November 2012. It is generally consistent with the
11 account she gave me in her witness statement, and in
12 oral evidence.

13 Mrs Perepilichnaya said that her husband arrived
14 home by taxi at about noon. He looked normal and did
15 not appear to have any health problems. He did not say
16 that he had been unwell in Paris, just that it had been
17 gloomy. He did not have a cough or runny nose and he
18 was not sweating. She told me that no one else was at
19 home aside from her, their daughter and the dog. They
20 had normal conversations and he spent most of the time
21 in his study.

22 Mrs Perepilichnaya and her daughter had prepared the
23 shi soup, which included chicken fillets, potato,
24 carrot, onion, egg and sorrel leaves. In November 2012
25 she told police officers that she had a little of the

1 soup herself, whilst her daughter had a ready meal. In
2 Mrs Perepilichnaya's May 2017 witness statement, and in
3 her oral evidence, she described how she used a whole
4 jar of sorrel. Both she and her daughter tasted the
5 soup whilst making it but she told me her daughter does
6 not like it and ate a different meal.

7 Mrs Perepilichnaya told me she only ate a little of the
8 soup because very gets hungrier later in the day. She
9 told me she and her daughter finished the soup whilst
10 waiting for her husband to come back from his run. She
11 did not see him eating anything else, although he may
12 have done as he liked chocolate and she did see him by
13 the snack cupboard. I am satisfied that
14 Mrs Perepilichnaya made soup including sorrel for her
15 husband and that she ate some of it, as she told the
16 police in November 2012. She suffered no ill effects.

17 At some point Mr Perepilichnyy and his daughter went
18 to PC World at Brooklands. It follows that he
19 apparently had no concern about leaving the house or
20 about taking his daughter with him. Although
21 Mrs Perepilichnaya cannot now remember whether it was
22 before or after lunch, just over two weeks later, in
23 2012, she told the police that it was after lunch and
24 that her daughter's computer needed mending.

25 At the time, she said that they were gone for about

1 20 minutes and picked up some groceries. In her most
2 recent evidence, she told me that they were gone for
3 a maximum of 40 minutes and that nothing unusual
4 happened on this trip, as far as she knew. Everything
5 was absolutely normal when they came back and they were
6 discussing some plans as they walked into the house.

7 The police analysis of Mr Perepilichnyy's telephones
8 indicates that he made a call to PC World technical
9 support at 2.14 pm, that he called home at 2.59 pm and
10 that the home telephone called him at 3.07 pm. There
11 are also credit card transactions timed between 2.33 pm
12 and 3.24 pm. All of this suggests that the trip took
13 place after lunch and lasted for at least an hour.

14 At about 4 pm Mr Perepilichnyy appeared in his
15 running clothes and said that he was going for a jog.
16 Again, he was prepared to leave the house and this time
17 on his own. Mrs Perepilichnaya said that it was more
18 usual for him to run on a machine at a local club and
19 that he normally ran for 45 minutes to an hour. This
20 day, he chose to run in the open. She became concerned
21 when he did not return within the hour and did not
22 respond to her calls.

23 In her most recent statement she said that it was at
24 this point that she thought that he might have stopped
25 at the St George's Hill sports centre. She made the

1 same point in a statement for the Inquest in May 2014.

2 Detective Constable Lawrence Burden spoke to
3 Mrs Perepilichnaya on 10 November 2012. He recorded in
4 his notebook when speaking to her that her husband was
5 not fat, medium, jogging alone, St George's Tennis Club.
6 In a statement made in July 2016 he said that
7 Mrs Perepilichnaya said that he had been at
8 St George's Hill Tennis Club before going out jogging.
9 I am satisfied that Detective Constable Burden is
10 mistaken in his recollection and that St George's Hill
11 Tennis Club is where Mrs Perepilichnaya told police she
12 thought her husband might have gone when he did not
13 return.

14 The attendance note produced by the secretary to
15 Mr Roger Gherson, Mrs Perepilichnaya's solicitor, in
16 respect of the meeting with the Surrey Police FLOs on
17 29 November 2012 also records that when he did not
18 return she thought her husband may have gone to
19 St George's Hill Tennis Club.

20 Telephone calls were made from the home address to
21 Mr Perepilichnyy's telephone at 5.26 pm, 6.09 pm and
22 6.16 pm. A text was sent from Mrs Perepilichnaya's
23 mobile telephone at 6.17 pm, saying "Where are you?"
24 The evidence available to me indicates that
25 Mr Perepilichnyy was last seen by Mr Eugene Elias from

1 his car as he was running up a steep hill north on
2 Granville Road, with Hillcrest Cottage at or near the
3 top of it. That was the same hill on which
4 Mr St Clair-Ford had seen Mr Perepilichnyy struggling on
5 several previous occasions. He was running towards
6 Mr Elias, Mr Elias described seeing a man in his late
7 40s in jogging kit and looking completely exhausted. He
8 appeared to be in pain and was grimacing, he looked pale
9 and unwell. Mr Elias also described the man's right arm
10 going across his stomach. He can still remember seeing
11 the man and his impression was he was struggling due to
12 lack of fitness. He commented to his wife that he
13 should not be running, he should be walking, but said
14 that this was less of a concern for the man, and more of
15 a joke.

16 I am satisfied on the basis of his overall
17 description, including that of the clothing, that it was
18 Mr Perepilichnyy who Mr Elias saw. In his original
19 statement, Mr Elias recalled that the man may have been
20 holding an iPod in his hand.

21 Mr Elias spoke to Police Constable Sarah Wilson, now
22 PC French, on the evening of 10 November 2012 and he
23 told her that the man may have had earphones in his
24 ears. Given what the first attenders and police found,
25 it is probable that Mr Perepilichnyy was wearing

1 earphones connected to one of his iPhones. Mr Elias and
2 his family were taking their nanny to catch a train.

3 On 7 December 2012, he told Detective Constable
4 Pollard that it was a 4.50 pm train that they were
5 rushing for and subsequently missed. This enabled him
6 to pinpoint the time when he saw Mr Perepilichnyy as
7 between 4.35 pm and 4.40 pm, and he said that it was
8 most likely 4.38 pm. He can no longer remember these
9 details, but I accept his broad timings, if not to the
10 exact minute.

11 Mr Perepilichnyy did not take any steps to try and
12 attract Mr Elias's attention, or to get help from him.
13 I regard that as strong evidence that Mr Perepilichnyy
14 cannot have thought at that time that he was suffering
15 ill effects as a result of some altercation with any
16 other person or from the administration of any poison of
17 which he was aware.

18 Mr Elias also saw a woman further north on
19 Granville Road. If she had carried on, and not turned
20 off anywhere, she would have come to the top of the hill
21 which Mr Perepilichnyy was approaching from the other
22 side. Mr Elias described her as wearing a long-sleeved
23 white Oxford shirt and in her 50s. He told the police
24 that she was walking and staggering and walking back and
25 forwards. In his oral evidence to me, Mr Elias said

1 that he did not consider her to be suspicious and that
2 he was just trying to describe in the fullest detail
3 what he saw that day. This woman has never been
4 identified. She was on her own, on foot. She does not
5 appear to have been taking any steps to conceal herself.
6 It would not be at all unusual for someone to be out
7 walking on the estate, as Mr Elias told me. I am not
8 able to make any connection between her and
9 Mr Perepilichnyy's death.

10 The next witness who saw Mr Perepilichnyy was
11 Mr St Clair-Ford, a chauffeur working in a property
12 nearby who found him collapsed in the road. It was dusk
13 and drizzly by then. He also gave a description of the
14 steep hill and said that as he was driving south along
15 the road Mr Perepilichnyy was collapsed on the left-hand
16 side of the road, just beyond the brow of the hill, near
17 to the top of the steep part. He described how it
18 looked as if Mr Perepilichnyy had run up the steep part
19 of the hill, and had reached close to the brow before
20 falling forward and then lying on one side but face down
21 in what Mr St Clair-Ford described as almost in the
22 recovery position. He was pale, very cold and wet from
23 damp rain or perspiration. He had, of course, been
24 running. He was not moving, but Mr St Clair-Ford
25 believed that he was trembling. In his statement made

1 that evening, he said that he could not feel him
2 breathing at this point. Mr St Clair-Ford described
3 being cautious before getting out of the car, and he
4 checked to make sure there was no one else around.
5 There was no one. Having got out of the car to check on
6 the collapsed man, Mr St Clair-Ford went to summon help
7 from Hillcrest Cottage because his telephone had no
8 signal. That was the nearest house, and this again
9 places Mr Perepilichnyy at or around the top of the
10 steep hill. There, he met Iris Da Silva, a house
11 keeper, who called 999 and went back with
12 Mr St Clair-Ford with blankets and later on, he thought,
13 with some torches as it became darker.

14 We know from the paramedic records that the first
15 ambulance received the call to attend at 4.45 pm.
16 Allowing some time for Mr St Clair-Ford to come across
17 Mr Perepilichnyy in the road, check on him, summon help
18 from Hillcrest Cottage and then for Iris Da Silva to
19 call 999, there cannot have been very long at all
20 between Mr Elias seeing Mr Perepilichnyy nearing the top
21 of the hill and Mr St Clair-Ford seeing him lying in the
22 road.

23 Mr Liam Walsh, the chef at the property where
24 Mr St Clair-Ford worked, suggested that the body was
25 just over the top of the steep bit of the hill, but

1 still near Hillcrest Cottage. This all fits with
2 Mr Elias's recollection that he saw Mr Perepilichnyy as
3 their car came over the hill and that he was in the
4 order of 10 to 15 feet away, and close to the top. If
5 Mr Elias's description is accurate, then he must have
6 seen Mr Perepilichnyy very shortly indeed before he
7 collapsed. I think that this is likely to have been the
8 case and that Mr Perepilichnyy was still running very
9 shortly before the point where he was found, and his
10 collapse and any symptoms that preceded it must have
11 come on suddenly. This would also explain why
12 Mr Perepilichnyy does not appear to have used his
13 telephone to call for help.

14 Mr St Clair-Ford described calling Mr Walsh to help
15 as he had some medical training. It was Mr Walsh who
16 gave CPR to Mr Perepilichnyy. All those who sought to
17 help him are to be commended.

18 From the descriptions given to me by Mr Walsh and
19 Mr St Clair-Ford and from the transcript of the 999
20 call, it is apparent that even if Mr Perepilichnyy was
21 breathing at first, he was no longer breathing by the
22 time Mr Walsh started giving CPR. Mr Walsh described
23 some vomit when performing resuscitation breaths.
24 Mr Perepilichnyy had eaten the green shi soup. Mr Walsh
25 said that the vomit had a greeny-yellow colour and

1 tasted metallic. He said that it was similar to bile
2 and he could not remember anything unusual about it.
3 The colour would be consistent with bile and/or the
4 soup. Some of it must have gone into his own mouth for
5 him to have tasted it, but Mr Walsh did not come to any
6 harm at all. I do not think that the description of the
7 vomit could sensibly be viewed as an indication of
8 poisoning and no expert witness suggested that it was.

9 Dr Peter Wilmshurst, consultant cardiologist, told
10 me in evidence that when an individual is unconscious if
11 there is active vomiting it is usually a regurgitation
12 of the stomach contents.

13 Dr Ratcliffe, the pathologist, did examine the
14 stomach contents and said that there was nothing unusual
15 about them. There was no unusual odour, colour or
16 texture. He described the presence of bile and
17 partially digested food.

18 When the paramedics arrived they recorded nothing
19 unusual. For example, there was not so much vomit that
20 it was blocking Mr Perepilichnyy's airway.

21 Mr St Clair-Ford also described about two
22 tablespoons of a drool-like substance, which he
23 described as "Like spit, but thicker".

24 One of the paramedics, Philip Nash, also described
25 finding phlegm, apparently a mixture of mucous and

1 saliva, which he considered normal for a patient in
2 cardiac arrest and losing control of his oral and nasal
3 secretions. No one who came into contact with
4 Mr Perepilichnyy came to any harm at all.

5 In the transcript of the 999 call, and in evidence
6 to me, Mr St Clair-Ford described how at one point
7 Mr Perepilichnyy made a faint noise, like a choking
8 sound. Mr Walsh described something similar.
9 Mr Daniel Weller, a paramedic in the first ambulance to
10 arrive, thought that this may have been agonal breathing
11 at the point of death. Dr Wilmshurst said that it is
12 common for there to be agonal breaths, even after
13 resuscitation has been abandoned.

14 Aside from those sounds, and the trembling that
15 Mr St Clair-Ford described, there were no other possible
16 signs of life. Mr St Clair-Ford believed that
17 Mr Perepilichnyy died whilst Mr Walsh was trying to give
18 him CPR.

19 The first ambulance arrived at 4.53 pm and the
20 second at 5.01 pm. The paramedics gave me a detailed
21 description of their attempt to resuscitate
22 Mr Perepilichnyy, however they never saw any signs of
23 life. His pupils were fixed and dilated, and his heart
24 was never in a shockable rhythm. After a last attempt
25 to start his heart using a mechanical chest compressor

1 device at 5.27 pm, all efforts were stopped at 5.37 pm
2 and he was pronounced dead at 5.39 pm. None of the
3 paramedics recalled anything unusual about the
4 resuscitation, such as excessive secretions, or unusual
5 vomit, or incontinence.

6 Mr Weller said that from his perspective as
7 a paramedic he could find nothing suspicious.
8 Mr Perepilichnyy had grazes to his knees and head, but
9 there was no active bleeding, haemorrhage or sign of
10 traumatic injury. I am satisfied that such injuries as
11 he had, and his position on the road, are consistent
12 with a sudden collapse.

13 Mr Perepilichnyy was found with two iPhones, one of
14 which had earphones plugged in according to Mr Walsh and
15 the police. Mr Walsh said that the earphones were
16 trailing underneath the body. He was able to get
17 Mr Perepilichnyy's name from the telephone, and gave it
18 to the police. Surrey Police were called to attend and
19 when the first police officers, PC Pasley and PC French,
20 arrived, the paramedics were still trying to resuscitate
21 Mr Perepilichnyy. Records suggest that they were
22 despatched at 5.21 pm and arrived at about 5.34 pm.

23 Section 4. The police investigation and the two
24 post mortem examinations.

25 The initial investigation into Mr Perepilichnyy's

1 death by Surrey Police before the Major Crime Team (MCT)
2 took over on 28 November 2012 was short lived.
3 PC Pasley found nothing suspicious at the scene, or on
4 Mr Perepilichnyy's body, and although looking for any
5 evidence linked to the body, he did not look much beyond
6 a distance of 10 metres from it. He obtained
7 Mr Perepilichnyy's email address and passed it on to
8 police control. Surrey Police intelligence officers did
9 not find out much more about Mr Perepilichnyy beyond the
10 fact that he was a Ukrainian/Russian financier.

11 However, I have heard evidence that had they looked
12 carefully they could have found an internet article
13 linking Mr Perepilichnyy with the alleged fraud using
14 Hermitage companies and reporting a claim that he was
15 hiding in London.

16 Police Constable Pasley also conducted some fairly
17 basic house-to-house calls, whilst PC French spoke to
18 a number of witnesses, including Mr Elias who had
19 approached the police cordon. At several of the house
20 calls there was no answer. In two cases PC Pasley
21 obtained timings from occupants, suggesting that there
22 was nothing to be seen in the road at about 4.30 to
23 4.35 pm, which fits with the timings given by Mr Elias.

24 PC Pasley spoke to a boy who described seeing what
25 must have been Mr Walsh and Mr St Clair-Ford attending

1 to Mr Perepilichnyy and on the telephone to the
2 ambulance service.

3 Acting DCI Collwood and Detective Sergeant Seear
4 attended the scene that evening at or just after
5 8.15 pm, and examined the body at about 8.34 pm. They
6 had previously agreed that scenes of crime officers
7 (SOCO) should attend and that photographs should be
8 taken. But SOCO refused to attend on the basis that the
9 police had not declared the death to be suspicious.
10 None of the police officers attending that evening
11 thought that there were any suspicious circumstances.
12 On the information that they had at the time, and faced
13 with a middle-aged man in jogging clothes collapsed at
14 the top of a steep hill, with no sign of trauma, it is
15 unsurprising that those officers came to this view.

16 In his evidence at the Inquest, Detective
17 Superintendent Pollard agreed with the general
18 proposition that the earliest times are the most
19 important in investigations of this kind. In
20 Mr Perepilichnyy's case, the decision not to categorise
21 his death as suspicious had a number of consequences.
22 These have affected my investigation and that of the
23 senior coroner before me. No photographs were taken of
24 the scene, a thorough search of the area was not
25 undertaken, no follow-up house-to-house enquiries were

1 carried out, CCTV was not seized, the mobile telephones
2 were not retained initially and a forensic post mortem
3 examination was not performed until 18 days after the
4 death.

5 But, as I have said, there were no obvious signs
6 that this may have been a suspicious death apparent to
7 those attending the scene, and there were no reports of
8 any of those who attended the scene suffering any ill
9 effects, including Liam Walsh, who gave resuscitation
10 breaths, and no reported concerns about suspicious
11 activity.

12 DCI Collwood accepted that if he had known about
13 Mr Perepilichnyy's involvement with the Swiss
14 authorities and their money laundering investigation,
15 which I shall come to, then coupled with greater
16 knowledge about poisons gleaned subsequently from media
17 coverage in other cases, he would have treated the death
18 as suspicious. The fact is that he did not do so at the
19 time. However, when Mr Pollard became the senior
20 investigating officer on 28 November 2012, he did treat
21 the death as suspicious, having been alerted to
22 Mr Perepilichnyy's connection with Hermitage.

23 As I have said, one significant lost opportunity is
24 the absence of an early forensic post mortem
25 examination.

1 Dr Norman Ratcliffe conducted a standard post mortem
2 examination on 12 November 2012 and, following a local
3 protocol, disposed of most of Mr Perepilichnyy's stomach
4 contents. He had examined them and said that there was
5 nothing unusual as regards odour, colour and texture.

6 Body fluid and tissue samples were not taken to
7 a forensic standard or subjected to any toxicological
8 testing for more than 18 days after the death.

9 Additionally, although the police initially had both
10 of Mr Perepilichnyy's mobile telephones, they did not
11 examine them and they were handed back to the family
12 after a few days. The upgrade to the investigation some
13 18 days after Mr Perepilichnyy's death also caused
14 a delay in the release of his body. That in turn
15 strained the relationship between the police and
16 Mrs Perepilichnaya and may have made it more difficult
17 to obtain potentially relevant evidence from her.

18 After 28 November 2012, a forensic post mortem
19 examination was ordered. Further samples were taken for
20 toxicological and a wide range of expert disciplines
21 became involved. When Mrs Perepilichnaya was asked to
22 give her husband's mobile telephones back to the police,
23 she was reluctant to do so. By the time she did, one of
24 the SIM cards was in a handset of hers, rather than
25 Mr Perepilichnyy's, because her handset had broken.

1 This means that evidence of some of Mr Perepilichnyy's
2 recent communications was not available to the police,
3 and is not now available to me.

4 That said, as will become clear, Mrs Perepilichnaya
5 drew the attention of the police to a text message that
6 her husband had received and to a voicemail that had
7 been left for him. Both can, in my judgment, be
8 discounted as having any connection with his death, but
9 she was obviously inquisitive. If she had found
10 anything of more immediate concern, I am satisfied that
11 she would have reported it.

12 Ms Medynska gave evidence about receiving four
13 telephone calls on 12 and 13 November from a British
14 number. She answered two of them. She said that this
15 was two days after she sent texts to Mr Perepilichnyy in
16 which she apologised to him for her behaviour in Paris,
17 but received no answer. She described a call coming
18 from an emergency medical centre, or a hospital as she
19 understood it at the time, saying that he had been in
20 a car accident. The caller spoke in English with
21 a British accent and asked who she was to
22 Mr Perepilichnyy and where he lived. The caller told
23 her that his telephone was broken, that they had seen
24 her text and thought that she was the last person to see
25 him. She began to think it was a joke, because they

1 would not answer her questions about what had happened
2 to him. She said that the caller was a man. When
3 Ms Medynska had responded in writing to police enquiries
4 in July 2013, she described how she had written
5 Mr Perepilichnyy a message asking for forgiveness on 7
6 or 18 November. The next day, a woman called her from
7 London, and said that they had found a man with a broken
8 mobile and it would appear they had seen an intimate
9 message from her, and so decided to call her. She
10 thought that it was a bad joke.

11 It follows that Ms Medynska has given different
12 accounts of when the call took place and whether the
13 caller was a man or a woman. If these events happened
14 fairly soon after they left Paris, she might well be
15 describing someone calling from the roadside. That fits
16 with the tenor of the conversation, and there would be
17 good reason for calling her number. If the calls took
18 place several days afterwards in response to her text
19 message, then the telephones would have been in
20 Mrs Perepilichnaya's possession. Text messages from the
21 telephone suggest that Mrs Perepilichnaya was using it
22 by 17 November.

23 On 19 November a text in Russian arrived asking for
24 forgiveness, referring to being a good girl and being
25 sad when they parted. I am satisfied that this was the

1 text described by Ms Medynska in 2013 as the request for
2 forgiveness. I think the most likely explanation for
3 this aspect of the matter is that she received
4 communications at the behest of the deceased's family,
5 trying to find out who she was, when the telephone was
6 back in their possession.

7 Certainly none of this evidence about subsequent
8 telephone calls is any indication that Mr Perepilichnyy
9 was murdered. There would, for example, be no reason
10 for a murderer or their accomplice to telephone
11 Ms Medynska to ask after his death where
12 Mr Perepilichnyy lived.

13 5. The fraud using Hermitage companies and
14 Mr Perepilichnyy's subsequent involvement with the Swiss
15 authorities.

16 Hermitage to their credit played a key role in
17 raising concerns about Mr Perepilichnyy's death with
18 Surrey Police with a view to ensuring that a thorough
19 investigation was carried out. At the heart of
20 Mr Perepilichnyy's involvement with Hermitage is the
21 alleged fraud perpetrated primarily against the Russian
22 taxpayer in 2007. Mr Browder described the fraud in his
23 witness statement of 11 November 2015 and in evidence to
24 me. It is said to have involved the theft of various
25 Hermitage companies, the institution of contrived

1 litigation involving those companies by a Russian
2 lawyer, Andrei Pavlov, a resulting tax rebate of
3 \$230 million approved by two Moscow tax officers, one of
4 whom was Mrs Olga Stepanova, and finally the
5 distribution of the proceeds by Vladen Stepanov and by
6 Mr Perepilichnyy. Mr Browder also told me that a group
7 of organised Russian criminals, headed by
8 Dimitri Klyuev, were instrumental in the fraud and that
9 several persons connected to it have died in suspicious
10 circumstances, including one of Hermitage's lawyers,
11 Sergei Magnitsky.

12 It is outside of the scope of this Inquest for me to
13 determine whether and how, as a matter of fact, the
14 fraud using Hermitage companies took place. In any
15 event, it would not be possible or fair for me to do so
16 in the absence of comprehensive documentary and witness
17 evidence.

18 Additionally, I am mindful of the statutory
19 prohibition against framing determinations in such a way
20 as to appear to determine any question of criminal
21 liability on the part of a named person, or of civil
22 liability, and also that allegations made against
23 Russian State officials could engage principles of state
24 immunity.

25 Finally, it would not be right in my view for me to

1 base my own conclusions on findings or pronouncements
2 that have been made in other jurisdictions or by
3 international bodies. Notwithstanding this, I obviously
4 cannot ignore the evidence that I have been given about
5 the fraud as described to me, and how it may relate to
6 Mr Perepilichnyy's death. It is part of the context in
7 which he died and, in accordance with the scope of the
8 Inquest determined by the senior coroner for Surrey,
9 I must consider whether he was killed because of his
10 role in giving information to Hermitage and then to
11 Swiss investigators.

12 For the purposes of my conclusions I will assume
13 without determining it that a fraud was committed in the
14 manner which Mr Browder described, that it involved the
15 Stepanovs and Pavlov, and the criminal group known to
16 Hermitage at least as the Klyuev organised crime group
17 (KOCG). I am however in no position to say what any
18 such group may call itself, if it calls itself anything
19 at all.

20 I accept that Mr Perepilichnyy approached Hermitage
21 initially by email in another name in July 2010, and
22 that he then attended relatively regular face-to-face
23 meetings from August 2010 onwards. I also accept that
24 he gave Hermitage information about millions of euros
25 which were transmitted to companies beneficially owned

1 by Mr Stepanov. More importantly, I am satisfied that
2 Mr Perepilichnyy reported to Hermitage that he
3 attributed the funds paid through his company's accounts
4 to the \$230 million fraud, and said that they were "ill
5 gotten gains". Mr Browder cannot say when
6 Mr Perepilichnyy came to that view, whether it was
7 shortly before going to Hermitage or from the outset.
8 I do not need to resolve all questions about
9 Mr Perepilichnyy's actual or constructed knowledge of
10 the origin of these funds, and it is important to
11 underline that no findings about this to his detriment
12 have been made. What matters is that he had some
13 knowledge of the alleged fraud money, that he approached
14 Hermitage to tell them about it and that he then gave
15 information to the Swiss authorities.

16 The upshot of the information Mr Perepilichnyy gave
17 to Hermitage, which the company itself then investigated
18 and verified, was that in January 2011 they filed
19 a criminal complaint with the Swiss attorney general's
20 office. This contained copies of the documents that
21 Mr Perepilichnyy had provided to them, and within days
22 led to the freezing of bank accounts connected to the
23 allegedly laundered money. Mr Browder told the Swiss
24 authorities that Hermitage's information had come from
25 Mr Perepilichnyy. He told me that before the complaint

1 was filed, Mr Perepilichnyy had told his colleagues that
2 he was comfortable with being named in the Swiss
3 proceedings. Although there is no written note of this
4 agreement, I accept that evidence. By waiving his
5 anonymity Mr Perepilichnyy was exposing himself first to
6 the possibility of being investigated himself and,
7 second, to the possibility, or even probability, that
8 his name would be disclosed to the potential defendants,
9 including Mr Stepanov.

10 Mr Browder never met Mr Perepilichnyy and never
11 spoke to him. His evidence about what Mr Perepilichnyy
12 said is at the very least second hand. He also said
13 that there were no written records of any of the
14 meetings with Mr Perepilichnyy, notwithstanding that
15 they could last for up to about two hours.

16 The absence of written records of these meetings
17 with Hermitage is less than ideal, as I am sure everyone
18 would accept. They would constitute the most accurate
19 information at different stages about his motivation,
20 his objectives and any concerns he may have had and why.
21 It is unfortunate that no records were kept of meetings
22 with such an important witness. Mr Browder said that
23 Mr Perepilichnyy told his colleagues that he had been
24 a private banker for the Stepanovs and had helped them
25 with the investments. They had then blamed him for the

1 loss of a significant amount of their money in the 2008
2 financial crisis, and in retaliation Mrs Stepanova had
3 used her position to threaten him with a criminal tax
4 investigation in Russia. Mr Perepilichnyy is said to
5 have indicated that if Hermitage released a video about
6 the Stepanovs it would help him in his conflict with
7 Mrs Stepanova.

8 Surrey Police obtained information from the Swiss
9 authorities about Mr Perepilichnyy's involvement in
10 their investigation. They said he told them he had read
11 about Mr Magnitsky's death and was shocked from a human
12 point of view. He tried to obtain more information from
13 Hermitage because he thought he could end up in the same
14 situation as them, or even like Mr Magnitsky. He was
15 also aware of the list of officials involved in
16 Mr Magnitsky's death, as established by Hermitage.

17 In his oral evidence to me, Mr Browder said that
18 Mr Perepilichnyy originally remarked that whilst
19 everyone is "aware and okay with corruption in Russia,
20 they are not okay with the murder of a young lawyer and
21 therefore he was outraged at what had happened" and came
22 to Hermitage as a result.

23 However, Mr Browder said that his colleagues came to
24 the conclusion that Mr Perepilichnyy also had a problem
25 with the Stepanovs due to the loss of their money, and

1 that this was later confirmed by Mr Stepanov himself.
2 I have been shown an article from Barron's newspaper
3 dated 31 May 2011 which quoted, apparently verbatim,
4 an advertisement taken out by Mr Stepanov in RBK Daily,
5 a Russian media publication, on 17 May 2011. In the
6 advertisement Mr Stepanov responded to a video posted on
7 Mr Browder's website, Russian Untouchables, and he
8 denied any wrongdoing. He also sought to respond to the
9 Swiss proceedings and the freezing of his assets on
10 27 April 2011. More importantly, he identified
11 Mr Perepilichnyy as a "financial wizard" who owed money
12 to him and to a lot of other creditors, and who was
13 hiding in London. He alleged that Mr Perepilichnyy had
14 cheated him by pocketing money and assets and had failed
15 to see the financial bubble bursting and was responsible
16 for the loss of Mr Stepanov's money and property. He
17 said that he was "confident in the role Perepilichnyy
18 played in notching up his, Stepanov's, notoriety because
19 of some details known only to him and nobody else". He
20 concluded by saying he would "seek redress". He then
21 followed this up with a video interview.

22 I am satisfied that quite soon after the institution
23 of the Swiss proceedings and the freezing of
24 Mr Stepanov's assets that Mr Stepanov identified and
25 publicly named Mr Perepilichnyy as the author of his

1 misfortune. I note too that in an earlier article dated
2 16 April 2011, Mr Browder had told Barron's that
3 Hermitage had obtained "secret Swiss bank records" from
4 a Russian businessman who was disillusioned by
5 Mr Magnitsky's death and said that he was part of
6 a network that paid Mrs Stepanova and other officials
7 for their roles in the embezzlement of state tax funds.
8 This article referred to new evidence of payments to
9 Mr Stepanov and of onward payments.

10 The Swiss authorities told Surrey Police that a bank
11 account held by one of Mr Perepilichnyy's companies,
12 Quartel Trading Limited, was frozen and that he
13 contacted them through his lawyer, Mr Horst Weber,
14 in June 2011.

15 On 26 April 2012 Mr Perepilichnyy was questioned in
16 Switzerland as an informant, which is a status between
17 the witness and accused, in the presence of another
18 lawyer, Mr Francois Micheli. His lawyers had asked for
19 a guarantee that he would not be arrested upon arrival
20 in Switzerland. He made no comments about his safety,
21 although he explained that a Russian police officer,
22 named Andrei Piatov, had contacted him at Zurich airport
23 on one trip, advising him to pass all case details
24 relating to Mr Stepanov to the Russian media.
25 Mr Perepilichnyy's lawyer's last letter to the Swiss

1 authorities was on 1 October 2012. However, the police
2 timeline shows that he was still in contact with his
3 Swiss lawyers right up to the day before his death.

4 Mr Stepanov was interviewed by the Swiss
5 authorities, first as a witness on 11 September 2012 and
6 then as an informant on 13 September 2012. He is said
7 to have denied that his funds came from criminal
8 activity, and accused Mr Perepilichnyy of
9 misappropriating \$3 million and fleeing to the UK. On
10 the second occasion he was told that his statements did
11 not correspond with Mr Perepilichnyy's and that there
12 would be a personal confrontation between the two men.
13 This confrontation had still not taken place by the time
14 Mr Perepilichnyy died, nor had any date been set for it.

15 In addition, Mr Stepanov had not been charged with
16 any offence. He was still at liberty. There is no
17 sense that the Swiss investigation was coming to a head
18 in some way at the time of Mr Perepilichnyy's death,
19 such that there was any immediate imperative for anyone
20 to kill him. I have been provided with translations of
21 some Skype messages found on Mr Perepilichnyy's
22 telephone. I have heard some evidence from Mr Browder
23 about their interpretation, based on his knowledge of
24 the described fraud using stolen Hermitage companies and
25 its aftermath.

1 Having examined the messages, I am satisfied that
2 the individual called Andrei identified by a particular
3 Skype name is Andrei Pavlov. Not only do we have the
4 context of the Skype messages, but the Skype name in
5 question provides a telephone number which is the same
6 as one provided to the UK Border Agency by Mr Pavlov.

7 The precise meaning of the Skype messages is not
8 always easy to discern. However, there are passages in
9 those messages which help me to understand
10 Mr Perepilichnyy's involvement in the Swiss proceedings
11 and his relationship with Mr Pavlov. I am satisfied,
12 for example, that they show that Mr Perepilichnyy met
13 Mr Pavlov at Zurich airport on 6 September 2011, and at
14 Heathrow Terminal 5 on 2 November 2011.

15 Mr Browder drew my attention to an Independent
16 newspaper article from 29 November 2012, which quotes
17 an interview Mr Pavlov gave to Kommersant after
18 Mr Perepilichnyy's death, saying that the two had met
19 twice in the previous year and that Mr Perepilichnyy
20 wanted to make peace with Mr Stepanov.

21 In a subsequent Independent article, dated
22 7 December 2012, Mr Pavlov was quoted as saying that
23 they had been in contact in 2010 and met first in
24 Zurich, and then in Heathrow, as Mr Pavlov was
25 transiting through. Those meetings are also consistent

1 with what Mr Browder says Mr Perepilichnyy told his
2 colleagues at Hermitage, that he had met with someone in
3 Switzerland in October 2011 who said he was
4 a representative of the interior ministry in Moscow, and
5 was threatened with the opening of a money laundering
6 case against him in Russia unless he cooperated. He was
7 to make a public statement affirming the legitimacy of
8 the transactions by Mr Stepanov. He met the person
9 a second time at Heathrow Airport. This also accords
10 with what the Swiss authorities told Surrey Police
11 Mr Perepilichnyy had reported to them, albeit with
12 Mr Pavlov's name as Piatov.

13 The Skype messages do suggest that in the spring of
14 2011 Mr Perepilichnyy was discussing the formulation of
15 legitimate explanations to be put forward to the Swiss
16 authorities for his involvement in handling the money.
17 I also think that a reasonable interpretation of the
18 context or aftermath of the meeting with Mr Pavlov in
19 the autumn of 2011 is that there was a threat of
20 criminal proceedings against Mr Perepilichnyy. The
21 action from the meeting was that Mr Perepilichnyy was to
22 agree a narrative as to the legitimacy of the funds.
23 This is consistent with what he told Hermitage and, to
24 a more limited degree, supported by what he told the
25 Swiss officials about his meeting with Mr Piatov/Pavlov.

1 Following the second meeting with Mr Pavlov,
2 Mr Perepilichnyy was contacted the same day over Skype
3 by someone asking to "coordinate actions in
4 Switzerland". There was further contact in January 2012
5 when the same person wrote, "It is necessary to put our
6 lawyers in touch with each other in Switzerland" and
7 that, "My lawyers in Switzerland would like to contact
8 yours". This person appears to be called "Vlad".

9 Mr Perepilichnyy told Mr Pavlov in November 2011
10 that he had tried to get in contact with Vlad, who may
11 well be Mr Stepanov himself. But whether or not that is
12 the case, I am satisfied that at that time it is likely
13 that Mr Perepilichnyy was trying to have discussions, or
14 some sort of mediation, with Mr Stepanov about the Swiss
15 proceedings.

16 Another tranche of Skype correspondence found on
17 Mr Perepilichnyy's telephone that was brought to my
18 attention covers a period from 19 November to
19 10 December 2011. It suggests that he was the subject
20 of some sort of criminal investigation, also involving
21 his wife's brother, Rishat Ismagilov, communicated to
22 him by Mr Pavlov, that he was seeking to resolve matters
23 and was told by another individual that he could pay
24 1 million euros to avoid a criminal case being opened
25 against him by the Russian police.

1 him to pay a substantial amount of money to resolve
2 matters. The absence of a satisfactory resolution may
3 have provided a motive to stop him, or to make
4 an example of him, by violent means if necessary. It is
5 not clear to me, however, that negotiations had
6 necessarily been exhausted and if he could have been
7 persuaded to withdraw or moderate incriminating
8 statements that would have significant advantages. The
9 confrontation in Switzerland had yet to be arranged.

10 There is no evidence of Mr Stepanov ever having had
11 a visa to enter the UK. Mr Pavlov was a frequent
12 visitor to the UK, and was in the UK at the time of
13 Mr Perepilichnyy's death. There is no information about
14 when he arrived, but he left on the evening of
15 11 November 2012. He returned on 12 November 2012 for
16 two days and continued a pattern of short visits
17 thereafter. I have received no evidence about the
18 purpose of these visits. There is nothing to suggest
19 that he is an assassin. If he had been involved in any
20 way in Mr Perepilichnyy's death, that might mean that he
21 would be less likely to have put himself within reach of
22 the authorities in this country so soon after it had
23 happened.

24 Section 7. Capability.

25 During the Inquest, I announced that pursuant to

1 rule 24 of the Coroners' Inquest Rules 2013 I intended
2 to admit some of the findings of the
3 Alexander Litvinenko Inquiry, chaired by
4 Sir Robert Owen, as evidence that assists me to assess
5 the general capability of the Russian State to kill by
6 poisoning and to identify alleged past killings and
7 poisonings.

8 At the heart of the Litvinenko Inquiry is the
9 conclusion that there was an operation by the Russian
10 federal security service (FSB) to murder Mr Litvinenko
11 by using a rare poison, and that this was probably
12 approved by Nikolai Patrushev, the then director of the
13 FSB, and by President Vladimir Putin.

14 A Nikolai Patrushev was staying at the Bristol Hotel
15 from 11 to 14 November 2017, according to the hotel's
16 records, and during Mr Medvedev's visit.

17 The Litvinenko Inquiry also found that leading
18 opponents of President Putin, including those living
19 outside of Russia, were at risk of assassination and by
20 poisoning. Mr Perepilichnyy, unlike Mr Litvinenko,
21 cannot be characterised as a leading opponent of
22 Mr Putin and certainly he had nothing of the history of
23 antagonism that existed between Mr Litvinenko and the
24 FSB, and Mr Putin personally. The Inquiry did find that
25 Russian assassins were prepared to commit murder in the

1 UK and to do so using a poison that was difficult to
2 detect. Which Mr Litvinenko himself did not realise was
3 being administered, although he became seriously ill
4 very quickly.

5 The Inquiry also received evidence from Professor
6 Robert Service, an expert in Russian history and
7 politics, about other deaths and killings of prominent
8 critics of Mr Putin and his administration in the years
9 before Mr Litvinenko's death. These included a number
10 of apparent poisonings.

11 I have also admitted in evidence a letter dated
12 13 April 2018, from Sir Mark Sedwill in his capacity as
13 the national security adviser to the UK Government, to
14 Jens Stoltenberg, secretary general of the North
15 Atlantic Treaty Organisation. The letter dealt with the
16 British investigation into the attempted assassination
17 of Sergei Skripal and his daughter in Salisbury the
18 previous month.

19 In that letter Sir Mark identified why it was that
20 the UK's Government assessment that it was highly likely
21 that the Russian State was responsible for the attack.
22 He identified that only Russia had the technical means,
23 the operational experience and the motive. He pointed
24 to open source reporting and intelligence concerning
25 Russia's development of a new class of nervous agents,

1 novichoks, and said that Russia had produced and
2 stockpiled it in the previous decade.

3 He noted that it was unlikely that novichoks could
4 be made and deployed by non-state actors, such as
5 criminal groups. In terms of operational experience, he
6 pointed to Russia's "proven track record of conducting
7 state-sponsored assassinations", relying in part on the
8 Litvinenko Inquiry findings but also on Russia's
9 programme in the 2000s to test means of delivering
10 chemical warfare agents and to train specialist
11 personnel to deliver them, including by application to
12 door handles. Novichoks had been produced and
13 stockpiled under the same programme.

14 Finally, in terms of motive he pointed to evidence
15 of Russian intelligence service interest in the Skripals
16 dating back at least as far as 2013 and to the fact that
17 Sergei Skripal was a former military intelligence
18 officer convicted of espionage in 2004. He said it was
19 highly likely that at least some of Russian defectors
20 are viewed by Russian intelligence services as
21 legitimate targets for assassination.

22 I have also been provided with a report prepared for
23 the Home Secretary's review into allegations of possible
24 Russian State involvements in 14 deaths in the UK, one
25 of which was Mr Perepilichnyy's. The report was subject

1 to a PII application but as I set out in my PII ruling,
2 I have not seen anything which provided new evidence of
3 any link between the deaths or any of them and
4 Mr Perepilichnyy's case of a kind that may assist me in
5 determining how he died.

6 The Home Secretary concluded his review and in
7 a letter to the chair of the Home Affairs Select
8 Committee, dated 23 August 2018, he said that the police
9 have confirmed that there is no basis on which to reopen
10 any of the investigations. The Metropolitan Police
11 counter terrorism command have said to me by letter of
12 18 December 2018 that they are not conducting
13 an investigation into Mr Perepilichnyy's death and that
14 they are not in possession of information that would
15 indicate a link to the activities of a hostile state
16 actor in the death. This was in response to a recent
17 media report.

18 Mr Browder gave evidence about the suspicious deaths
19 of individuals who were connected to what he referred to
20 as the KOCG. He identified the following cases.

21 (a) Mr Magnitsky was the lawyer hired by Hermitage
22 who investigated and uncovered details of the fraud,
23 enabling Hermitage to file complaints with the competent
24 Russian authorities. He was arrested and placed in
25 pre-trial detention. Mr Browder said that he developed

1 pancreatitis and gallstones and was in desperate need of
2 urgent medical care. Instead he was placed in
3 an isolation cell, handcuffed and beaten. He died
4 without receiving treatment.

5 (b) Sergei Albaev and Alexei Alexanov were said to
6 have been the organisers of another fraud perpetrated by
7 the KOCG. Mr Browder says that they died in 2005 and
8 2006. Mr Albaev died age 39 due to heart failure and
9 the cause of Mr Alexanov's death is unknown.

10 Neither was then able to testify at a trial of
11 Mr Klyuev, although I do not have any further details
12 about the trial, what the charges were, when it was or
13 what their role was in it. Mr Browder says that
14 Mr Klyuev was convicted of a lesser charge than he might
15 otherwise have faced. I cannot, of course, know what
16 evidence that they might actually have given.

17 (c) Valery Kurochkin was a director appointed to one
18 of the stolen Russian companies involved in the fraud
19 using Hermitage companies. He was found dead in the
20 Ukraine in April 2008 aged 43, the cause of death was
21 said to be cirrhosis. Mr Browder says that his
22 colleagues have obtained records which showed that he
23 travelled to the Ukraine with four other members of the
24 KOCG the month before. I was told that he was a low
25 ranking member of the group, so this may not be

1 surprising.

2 (d) Octai Gasanov was accused by the Russian
3 ministry of the interior of being the mastermind behind
4 the fraud using Hermitage companies. Records state that
5 he died on 1 October 2007, two months before the
6 fraudulent tax refund applications.

7 (e) Semyon Korobeinikov was also accused by the
8 ministry of the interior of being an orchestrator of the
9 crime. He died in 2008 at the age of 57, having fallen
10 from a balcony.

11 Mr Browder makes the point that these are not just
12 sudden deaths of middle-aged men linked to the fraud or
13 its investigation, but that it was only after they had
14 died that the Russian Government accused them of
15 involvement in the fraud, ie when they were unable to
16 refute the allegations made against them and were
17 therefore being made to take the blame for others. That
18 said, acknowledging a fraud and blaming some individuals
19 would not prevent additional culprits being identified
20 at a later stage.

21 In their response to Surrey Police the Swiss
22 authorities referred to the deaths of three witnesses
23 connected to the Hermitage fraud. DCI Pollard received
24 confirmation that the information about these deaths
25 came from the Russian Untouchables website operated by

1 Hermitage. The Swiss authorities were probably
2 referring to the Kurochkin, Gasanov and Korobeinikov
3 deaths. My attention has been drawn to a news report
4 saying that on 19 November 2018 the investigative
5 committee of the Russian Federation had launched
6 a criminal case on the basis that the three men had been
7 poisoned, perhaps by an aluminium compound. I am not
8 sure where that leaves the fall from the balcony, and
9 there is a danger in repeating newspaper reports which
10 then become embedded as proved fact when they are
11 nothing of the sort.

12 Save where it is obvious, it is not part of my
13 investigation to determine whether or not a particular
14 death was the result of foul play. Even if this were
15 proved after investigation to be the case, where someone
16 is alleged to have been a member of an organised crime
17 group, the question would then arise as to whether the
18 death was connected to the fraud using Hermitage
19 companies, or whether it had its origins in some other
20 possible wrongdoing or dispute. I accept that a high
21 level organised crime group may resort to violence, but
22 I cannot simply assume a Hermitage connection without
23 having sound evidential basis for doing so and without
24 knowing whether there might be any other reason for foul
25 play. Mr Browder has also highlighted the shootings of

1 Mr Boris Nemtsov, a Russian politician, and
2 Ana Politkovskaya, a Russian journalist. However, like
3 Mr Litvinenko, they were high profile and vocal critics
4 of the Kremlin who were very obviously murdered.
5 Mr Perepilichnyy was not an outspoken critic of the
6 Kremlin, and there is no direct or incontrovertible
7 evidence that he was murdered at all.

8 Mr Browder also brought to my attention two cases of
9 alleged attempted murder.

10 First, the poisoning of Mr Kara-Murza, a prominent
11 political activist, deputy leader of a Russian
12 opposition party and an advocate for Magnitsky
13 sanctions. He was reportedly poisoned in 2015 and again
14 in 2017, in each case he fell seriously ill with
15 symptoms of organ failure, but survived. He did not
16 notice any poison being administered.

17 Secondly he described the case of Nikolai Gorokhov,
18 a Russian lawyer for Mr Magnitsky's family, who had been
19 pursuing a criminal investigation in Russia into his
20 death. On or around 22 March 2017, he fell four floors
21 from the balcony of his Moscow apartment in unexplained
22 circumstances. He survived, albeit seriously injured.
23 Mr Browder explained that he was due to attend court the
24 next day to present evidence about organised criminals
25 colluding with Russian police in relation to the fraud

1 using stolen Hermitage companies. He was also a key
2 witness in US civil proceedings and the US Government
3 had raised concerns about his safety.

4 Mr Browder also told me about threats which had been
5 made to Hermitage's lawyers.

6 The toxicological experts, Dr Fiona Perry,
7 Professor Robin Ferner and Dr Paul Rice agreed that
8 there will be poisons available to a determined assassin
9 that are rare, or specially made, and hard or impossible
10 to detect. Dr Rice also said that there may be some
11 states who seek to make such poisons, including nerve
12 agents, and that Russia has access to nerve agents.

13 On this issue I have already indicated that I have
14 admitted the findings of the Litvinenko Inquiry and the
15 letter of Sir Mark Sedwill. Additionally Mr Browder
16 drew my attention to literature relating to a special
17 unit of the FSB which is is said to have its own poisons
18 factory and to be developing experimental poisons which
19 may be untraceable and cause ostensibly natural deaths.
20 I accept all of this evidence.

21 Section 8. Threats to Mr Perepilichnyy.

22 There is evidence from a number of sources that
23 Mr Perepilichnyy did receive threats of different kinds
24 in the two or three years before he died.

25 Mr Perepilichnyy's departure from Russia.

1 There is conflicting evidence about why
2 Mr Perepilichnyy left Russia in the first place. On the
3 one hand Mrs Perepilichnaya told me that the main reason
4 why they came to the UK was for the children's
5 education. She also liked the UK and London in
6 particular. She denied that her husband ever expressed
7 a fear of being in Russia. It is clear from UK Border
8 Agency records that Mr Perepilichnyy was living in the
9 country under a tier 1 investor visa and not for reasons
10 of asylum or international protection.

11 Mr Gherson, the family's immigration solicitor, told
12 me that he had started to look at an investor visa for
13 the family in December 2009/January 2010, although he
14 had had much earlier contact with Mr Perepilichnyy in
15 2002, which was not followed up. Mr Gherson did not
16 recall their reason for moving to the UK, but never had
17 the impression Mr Perepilichnyy was seeking refuge and
18 suggested that the fact that he travelled freely was
19 inconsistent with seeking a safe haven in the UK. He
20 told me that not only did Mr Perepilichnyy not seek
21 asylum, but he declined the option "when the Hermitage
22 story came up", which is not what he would expect of
23 a client in fear. Indeed, based on his professional
24 relationship with Mr Perepilichnyy, he did not believe
25 that he was in fear of his life.

1 Mrs Perepilichnaya denied that her husband ever said
2 that he feared for his life or his safety, and denied
3 that that was the reason for their move. Records
4 obtained by police indicate that Mr Perepilichnyy had
5 not flown directly to Russia since November 2009, as
6 I have said, although he had a variety of interests
7 there. This is consistent with a concern as to what
8 might happen were he to visit. Mrs Perepilichnaya also
9 said that her husband had never mentioned losing a large
10 amount of money for people in Russia, or falling out
11 with anyone there, or being afraid of arrest there. She
12 had never heard of Mr Stepanov.

13 On the other hand, I was provided with three news
14 articles from December 2012 and March 2013, which cited
15 public records referring to a lawyer for
16 Mr Perepilichnyy telling a Moscow court in 2011 that he
17 was living outside of the Russian Federation because he
18 feared for his life. I obtained the link to the public
19 record from one of the journalists, Mr Parfitt from the
20 Daily Telegraph, and have had it translated. It was
21 a court decision by the federal judge of the Gagarinsky
22 district court on 20 May 2011, in respect of a claim by
23 Dzhirsa LLC against Mr Perepilichnyy. According to the
24 judgment, Mr Perepilichnyy's representatives attended
25 the court hearings and explained that he was outside of

1 the Russian Federation "because he is afraid for his
2 life" although no further detail is given.

3 One of the named lawyers, Dmitry Lipkin, agreed to
4 give evidence to the Inquest by video link from Russia
5 at the resumed hearing in April 2018. He confirmed that
6 these were indeed his instructions, but said that he did
7 not have and did not need to provide the judge with any
8 further information. He told me that he first met
9 Mr Perepilichnyy in London in autumn 2010, because he
10 did not want to fly to Russia. Mr Lipkin cannot now say
11 that it was Mr Perepilichnyy who told him that he was
12 fearful for his life. In fact he said he could not tell
13 me who gave him that information, or when. He was very
14 vague. He did agree that the information provided to
15 him referred to threats to Mr Perepilichnyy's life and
16 that he left Russia as a result of those threats, but he
17 could not give me further detail.

18 Aside from acknowledging that those were his
19 instructions, and that the information was given to him,
20 he could not help further.

21 Mr Lipkin was also asked about the litigation
22 brought against Mr Perepilichnyy by the Dzhirsa company
23 with which Mr Dmitry Kovtun, one of
24 Alexander Litvinenko's assassins, is purported to have
25 been associated. It was in one of these cases that the

1 judge was told that Mr Perepilichnyy was living outside
2 of Russia because he feared for his life. The evidence
3 that I have heard suggests that Mr Perepilichnyy was
4 being pursued for money arising out of commercial
5 obligations, and that Dzhirsa had bought those debts.

6 In one of the cases, which Mr Perepilichnyy
7 ultimately won on appeal, he argued that his signature
8 had been forged on the commercial documentation. In
9 another, there are references to bribing judicial
10 authorities to make a decision in favour of Dzhirsa.
11 Nonetheless, in the absence of anything further there is
12 no secure evidential chain which could connect Mr Kovtun
13 to Mr Perepilichnyy's death.

14 More generally, I heard evidence, which I accept,
15 that litigation can be used in Russia as a form of
16 intimidation or harassment. I am not in a position to
17 come to a view about whether or not this was behind
18 civil litigation involving Mr Perepilichnyy, I simply do
19 not know enough about the individual cases. That said,
20 an attack of this kind would on the face of it be
21 designed to cause its victim financial difficulty rather
22 than physical harm.

23 In the RBK Daily advertisement from 17 May 2011,
24 which I referred to in section 5, Mr Stepanov asserted
25 that Mr Perepilichnyy owed him and "scores of other

1 creditors" a lot of money and was "hiding in London".
2 If true, this highlights the apparent falling out with
3 Mr Stepanov that Mr Browder described. It supports
4 Mr Browder's account that Mr Perepilichnyy told
5 colleagues that he had left Russia because he had fallen
6 out with the Stepanovs, and was afraid of things that
7 were going to happen to him if he stayed, in particular
8 that Mrs Stepanova had opened a criminal tax evasion
9 case against him, and he left Russia to avoid arrest.

10 In newspaper articles after Mr Perepilichnyy's
11 death, which I have also referred to in section 5
12 earlier, Mr Pavlov was quoted as suggesting that
13 Mr Perepilichnyy was "worried about the situation he had
14 in Russia". He was said to have lost a large amount of
15 money in the financial crisis and to have begun
16 receiving threats from those to whom he owed money. As
17 a result, he decided to flee to London in early 2010.
18 Mr Pavlov is reported to have suggested that
19 Mr Perepilichnyy appeared stressed and wanted to make
20 peace with Mr Stepanov but had subsequently "gone dark"
21 and disappeared from Skype. He was worried about
22 security and apparently came to an agreement with
23 Mr Stepanov directly.

24 The previous coroner was in contact with lawyers for
25 Mr Pavlov and although he initially suggested that he

1 would assist these proceedings, he has subsequently
2 declined to do so. I cannot attach weight in these
3 circumstances to information that I cannot test.
4 Mr Perepilichnyy was using Skype in 2012.

5 I am satisfied that Mr Lipkin was given instructions
6 to the effect that Mr Perepilichnyy had left Russia
7 because at that time he was fearful for his life.
8 Whether or not Mr Lipkin received the instructions
9 directly from Mr Perepilichnyy, I am satisfied that they
10 must at least have originated with him. I am also
11 satisfied that conflict over financial matters, as
12 related to Mr Browder's colleagues, was one reason why
13 Mr Perepilichnyy left Russia. He would have felt under
14 much less pressure here and it also suited him to make
15 the move for his children's education.

16 I am unable to say whether any threats did in truth
17 go so far as to make him fear for his life. It may
18 perhaps have suited him to say that they did, so as to
19 explain why he had had left any legal problems
20 unresolved in Russia, and to explain his absence from
21 Russia during any subsequent court cases. A threat of
22 a possible criminal case and an arrest could have been
23 sufficient to prompt him to leave, and I am satisfied
24 that he was under pressure of that kind as he described
25 to Hermitage. If he really had had death threats or

1 feared for his life, I think it is likely that he would
2 have told Hermitage explicitly.

3 After the family obtained a visa to come to the UK
4 in June 2010, Mr Perepilichnyy had contacted Hermitage
5 the very next month. The only specific mention of
6 a threat to his life that he raised with Hermitage was
7 in regard to something that he regarded as an extortion
8 attempt in November 2011.

9 The Hermitage connection.

10 Mr Perepilichnyy voluntarily informed Hermitage
11 about the financial transactions said to have resulted
12 from the fraud using their companies. He then willingly
13 provided incriminating information to the Swiss
14 authorities and consented to being identified in the
15 resulting proceedings. There were obvious risks in
16 doing so, particularly bearing in mind the fate of
17 Mr Magnitsky and perhaps others. On 30 October 2012
18 Mr Perepilichnyy had searched the internet about
19 Mr Magnitsky's death.

20 The hit list and/or dossier.

21 The next source of evidence about threats to
22 Mr Perepilichnyy relates to the alleged appearance of
23 his name on a hit list. I have been provided with
24 a Russian language Rosbalt article from April 2015,
25 which refers to a search of the apartment of alleged

1 murderer Mr Valid Lurakhmaev in the summer of 2012.
2 Mr Lurakhmaev was accused of shooting a businessman,
3 Mr Lanin, in Nice in 2011. The article reports that
4 a dossier on Mr Perepilichnyy was found in the apartment
5 and suggests that Mr Lurakhmaev was interested in
6 gathering information about him and his home in England.

7 The article also suggests that Mr Perepilichnyy had
8 spoken from the UK to the Russian intelligence services
9 shortly before his death, and alleges that some of his
10 clients felt that he owed them a lot of money and had
11 asked for Lurakhmaev to get involved in extracting money
12 from him. Mr Lurakhmaev was arrested and detained in
13 Turkey. Of course, simply because something appears in
14 a published article that is not conclusive evidence of
15 its truth or reliability. Even if it is subsequently
16 picked up and repeated many times in other publications
17 as fact. It depends upon whether the original author is
18 reporting from their own direct knowledge, and in that
19 case how accurate and reliable the author is,
20 alternatively the information may have come through one
21 or more sources, in which case everything depends upon
22 how reliable the various links in the chain are.

23 In any event, killing Mr Perepilichnyy might not on
24 the face of it be consistent with extracting money from
25 him. It is not entirely clear from the Rosbalt article

1 whether the apartment that was reportedly searched was
2 in France or Russia, or indeed Turkey, although the most
3 natural reading is that it was his apartment in Russia.
4 The French authorities have confirmed to me that
5 Mr Lurakhmaev was linked to the shooting in Nice of
6 Mr Lanin, but that no such list of names, including
7 Mr Perepilichnyy's, was found. They provided me with
8 the relevant parts of the investigation into the
9 shooting of Mr Lanin they also confirmed to me that no
10 home in France has been identified for Mr Lurakhmaev,
11 nor under his apparent alias of Aleksandr Smirnov, and
12 their investigations did not reveal his presence in
13 France in 2012.

14 I also made requests of the Turkish and Russian
15 authorities, providing them with copies of the article,
16 and asking them to provide any materials in their
17 possession that may relate to threats against
18 Mr Perepilichnyy, with particular reference to materials
19 that may have been recovered during any investigation
20 into Mr Lurakhmaev. The Turkish authorities responded
21 and said that they had no relevant information about
22 Mr Perepilichnyy. They did receive information from one
23 of their chief prosecutor's offices about
24 a investigation into the death of Maxim Ozirny. It was
25 suggested in the Rosbalt article that Mr Lurakhmaev was

1 being investigated for shooting Mr Ozirny, but they said
2 it was an ongoing investigation and there was no
3 information about Mr Perepilichnyy on the case file. No
4 other chief prosecutor's office held any information or
5 documents about Mr Perepilichnyy, or about any of the
6 individuals named in the request.

7 The Russian authorities also responded to my
8 request, and reported that the main investigative
9 department of the investigative committee of the Russian
10 Federation was handling a criminal case in relation to
11 Valid Lurakhmaev, who they say is accused of murder,
12 attempted murder and other crimes not connected to
13 Mr Perepilichnyy. They report:

14 "There is no information in the files for this
15 criminal case that prove that V Lurakhmaev was involved
16 in the death of A Perepilichnyy."

17 They declined to give access to the files, because
18 the investigation was ongoing. I sent a further request
19 to them on 15 March 2018 to clarify whether any
20 materials that were recovered following a search of
21 Lurakhmaev's home in Moscow or elsewhere in Russia
22 specifically named or referred to Mr Perepilichnyy. No
23 response to that request has been received by the time
24 of delivering these conclusions.

25 The senior coroner also made requests of the UK

1 Border Agency who reported that there is no record of
2 Mr Lurakhmaev having a visa to enter the UK, nor under
3 an alias of Aleksandr Smirnov. People can, of course,
4 enter under different names.

5 Mr Browder said that Mr Perepilichnyy told
6 Mr Browder's colleagues about a death threat that he had
7 received in November 2011, when a member of his family,
8 who Mr Browder now believes to be Mr Ismagilov, was
9 contacted by a Moscow police officer, who said that
10 following the arrest of an organised group of
11 professional hitmen, Mr Perepilichnyy's name was on
12 their hit list and that the police had obtained
13 a dossier about him.

14 In a witness statement, Mr Browder said that
15 Mr Perepilichnyy had reviewed this dossier, and although
16 at first he believed it to be an extortion attempt by
17 Russian police, he later came to believe that the threat
18 was genuine. In his oral evidence, however, Mr Browder
19 accepted that his Hermitage colleagues' account was that
20 although Mr Perepilichnyy had spoken to officers and
21 obtained a copy of the dossier, the information in it
22 was in some respects out of date. He thought it was
23 an extortion attempt and had not mentioned it again.

24 This highlights the difficulties that arise, because
25 Mr Browder had in fact had no first-hand contact with

1 Mr Perepilichnyy at all, and because there are, as
2 I have said, no contemporaneous records of his meeting
3 with Hermitage's representatives. Hermitage did not ask
4 for a copy of the dossier, or bring its existence to the
5 attention of UK police when they heard about it. From
6 this, I infer that, as Mr Browder was driven to
7 conclude, Hermitage was not alarmed about the dossier
8 because Mr Perepilichnyy downplayed its significance,
9 and never mentioned it again. In this respect
10 Mr Browder also gave evidence that there is no limit to
11 the creativity of extortion attempts by Russian police.

12 Mr Ismagilov himself denies any knowledge of any
13 threats, credible or otherwise, to Mr Perepilichnyy, but
14 he has refused to give evidence without good reason and
15 I would need to have heard from him before relying on
16 him as to this.

17 Mrs Perepilichnaya also denied that her husband
18 mentioned such a dossier, or that Mr Ismagilov or any of
19 the family in Russia or Ukraine, when asked, had any
20 knowledge of it.

21 Perhaps most telling about the dossier episode,
22 however, is Mr Perepilichnyy's reported response that it
23 was just an extortion attempt. I find it hard to
24 imagine that he would have failed to enhance his
25 security measures if he had perceived such a threat to

1 be at all credible. This evidence is not sufficiently
2 robust for me to conclude that there was a genuine hit
3 list or dossier, or that Mr Perepilichnyy's name
4 appeared on it. I cannot sensibly rely upon the Rosbalt
5 article from 2015, I have no means of testing its
6 reliability. I have no way of knowing where the
7 information came from. I have not been able to obtain
8 any confirmation of it from the authorities I have
9 contacted. And, absent the Rosbalt article, there is no
10 positive evidence linking Mr Lurakhmaev to
11 Mr Perepilichnyy. It seems that Mr Lurakhmaev's alleged
12 modus operandi is shooting, rather than using poisons
13 that are hard to detect or which mimic sudden cardiac
14 death. On balance, therefore, I cannot and do not place
15 any weight on this evidence.

16 Another individual linked to Mr Lurakhmaev is
17 Mr Akhmed Khamidov, he was also implemented in the Lanin
18 shooting by the French police and the Rosbalt article
19 suggests that he organised it. My investigations of
20 border authorities revealed that Mr Khamidov was in the
21 UK for a short period in May 2012, although hotel
22 documents suggested that he was here for longer, and
23 checked out in June 2012. Whatever the reason for that
24 anomaly, there is simply no proper basis for me to link
25 Mr Khamidov to Mr Perepilichnyy or his death.

1 The Skype messages.

2 I have already outlined the evidence from
3 Mr Perepilichnyy's Skype messages that he met Mr Pavlov
4 at Zurich airport and then Heathrow Airport. I am
5 satisfied that at some stage he was probably being
6 threatened with a form of criminal or tax investigation.
7 I am not, however, persuaded that the messages
8 demonstrate a clear and immediate threat to
9 Mr Perepilichnyy's personal safety. There was also no
10 evidence of such a threat in the Skype messages found on
11 the computer attributed to Mr Perepilichnyy, and which
12 I had translated in July 2017. These included messages
13 in the months leading up to his death.

14 The information provided to Surrey Police.

15 Further evidence about threats comes from the
16 investigation by Surrey Police. There are three main
17 sources. What Mrs Perepilichnaya told the police,
18 telephone material and what the police recorded that
19 Mr Gherson had told them in November 2012.

20 The information from Mrs Perepilichnaya is recorded
21 in the contemporaneous or near contemporaneous
22 manuscript notes of Detective Constable Seema Taylor,
23 a FLO, the typed notes of DC Taylor and Mrs Kay Button,
24 a FLO, and in a note taken by Mr Gherson's secretary
25 during a meeting on 29 November 2012. I also heard oral

1 evidence from DC Taylor, Mr Gherson and
2 Mrs Perepilichnaya.

3 In the FLOs' notes it is recorded that
4 Mrs Perepilichnaya told them that (a) not long ago she
5 returned home unexpectedly and overheard her husband on
6 the telephone to an unknown person. He was saying that
7 pressure was being put on him and that "they know where
8 they are living in Surrey". (b) after their address was
9 entered on to the police computer system in May 2011,
10 following an entirely unrelated incident that everyone
11 agrees has no bearing on my investigation, she and her
12 husband had numerous discussions because he was
13 concerned that their address was now discoverable. She
14 said that people in Russia have access to the
15 Metropolitan Police computer and would be able to find
16 out their address. She was not able to name any
17 particular individual, however she was reassured that
18 her previous address was the only one on the police
19 system. (c) on 27 November 2012, after her husband's
20 death, she picked up a voicemail on his telephone from
21 a man saying that the money being transferred had not
22 arrived and that he had until 29 November to complete,
23 otherwise "the task would be carried out or something
24 would happen". She played the message, and explained
25 that the voice was polite and that it said that

1 Mr Perepilichnyy had not done what he had promised to
2 do, and so the caller had instructed people a month ago.
3 She explained that the rest of the message seemed to
4 suggest that the people would make a problem with him in
5 relation to what she described as "some jurisdictional
6 matter". This may be a reference to judicial
7 proceedings of some kind.

8 (d) Mrs Perepilichnaya also translated an old SMS
9 message from June 2011. This warned her husband that he
10 would go to prison for a long time, he or she could "do
11 that" and if he wanted to be free he had to pay 3,000
12 roubles by 2 pm the following day. She explained at the
13 time that that was not much money. This text message
14 was found on Mr Perepilichnyy's telephone, and has been
15 independently translated in much the same terms, save
16 that it refers to 300,000 roubles. In June 2011, that
17 was roughly equivalent to £6,000. Plainly the sums of
18 money involved in any aspect of the fraud using
19 Hermitage companies are far in excess of this figure and
20 in my judgment it is impossible to believe that they are
21 in any way connected. The same text and amounts were
22 reported by Ms Ekaterina Clark-O'Connell, a police
23 analyst, in her examination of Mr Perepilichnyy's
24 computer, along with the follow up "do not do silly
25 moves as we have everything under control", and that the

1 details of where to transfer would follow his decision.

2 Mr Gherson's attendance note of the meeting with
3 Mrs Perepilichnaya on 29 November 2012 has her saying,
4 as regards paragraph (a) above:

5 "Mr Perepilichnyy did not know I was there. He was
6 talking to someone in Russia. Somebody is trying to
7 pressure him. They said that they know where the
8 children are living. They know the address. That is
9 what I heard him talking to someone about. He was
10 saying it is so easy to find out the address, how could
11 it be so easy?"

12 It goes on to say that the reason for this was that
13 the address was on the police computer.

14 Mr Gherson's attendance note indicates that
15 Mrs Perepilichnaya's answer was given in response to
16 a question about whether she knew of anyone who wanted
17 to harm Mr Perepilichnyy. It is apparently transcribed
18 as one answer, or information, given at about the same
19 time because the note identifies the individual
20 speakers' questions and answers. The note only records
21 Mr Gherson explaining that he had previously called the
22 police on Mr Perepilichnyy's instructions about concerns
23 that people in Russia had access to the police files and
24 could get their address. Mr Gherson told me in his
25 evidence that the reason for doing so was that

1 Mrs Perepilichnaya was concerned about the address,
2 having overheard a conversation in which her husband had
3 received a threat or threats. The note also refers to
4 the voicemail, and apparently a translation of it at the
5 meeting by a Russian-speaking lawyer.

6 In her evidence to me Mrs Perepilichnaya denied that
7 she had a conversation with her husband after their
8 address was recorded on the police computer in which he
9 expressed concern that it could jeopardise their safety.
10 She said that she did not remember being asked about it
11 by the FLOs and was not shown the notes that they made.
12 She accepted that she overheard her husband on the
13 telephone but denied that he was being threatened. She
14 said that a third person, not Mr Perepilichnyy, was
15 being pressured and that he was saying, "Pressuring him,
16 pressurising who?"

17 She said that her comments had been misinterpreted,
18 partly because there was no translator present at the
19 meetings with the FLOs, which I accept, beyond the
20 presence of the Russian-speaking lawyer, partly as
21 a result of her confused state of mind after her
22 husband's sudden death and partly because during that
23 period she did have a genuine concern about the media
24 having possession of the family's address. In the main,
25 Detective Constable Taylor and Mr Gherson rely on their

1 notes as to what was said at the meeting, although
2 Mr Gherson had an independent recollection that
3 Mrs Perepilichnaya had overheard a conversation in which
4 her husband had received threats and that he had been
5 asked by Mr Perepilichnyy to call the police about the
6 issue.

7 DC Taylor did not accept that it was conceivable
8 that Mrs Perepilichnaya was describing overhearing her
9 husband referable to someone else being under pressure,
10 and did not accept that she had misunderstood
11 a reference about concern regarding the media.

12 It is clear to me from the two contemporaneous
13 records and the way in which Mrs Perepilichnaya's
14 comment flows from a specific question, and ties the
15 concern about the address to the overheard conversation,
16 that her subsequent explanation cannot be right.

17 I accept that the overheard conversation took place
18 essentially as described in the FLOs' notes. I also
19 accept that following their address being placed on to
20 the police computer, Mr Perepilichnyy raised a concern
21 about people in Russia getting hold of it. Mr Gherson
22 said that he was instructed to ring the police by
23 Mr Perepilichnyy in 2011, although his interpretation
24 was that it was a request that had originally come from
25 Mrs Perepilichnaya, rather than being a concern of

1 Mr Perepilichnyy's own, and he did not express any fear
2 at that time.

3 Mrs Perepilichnaya maintained her interpretation of
4 the voicemail and text messages, and I agree with
5 Mr Pollard's emphasis on the fact that the text was more
6 than a year old, and not repeated as far as we are
7 aware. It was also low level as threats go, and about
8 a small sum of money. The telling point about the
9 voicemail on 27 November 2012 is that it came after
10 Mr Perepilichnyy's death and cannot therefore have been
11 from anyone who was responsible for it.

12 A further issue arose in respect of what Mr Gherson
13 told Surrey Police when speaking to them after
14 Mr Perepilichnyy's death. Mr Gherson's evidence is that
15 he had no knowledge of Mr Perepilichnyy ever expressing
16 fear for his safety or indicating that he had received
17 any threats. Had he done so, Mr Gherson says that he
18 would have encouraged Mr Perepilichnyy to call the
19 police and would have told the police himself. He did
20 not discuss Mr Perepilichnyy's frame of mind, or any
21 fears for his safety. The reason he went to the police
22 in November 2012 was to get them to undertake a thorough
23 investigation of Mr Perepilichnyy's death in order to
24 determine whether he had or had not been murdered, and
25 in particular to do proper toxicology tests to rule out

1 poisoning:

2 "He did not want there to be another Litvinenko
3 situation".

4 Surrey Police made two records of conversations with
5 Mr Gherson which appear to suggest that he had specific
6 knowledge of threats. Detective Sergeant Drinkwater
7 made an entry in a computerised log at 8.56 pm on
8 Sunday, 18 November 2012 to the effect that Mr Gherson
9 had told him that Mr Perepilichnyy had been involved in
10 a large-scale fraud, and that as a result of being
11 a witness in certain proceedings he was "alleged to have
12 been concerned regarding his safety in recent weeks".
13 He felt that extensive toxicological work should be
14 carried out.

15 A note of a second telephone call on
16 22 November 2012 with Mr Gherson suggested that
17 Mrs Perepilichnaya was very distressed, and told
18 Mr Gherson that some people said to her that they know
19 where she lives, but that no specific threats had been
20 made.

21 In a report he made on 14 January 2013, Detective
22 Sergeant Drinkwater reiterated that Mr Gherson had said
23 that Mr Perepilichnyy had been concerned for his safety
24 in recent weeks, and that when DS Drinkwater asked
25 further questions about why Mr Perepilichnyy felt

1 concerned, Mr Gherson became defensive.

2 When Surrey Police went to speak to Mr Gherson, and
3 in an email to them dated 3 December 2012, Mr Gherson
4 said that he had no evidence or information to assist
5 them.

6 DS Drinkwater stands by his note, although he cannot
7 say how much time passed between the call and the
8 computerised log entry being made. Perhaps an hour or
9 so, depending on how busy he was, although he may have
10 made notes at the time. He understood that Mr Gherson
11 was conveying Mr Perepilichnyy's concerns for his
12 safety. He described asking further questions about the
13 concerns, and perceiving that Mr Gherson became
14 defensive. At the time the note was recorded as being
15 made, 8.56 pm, I am satisfied that Mr Gherson was in
16 fact on a 4 pm flight to New York. It follows that
17 there would have been at least five hours between the
18 conversation and the note being made.

19 On balance, I am satisfied that during his
20 conversations with Surrey Police Mr Gherson did refer to
21 Mr Perepilichnyy's involvement with the alleged fraud,
22 but in the sense of his involvement with Hermitage and
23 the Swiss investigation. At this distance and time it
24 is impossible to resolve precisely what was said about
25 his safety. DS Drinkwater's note must have been made

1 some hours later and it is hard to think that if
2 Mr Gherson was aware of serious concerns that he would
3 not have encouraged Mr Perepilichnyy to do something
4 about them, or that he would not have been prepared to
5 expand upon them to DS Drinkwater, so as to ensure
6 a thorough investigation.

7 Mr Perepilichnyy's involvement with Hermitage and
8 the Swiss investigation had certainly given rise to
9 pressure and concern. I am not able to say that what
10 was reported went any further than this, in other words
11 that Mr Perepilichnyy was being put under pressure as
12 his wife had also reported on 29 November. But beyond
13 that there is no detail about it at all.

14 There is also no evidence that either
15 Mr Perepilichnyy or his wife took any extra security
16 precautions at all in the weeks before his death. That
17 points against either of them having had concern about
18 any immediate danger.

19 The timing of the move to St George's Hill.
20 Mr Perepilichnyy and his family moved to the
21 St George's Hill Estate in the summer of 2011. This was
22 after the incident in late May 2011, when concerns arose
23 about their address being on the police computer.
24 I have been provided with the leases for the old
25 property and for the St George's Hill address. The old

1 lease was made on 1 August 2010, and the agreement was
2 scheduled to end on 31 July 2011. The new lease started
3 on 25 July 2011. Accordingly, it appears that the
4 Virginia Water lease came to its anticipated end
5 in July 2011. On balance, the timing of the family's
6 move is such that I cannot positively conclude that it
7 was for security reasons, although that remains
8 a possibility.

9 Life insurance policies.

10 Mr Perepilichnyy sought and in part obtained
11 a substantial amount of life insurance in the months
12 before he died. Possibilities to consider are whether
13 he did so in recognition that his life was under threat,
14 or because he was anticipating obtaining a large
15 mortgage in the near future, or because as a very
16 wealthy man in his mid 40s he simply wanted to ensure
17 that his family was well provided for in the event of
18 his death. Or it may of course have been a combination
19 of all of these factors.

20 In May 2012 Mr Perepilichnyy obtained £500,000 worth
21 of life insurance with Aviva. On the face of the form,
22 this was not to cover a mortgage. Between 17 and
23 21 June 2012 he applied for £5 million of life insurance
24 with Ageas, now AIG, split into three applications
25 through three different brokers. In the first two

1 applications in time Mr Perepilichnyy identified that
2 the reason for taking out cover was for family
3 protection rather than mortgage protection. In the
4 third application I have heard the tape of the telephone
5 conversation in which Mr Perepilichnyy clearly chooses
6 family protection over mortgage protection in answer to
7 the broker's question. It is also apparent that he did
8 not disclose the full extent of his existing cover in
9 all cases, or the fact that he had other applications
10 outstanding. Notwithstanding that he had made three
11 applications within the space of a few days, each time
12 he was asked whether he had any other applications for
13 cover with Ageas, or whether he intended to apply for
14 additional cover with Ageas, his answer is recorded as
15 "no".

16 These applications were postponed while
17 Mr Perepilichnyy underwent some medical tests. However,
18 the broker he spoke to on 21 June 2012 suggested that he
19 could split the £2 million application that he had made
20 into two, and so another application was made to
21 Liverpool Victoria for £1 million. This was accepted.

22 On 4 July 2012 Mr Perepilichnyy applied for
23 £2 million of cover with Legal & General. Legal &
24 General have taken a leading part in these proceedings.
25 Again, upon being asked, he did not disclose that he had

1 already made applications to AIG/Ageas and to Liverpool
2 Victoria and the reason given by the broker for the
3 cover was family protection not mortgage protection.

4 Following medical tests this policy was accepted
5 shortly before his death, with formal acceptance letters
6 being sent on 2 November 2012.

7 In summary, Mr Perepilichnyy successfully applied
8 for £3.5 million of life insurance in the six months
9 before his death, and unsuccessfully applied for another
10 5 million. At no stage did he suggest that this was for
11 mortgage protection purposes and whenever asked directly
12 or through a broker, he indicated that it was for family
13 protection. In addition he did not give accurate
14 answers to questions about other applications and about
15 existing cover. Mr Russ Whitworth, claims and
16 underwriting director for Legal & General, gave evidence
17 about the possible implications of this.

18 Mrs Perepilichnaya's understanding was that to
19 secure a mortgage in the absence of business or property
20 in the UK, Mr Perepilichnyy needed to have life
21 insurance in place. She told me that in part
22 Mr Perepilichnyy led her to believe this. They were
23 looking at a property worth £7.8 million in
24 St George's Hill. Mr Gary Nagioff owned a substantial
25 property on the estate which was on the market in 2012

1 with a guide price of between £7 million and £8 million.
2 He recalled that a Russian couple were interested and
3 that after Mr Perepilichnyy's death he was told that it
4 was Mr and Mrs Perepilichnyy.

5 Mrs Perepilichnaya understood that her husband had
6 spoken to Liz Kaye at EFG in February or March 2012, and
7 that she had told him that she had a client with eight
8 policies who had needed them for a loan for an expensive
9 property. He was discussing mortgages with several
10 banks. There is no evidence from any banks that they
11 were requiring such an arrangement, and that is not the
12 reason he gave the brokers or insurance companies.
13 However, Liz Kaye did say that she had a conversation
14 with Mr Perepilichnyy in early 2012, because he was
15 buying a property in St George's Hill and they discussed
16 that Barclays had suggested taking out a life insurance
17 policy. She told him that if he was buying
18 a £10 million property as he had mentioned, he would
19 need 40 per cent cover for inheritance tax and would
20 need more than one policy. She was sure that she did
21 not say that a client had eight insurance policies,
22 although someone else may have done, and she was aware
23 of people with three or four such policies.

24 It is difficult for me to assess precisely why
25 Mr Perepilichnyy applied for such substantial life

1 insurance over the summer of 2012, or why he made the
2 applications in the way that he did. I accept Ms Kaye's
3 evidence that they had a discussion about life insurance
4 in relation to buying a property, although her
5 recollection of him already having a £500,000 policy
6 might place it later in the year than February or
7 March 2012. But Mr Perepilichnyy's actions suggest to
8 me that he was seeking to spread out the applications
9 and was not tying them to any mortgage applications.
10 I am inclined to conclude that he was a man who, as
11 Ms Kaye said, wanted to look after and protect his
12 family. This may have included leaving some money to
13 deal with a potential mortgage. However, viewed in the
14 context of the ongoing Swiss proceedings and the
15 evidence of threats and pressure that I have already
16 considered, I am also satisfied that Mr Perepilichnyy's
17 actions were motivated, at least in part, by
18 a recognition that he faced some risks as a result of
19 his dealings in Russia and his involvement in the Swiss
20 investigation and thus by at least a degree of concern
21 for his own safety.

22 Other evidence.

23 I should record that Surrey Police made specific
24 enquiries of the Serious Organised Crime Agency, the
25 South-East Counter Terrorism Unit, Surrey special branch

1 and Surrey and Sussex Police information systems to
2 ascertain whether there was any intelligence, including,
3 for example, information obtained from independent
4 confidential sources, to indicate that Mr Perepilichnyy
5 had been under threat at any time or that he had been
6 murdered. Nothing was found.

7 The police do not appear to have had any interest in
8 Mr Perepilichnyy prior to his death, or to have known of
9 his connection to the fraud using Hermitage companies or
10 the money laundering investigation by the Swiss
11 authorities. Mr Perepilichnyy never asked the police
12 himself for help with security, or spoke to them himself
13 about any concerns.

14 Indeed, I have found no evidence that
15 Mr Perepilichnyy took any form of heightened security
16 measures in the months before he died. Even after his
17 status with the Swiss authorities came to Mr Stepanov's
18 attention. Mr Micheli, his Swiss lawyer, said in
19 correspondence that Mr Perepilichnyy never indicated
20 that he felt threatened or alluded to any circumstances
21 which could imply that he was not feeling safe.
22 Mr Micheli thought that he would have known if
23 Mr Perepilichnyy had felt insecure, if that insecurity
24 had any link to the Swiss proceedings. Mr Micheli's
25 evidence cannot be tested as he declined to give

1 evidence in this Inquest, citing client privilege. As
2 a result, I cannot place much weight on this evidence.

3 However, I do note that Mr Micheli had referred on
4 2 November 2012 to "serious concern about procedural
5 requests from the Russian Federation to the Swiss
6 authorities in connection with the Swiss investigation".
7 Even so, this may suggest that avenues were being
8 pursued aside from direct violence to him in this
9 country.

10 Mrs Perepilichnaya told me that overt use of
11 security is a symbol of prestige for wealthy people in
12 Russia but there is no evidence that Mr Perepilichnyy
13 ever retained a bodyguard, or engaged a chauffeur who
14 could provide security, either for himself or the wife
15 and children. The family home had an alarm, but
16 Mrs Perepilichnaya said that she did not know how to
17 operate it and with Mr Perepilichnyy away so often, this
18 meant that their home security would have been limited
19 to that provided to all of the residents of the
20 St George's Hill Estate. Barriers, perimeter guards,
21 patrols and CCTV. This might, perhaps, deter house
22 burglars, but not a determined attacker or assassin,
23 Mr Perepilichnyy did not conceal his name in his
24 day-to-day life, on his tenancy agreements, bank
25 accounts, travel arrangements or hotel reservations.

1 There was no suggestion, for example, that he changed
2 routes when he travelled or took any other basic
3 measures to avoid his whereabouts being known. He was
4 openly going on foreign holidays, as well as travelling
5 extensively. He was also interested in buying a home on
6 the same estate where he had already lived for a year.

7 Conclusion.

8 The evidence that I have heard supports the
9 conclusion that Mr Perepilichnyy was subject to pressure
10 or threats of different kinds before and even after his
11 death. This is apparent, for example, from the
12 conversation that Mrs Perepilichnaya overheard. From
13 the voicemail and text messages that she drew to the
14 attention of the police after he died. From the Skype
15 messages. From the information he provided to Hermitage
16 about why he left Russia. From the life insurance that
17 was obtained. And from the fact that he appears to have
18 avoided travelling back to Russia in the last few years
19 of his life.

20 The precise nature and source of any threats are
21 often unclear. There is certainly no secure evidence of
22 a specific threat to kill Mr Perepilichnyy made in the
23 period leading up to his death, or ever, or in terms
24 which left no room for doubt that it was soon to be
25 carried out. That said, I do not overlook the fact that

1 someone can be killed without warning at all. What
2 I can say is that Mr Perepilichnyy never sought to
3 implement any significant security measures to protect
4 himself or his family and never reported any actual
5 threats to the police. It is possible that he was naive
6 about the risks he was facing, but given
7 Mr Perepilichnyy's intelligence and his acumen as
8 an entrepreneur operating in Russia and Ukraine over
9 a period of many years, I think this is unlikely.

10 Instead, it is probable that he took the view that
11 such threats as there were, for example of criminal or
12 tax investigations and arrest by the Russian
13 authorities, was something that he could adequately and
14 safety manage by himself, albeit that he had taken the
15 precaution of obtaining life insurance.

16 Of course, his own view of any danger he faced is
17 not an end of the matter. The critical question is
18 whether he was in fact unlawfully killed, no matter how
19 seriously or otherwise he took any risk of that
20 happening.

21 Section 9. Direct evidence that Mr Perepilichnyy
22 was murdered.

23 There is no direct evidence that Mr Perepilichnyy
24 was murdered. We can put aside the evidence of an
25 unknown compound in Mr Perepilichnyy's stomach, which as

1 I shall explain, I am satisfied has no link to the
2 Gelsemium species of plant whatsoever and has now
3 probably been identified as a widely occurring and
4 innocuous compound. Instead, I am left to weigh up the
5 available circumstantial evidence of (a) motive (b)
6 threats (c) taking out substantial life insurance in the
7 months before he died (d) possible means of causing
8 death (e) opportunity and (f) his movements and the
9 events in the days and hours leading up to his death.

10 However, I must do so in the knowledge that for the
11 reasons I have explained, although the police initiated
12 a detailed investigation into Mr Perepilichnyy's death
13 after the appointment of Mr Pollard as senior
14 investigating officer on 28 November 2012, there were
15 gaps in the work that they had undertaken prior to that
16 date and it was not possible for all of them to be
17 remedied retrospectively, either by the police
18 themselves or as a result of the investigations that
19 Mr Travers and I have initiated subsequently.

20 The main points are as follows:

21 (a) the first post mortem examination was not
22 a forensic one. As a consequence, certain body samples
23 were not obtained and tested soon after the death and
24 most of the stomach contents were thrown away.

25 (b) only a limited search of the scene of

1 Mr Perepilichnyy's collapse was conducted, as a result
2 of which it is possible that potentially incriminating
3 evidence of an attack was missed and lost.

4 (c) there were no follow-up house-to-house calls to
5 the properties where no one had been at home at the time
6 of the initial enquiries on 10 November 2012. Publicity
7 has, perhaps, been such that anyone who had any
8 information which they were willing to give would have
9 come forward by now.

10 (d) only a very limited amount of the available CCTV
11 was viewed. This was obtained from two out of six
12 entrances on the estate and nothing useful has been
13 found on it, but the film from other CCTV cameras which
14 may now have been overwritten or may have been on the
15 hard drive seized by the police was been viewed. It is
16 not now possible for specialists to identify the dates
17 on the film footage which does exist, and reconstructing
18 it is impossible.

19 (e) the handset for Mr Perepilichnyy's second mobile
20 telephone was never obtained, and his voicemails were
21 not listened to by the police on either telephone. The
22 computer that was obtained appeared to be a family one
23 and there is a strong suspicion that Mr Perepilichnyy
24 had another computer. I have sought to have all of the
25 text and Skype messages found on the telephones and

1 computer translated from September 2011 onwards but
2 there still appeared to be gaps and I do not have
3 comprehensive coverage of Mr Perepilichnyy's email
4 account. It has not been possible for me to see the
5 documents found on the computer, including financial
6 accounts, because the forensic image which was taken
7 cannot now be found by the police. I am not convinced
8 that the police officer translators who did see them
9 will have necessarily picked up all of the nuances of
10 who individuals or companies were, albeit that they
11 should have spotted and reported anything with
12 an obvious threat.

13 It is a matter of regret that the forensic image of
14 the computer cannot now be found, although I am
15 satisfied that there was nothing sinister about this.
16 As I have said, Mrs Perepilichnaya had drawn the
17 attention of the police to the text and voicemails she
18 came across after her husband had died, and referred to
19 in the Surrey Police section above. She was obviously
20 inquisitive, and if there had been anything more
21 immediate that she had come across after his death,
22 I think she would have reported it.

23 (f) there is no comprehensive and contemporaneous
24 account of Mr Perepilichnyy's time in Paris, although
25 I took steps to call Ms Medynska as a witness. They

1 were together for much of the time.

2 10. Expert evidence as to the cause of death.

3 The experts have largely reached a consensus, with
4 the result that I am faced with two potential medical
5 causes of death. Sudden arrhythmic death syndrome, or
6 SADS as it is known, or poisoning.

7 As I indicated at the outset, Mr Perepilichnyy was
8 an apparently healthy man. He had lost some weight in
9 2012 by diet and by increasing his levels of activity.
10 He had not complained of any recent health problems and
11 as far as I know had never complained of cardiac
12 symptoms. Although there was mention of some fainting
13 episodes as a child, this is so far removed from the
14 events of November 2012 that I accept Dr Wilmshurst's
15 assessment that it probably has no relevance.

16 In October 2012, following blood tests and medical
17 examination, Dr O'Connor found no reason to suspect that
18 he would have a reduced life expectancy. I am satisfied
19 that Mr Perepilichnyy did vomit in Paris on the night
20 before he died as a result of the food and drink he had
21 that night. The likelihood is it was some form of
22 inadvertent food poisoning, it was short lived and
23 coincided with Mr Perepilichnyy complaining about the
24 food whilst eating in a restaurant that would have
25 served raw fish. I cannot make a positive finding about

1 what he ate, and in particular whether he ate scombroid
2 fish. Dr Wilmshurst raised the issue of scombroid
3 poisoning, having read about the symptoms that
4 Ms Medynska described, including most notably signs of
5 a redness on Mr Perepilichnyy's body. Dr Wilmshurst
6 recognised those symptoms because he had suffered from
7 scombroid poisoning in the past. If Mr Perepilichnyy
8 ate scombroid fish then such a form of poisoning is
9 likely, as Professor Ferner agreed. If not, it is
10 likely to have been some other self-limiting food
11 poisoning.

12 The following morning Mr Perepilichnyy was in good
13 experts, ate breakfast, and save for the description of
14 his red eyes, any symptoms appear to have passed.
15 Importantly, however, if it was food poisoning or some
16 other accidental irritant, then I am satisfied on the
17 balance of probabilities that it did not cause or
18 contribute to Mr Perepilichnyy's death. That
19 theoretical possibility was raised by Dr Wilmshurst as
20 regards scombroid poisoning. But having reviewed the
21 literature and the absence of reports of such deaths
22 worldwide directly linking such poisoning to cardiac
23 arrhythmias, the chances appear to be vanishingly small.

24 Dr Wilmshurst would put it no higher than
25 a possibility, and I agree with Professor Ferner that

1 although it cannot be ruled out, it is highly unlikely.
2 Accordingly, I find that absent deliberate poisoning the
3 vomiting in Paris had no material bearing on
4 Mr Perepilichnyy's death. This does leave open the
5 possibility of a deliberate poisoning which led to acute
6 symptoms in Paris, following by an apparently complete
7 recovery and then death within 17 hours or so.
8 Toxicologists agree that this is a possibility, but no
9 more than that, with colchicine being cited as
10 a potential toxin by Professor Ferner. They agree,
11 however, that this is unlikely and that the episode in
12 Paris is likely to have been coincidental to
13 Mr Perepilichnyy's death. I will return to this point
14 when considering the wider toxicology evidence.

15 There is no other evidence that Mr Perepilichnyy
16 suffered any symptoms before going out for a run at
17 about 4.00 pm on 10 November 2012. On the contrary,
18 there is positive evidence from Mrs Perepilichnaya that
19 he appeared to be in good health. He also felt fit
20 enough to go out for a run. When Mr Elias saw
21 Mr Perepilichnyy at about 4.40 pm, he was heading north
22 on Granville Road towards his home. Whether or not he
23 was intending to finish his run then, I cannot say, but
24 it fits with Mrs Perepilichnaya's evidence that he left
25 at 4 pm and usually ran for 45 minutes to an hour. I am

1 also satisfied that he was still running at the time.
2 Indeed, he was running up a steep hill. He is likely to
3 have been feeling healthy enough to run until very close
4 to the point of collapse. If he had any symptoms, they
5 were not sufficient to make him walk up the hill, or
6 summon help.

7 Whatever happened to Mr Perepilichnyy, at least in
8 terms of acute symptoms sufficient to stop him running,
9 it appears to have happened within the space of
10 a handful of minutes at most. If Mr Elias's
11 recollection of timings and distances in his initial
12 statements are accurate, then it happened within less
13 than five minutes and probably over a maximum of just
14 a few metres. Indeed, he could have collapsed at or
15 within a few seconds of the onset of symptoms.

16 The evidence from the pathologists is clear, whether
17 from Dr Ratcliffe's initial post mortem examination on
18 12 November 2012, Dr Fegan-Earl's forensic post mortem
19 examination on 28 November 2012, or
20 Professor Mary Sheppard's analysis of the heart,
21 reported on 29 November 2012, there was no direct
22 evidence of third party assault or restraint, and no
23 pathological evidence of injection marks.

24 Equally, there was no macroscopic or microscopic
25 evidence of a critical, natural disease process that

1 could explain his death. For a man dropping dead whilst
2 running, if the collapse is from natural causes,
3 generally the cause will be found in the heart, lungs or
4 brain. Here there was nothing. There were signs of
5 minor injury in the form of abrasions that were not
6 bleeding, but I am satisfied that these were entirely
7 consistent with having been caused at the point of
8 collapse, as the pathologists all agree.

9 A second post mortem examination was conducted by
10 Dr Rouse in December 2012, but it adds nothing to the
11 findings of Dr Fegan-Earl. There was evidence of
12 pulmonary congestion and oedema, which are very common
13 findings at post mortem. They are relatively
14 non-specific findings in cases of sudden death,
15 including sudden cardiac death, and also deaths where
16 there has been a prolonged phase of resuscitation.
17 There was also intra-alveolar haemorrhage, which I am
18 told was not prominent and was only observed
19 microscopically. This too may occur during
20 resuscitation and is a non-specific finding. These
21 findings in Mr Perepilichnyy's lungs are common in
22 a wide range of conditions, including those of cardiac
23 origin, and in the absence of an obvious pathology to
24 account for the development of heart failure and in the
25 absence of a toxin, the findings are non-specific.

1 Dr Ratcliffe told me that this is what he would
2 expect to find, given the circumstances of death, and
3 the resuscitation which was prolonged in this case, at
4 around 45 minutes. Dr Wilmshurst agreed.

5 The joint opinions of the pathologists mean that the
6 two possible causes of Mr Perepilichnyy's death are SADS
7 and poisoning. SADS does not leave any pathological
8 signs, and certain poisons may not do so either. The
9 pathologist considered that if this death had occurred
10 in a 44-year old man with no circumstantial history of
11 poisoning to raise concerns, then it would have been
12 attributed to SADS. Again, Dr Wilmshurst agreed.

13 From the point of view of the pathologists, however,
14 if there is a suspicion of poisoning, or the possibility
15 of an undetected poison, then it cannot be excluded as
16 a cause of death and so the diagnosis of SADS cannot be
17 reached. In those circumstances, Dr Fegan-Earl says
18 that he would give the cause of death as unascertained.

19 However, he accepted that the circumstantial
20 evidence of poisoning, a question of fact, is for me to
21 assess and determine if rejected the cause of death will
22 not be unascertained.

23 As to the clinical signs prior to death, I am
24 satisfied that there is nothing that points specifically
25 towards poisoning rather than SADS. Whilst the absence

1 of clinical signs before death and its apparent
2 suddenness do limit the nature and identity of the
3 possible poisons, equally there is nothing specific that
4 points away from poison as a mechanism and towards SADS.
5 Sudden cardiorespiratory arrests could be caused by an
6 undetected poison. Vomiting is very common in the
7 process of cardiac arrest, as is the presence of gastric
8 contents in the airways and both are common in those who
9 are resuscitated.

10 Dr Wilmshurst has explained that when a person is
11 unconscious and lying flat there can be regurgitation of
12 stomach contents, particularly when giving
13 mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, Mr Perepilichnyy's pupils
14 were fixed, as they will be at death, and we do not know
15 what they would have looked like prior to death.

16 Finally, there is no evidence of anything unusual
17 such as excessive secretions, incontinence or unusual
18 smells. In any event, aside from excessive secretions
19 had they been present, the toxicologists consider that
20 the clinical signs which can be elicited are consistent
21 with either poisoning or cardiopulmonary arrest.

22 The evidence from Professor Sheppard, cardiac
23 pathologist, and Dr Wilmshurst, cardiologist, supports
24 the pathological analysis. Professor Sheppard
25 emphasised that there was nothing structurally wrong

1 with Mr Perepilichnyy's heart on very extensive
2 macroscopic and microscopic assessment and of course
3 there was no overt heart disease. Examination of the
4 heart tissue showed no abnormality. She explained that
5 when the heart is normal, and no other cause of death is
6 found at autopsy, a pathologist considers SADS but the
7 toxicological and all other enquiries have to be
8 concluded before coming to a diagnosis. We all die of
9 cardiac arrest eventually, it is the terminal event, and
10 in cases such as this there is no apparent cause of the
11 cardiac arrest. The most common cause of SADS, and ion
12 channelopathy or defect in an ion channel is
13 an electrical abnormality and it is invisible to the
14 cardiac pathologist because it is at cellular level.
15 For some conditions the only evidence that an individual
16 has it is in life whilst in others there may be genetic
17 mutations or clinical signs present in the family.

18 Professor Sheppard suggested that in the UK there
19 are about 800 SADS deaths each year, with the caveat
20 that some cases are still reported as unascertained
21 rather than SADS and so would not be included within
22 this statistic. She considers that we are fortunate in
23 this country to carry out autopsies on all sudden
24 deaths, and yet she still thought that 800 was
25 a conservative figure, and that it was probably in the

1 order of 1,200 to 1,500 each year. Dr Wilmshurst also
2 highlighted the underreporting in the elderly, where the
3 tendency might be to put the death down to comorbidities
4 or old age, but whatever happened to Mr Perepilichnyy it
5 was highly unusual and in reality it was either
6 poisoning or SADS.

7 Professor Sheppard suggested that in 40 per cent of
8 the 800 deaths, a combination of molecular pathology,
9 clinical history and family genetic testing would lead
10 to a diagnosis of a channelopathy. In this case nothing
11 was found on genetic testing or on review of family
12 members, although I do not have much detail about the
13 examinations or tests that were conducted or on who.

14 Commenting on a recently published study into SADS
15 by Lahrouchi and others, Professor Sheppard thought that
16 would be a positive molecular result in the minority of
17 cases with Lahrouchi quoting 13 per cent, but the range
18 in the literature typically being 13 to 30 per cent.
19 Males are more likely to die from SADS than females.
20 Although the paper suggested a high prevalence in
21 younger people, Professor Sheppard thought that about
22 half of her database were over 35 and she also thought
23 it was misdiagnosed in older patients. In her
24 experience about 10 to 15 per cent die with exercise,
25 and this supports the findings in Lahrouchi.

1 Also of potential importance in this case is the
2 fact that most die without any prior symptoms up to and
3 including the hour prior to death, which is the
4 definition of SADS in an observed death. In the
5 Lahrouchi paper, the figure is about 75 per cent.
6 Dr Wilmhurst and Dr Homfray, a consultant geneticist,
7 also highlighted that usually this is the individual's
8 first event and, tragically, there is no prior warning.

9 Professor Sheppard also relied on the Lahrouchi
10 paper, to which she contributed, to support her
11 conclusion that in just under 40 per cent of cases
12 a genetic mutation or a diagnosis through the family
13 would be found. This led her to conclude that the
14 absence of findings on genetic testing here has no
15 significance because of the low rate of finding such
16 a mutation, an opinion with which Dr Wilmhurst agreed.

17 Professor Sheppard and Dr Wilmhurst also agree that
18 if I decide that Mr Perepilichnyy did not die from
19 trauma, acute medical illness, overt heart disease or
20 poisoning, then the exclusion criteria are satisfied in
21 order to make a diagnosis of death from SADS. Negative
22 findings on post mortem examination and on toxicological
23 are consistent with that diagnosis.

24 Professor Sheppard and Dr Wilmhurst were asked
25 a number of questions about the features of individual

1 channelopathies and whether the facts of this case are
2 consistent or inconsistent with them. I have not found
3 that helpful. It is apparent that even the individual
4 channelopathies or conditions present differently in
5 different people, and there are likely to be further
6 channelopathies or conditions not yet identified which
7 will become apparent in the future. They are content
8 for a diagnosis of SADS, if I am satisfied that
9 Mr Perepilichnyy did not die from poisoning. They
10 cannot say which of the many possible channelopathies
11 might have been responsible. Equally, there is nothing
12 that identifies to them that it was a channelopathy
13 rather than poisoning.

14 Dr Homfray has particular expertise in inherited
15 cardiac conditions, and she sent the frozen spleen
16 sample to Manchester to be genetically tested. She
17 explained how the use of molecular autopsies is
18 a relatively new phenomenon and that she chose
19 Manchester for the quality of its output. No relevant
20 genetic mutation was found by them, but in her view this
21 was overwhelmingly the expected outcome. The
22 limitations in the genetic testing included the fact
23 that there may be combinations of more subtle and
24 unreported genetic variations, and that there are
25 channelopathies where no genetic marker has been

1 identified and where the cause may not be inherited.

2 Dr Homfray told me that in a 40-year old male with
3 no family history, with a normal post mortem examination
4 and relatives with no abnormality, the likelihood of
5 finding a genetic mutation on molecular autopsy would be
6 less than 10 per cent. Dr Wilmshurst said that he had
7 been in correspondence with Dr Eaton at the Manchester
8 laboratory where the molecular autopsy was conducted and
9 that an audit of their data suggested that they found
10 a channelopathy gene that is known to be pathogenic in
11 30 per cent of cases.

12 Dr Homfray considers that dying during exercise made
13 it more likely that a genetic mutation would be
14 detected, but less likely that you would find signs and
15 symptoms in family members.

16 I am satisfied that whatever the true incidence, it
17 is more likely than not for an individual in
18 Mr Perepilichnyy's situation, collapsing at 44 years of
19 age whilst running, if in fact dying of SADS, that there
20 would be no relevant findings in the family or on
21 molecular autopsy.

22 The toxicological experts, Professor Ferner and
23 Dr Rice, and insofar as it is within her expertise
24 Dr Fiona Perry, a forensic toxicologist, specialising in
25 analysis of body samples, but without a medical

1 saying this, they are not looking at the whole of the
2 evidence as I am obliged to do, but only at the science.
3 The toxicologists agree that certain modes of
4 administration cannot be ruled out, although their
5 evidence is that certain modes, including injection, are
6 most unlikely without signs of forcible administration.
7 In relation to any injection marks, Dr Fegan-Earl
8 thought that injection marks might not be easy or
9 possible to be find, notwithstanding subcutaneous
10 dissection in this case and the absence of marks or
11 bruising. There were no signs of struggle, which he
12 would expect with forcible injection. The toxicologists
13 do consider that tablets, oral ingestion, inhalation,
14 nasal insufflation or ocular administration were
15 possible.

16 Leaving aside the question of specific poisons
17 having been used, the toxicology experts consider that
18 it was possible that Mr Perepilichnyy died of poisoning,
19 and that its likelihood had to be considered alongside
20 alternative diagnoses. Dr Rice agreed that if SADS was
21 likely then poisoning was unlikely, and vice-versa.

22 Given the absence of any toxicological or
23 pathological evidence of poisoning, the likelihood that
24 Mr Perepilichnyy died from poisoning has then to be
25 determined by me after consideration of all the

1 available evidence in the case as a whole. Poisoning is
2 part of a broader question of whether he was unlawfully
3 killed.

4 The experts identify that it could have been
5 a rapidly acting poison causing respiratory or cardiac
6 depression, or both, and that it could have been
7 administered by one of the acknowledged methods.

8 Professor Ferner also considered that there could
9 have been a delayed-action poisoning, whose effects
10 became manifest on the afternoon of 10 November 2012.
11 Without a reliable clinical history, the experts were
12 not prepared to narrow down when such a poison might
13 have been administered, save to say that it was probably
14 not cumulative poison and it could have been delayed,
15 immediate release or state dependent. They do agree,
16 however, that if he felt sufficiently well to run he was
17 probably not suffering from the serious effects of
18 poisoning at the time he set off.

19 The experts agree that one possibility is that
20 Mr Perepilichnyy was administered a poison whose effect
21 was brought on by exercise. They also consider that it
22 was possible that he was administered a fatal dose of
23 toxin whilst out running by having a liquid sprayed on
24 him or by drinking from a bottle containing a toxin, or
25 by minute injection, or having his mouth covered with

1 a cloth soaked in toxin, with the last two being
2 inherently less likely. As I have said,
3 Mr Perepilichnyy never sought help or to report any
4 attack upon himself.

5 Nonetheless, if such a scenario is postulated, the
6 poison must be one that has not been detected on
7 toxicological tests and one which left no sign at the
8 post mortem examination which was conducted. As to
9 this, the experts identified factors which mean that it
10 is not possible to exclude death by poisoning. There
11 were limited amounts of samples available following the
12 post mortem examination. Some of the samples were of
13 poor quality. There is no universal test for poison and
14 there are a large number of potentially relevant toxins,
15 some are very rare and some have little known
16 properties. Some may be very hard to detect and some
17 can go undetected at post mortem. They consider that
18 there are almost certainly poisons the properties of
19 which are unknown, which will not therefore have been
20 tested for in this case, as well as some known poisons
21 that were not tested for. We do not know the symptoms
22 or toxicology of every potential poison that may be used
23 and some poisons will degrade and disappear over time in
24 urine or blood.

25 The experts have also identified certain poisons

1 that have not been eliminated in this case for a variety
2 of reasons. These include cyanide, azides, etorphine
3 and phosphide, there are also highly toxic animal
4 poisons that were not tested for, in the case of
5 organophosphorous compounds, including nerve agents, the
6 expected symptoms which are described as a cholinergic
7 crisis do not fit with those Mr Perepilichnyy is
8 reported to have suffered.

9 Professor Ferner and Dr Rice consider that it is not
10 likely that a nerve agent, including novichoks, was
11 administered. Not only do the symptoms not readily fit,
12 but they also cited the difficulties of obtaining,
13 handling and administering it. Albeit that those
14 difficulties can, of course, be overcome.

15 It is not necessary to assess each individual poison
16 because I cannot be satisfied as a matter of certainty
17 from the toxicology evidence that Mr Perepilichnyy was
18 not killed by a poison which has not been detected.
19 Although many poisons have been tested for, and the
20 blood and urine samples have not revealed the presence
21 of any toxin, it is always possible that something has
22 not been identified and even if all known poisons could
23 be excluded, there is the possibility of a novel poison
24 going undetected.

25 As part of the overall picture I am left to weigh up

1 factors, including the possibility of clandestine
2 administration of a poison that has not been detected,
3 the likelihood of the use of either a delayed-action
4 poison or administration on or shortly before the run,
5 the absence of prior symptoms and the large amounts of
6 toxicological work that has been completed. This
7 includes the work by Dr Perry, testing for a range of
8 potentially toxic chemicals, including medications,
9 testing for heavy metals and anions, testing for
10 radioactive materials, and mass spectrometry work.

11 Dr Black tested samples of Mr Perepilichnyy's urine
12 and hair for aluminium, concluded that the concentration
13 of elements in the hair and urine all fell within normal
14 levels. Whilst the coverage can never be complete,
15 a lot of work has been carried out without positive
16 findings. There is a complete absence of any positive
17 evidence that a poison was administered to
18 Mr Perepilichnyy.

19 We know from Mr Elias's evidence that shortly before
20 his collapse Mr Perepilichnyy was not only still
21 running, but was trying to run up a steep hill. No one
22 was seen to administer a poison to him after that. The
23 opportunity to have done so was extremely limited.
24 Mr Perepilichnyy never telephoned for help. He became
25 acutely ill and died very quickly. Professor Ferner

1 accepted that questions of the likelihood of different
2 modes of administration were matters for me.

3 In this case, where Mr Perepilichnyy was apparently
4 struck down suddenly, unless he ingested a poison
5 thinking he was ingesting something else, it is
6 difficult to conceive of scenarios where, for example,
7 it was administered on his run. Before that he appears
8 to have been at home with his family, save for a short
9 journey to PC World. Nothing unusual was reported on
10 that trip but if this was a fast-acting poison
11 sufficient to kill him quickly, no symptoms were
12 reported or appear to have been apparent until the end
13 of his run. That would suggest not only clandestine
14 administration, but delayed-action or state-dependent
15 poisons.

16 Dr Rice said that taking into account the totality
17 of the evidence he had seen, which was not
18 comprehensive, assuming a delayed or fast-acting poison,
19 the means of administration available, the signs and
20 symptoms and lack of pathological findings and the
21 toxicology testing which had been done, then on balance
22 he did not consider that it was a poisoning, but rather
23 a sudden cardiac death. That was his judgment only, and
24 he did think that poisoning could be excluded with
25 certainty. He reiterated that opinion in his evidence

1 to me in April 2018. He was an impressive witness. It
2 is right to acknowledge Dr Rice's very particular
3 experience and expertise. He is chief medical officer
4 at the defence, science and technology laboratory at
5 Porton Down. He is a pathologist by training and has
6 become a specialist, mainly in the medical and
7 toxicological effects of biological and chemical
8 weapons.

9 As I have said, I am satisfied that Mr Perepilichnyy
10 was given sorrel to eat on 10 November 2012 by his wife
11 and that she ate some of the soup containing it. It is
12 right to acknowledge that sorrel has not been positively
13 identified in his stomach contents, where no plant
14 material was found, or in his digestive tract by
15 Dr Branch, a paleoecologist, the study of fossilised
16 plant and animal remains, and head of archaeology,
17 geography and environmental science at the University of
18 Reading.

19 Although Dr Branch's original report suggested that
20 sorrel had probably been found in the duodenum and
21 ileum, by comparing the plant material under the
22 microscope with leaves from a jar of sorrel he was
23 given, he is not a specialist in microscopic analysis,
24 and even the laboratory at Kew could not identify it on
25 that basis. Dr Branch said that he had compared the

1 plant material he extracted from the duodenum and ileum
2 with leaves from the jar of sorrel, and concluded that
3 it was probably sorrel. However, his comparison was
4 a basic visual examination with the absence of
5 identifying features being the main reason to link the
6 two. He also relied on what he was told that
7 Mr Perepilichnyy had eaten for lunch.

8 In oral evidence he accepted that he could go no
9 further than to say he identified plant material with no
10 particular identifying features, just as the sorrel in
11 the jar did not have any, and that if Mr Perepilichnyy
12 had eaten sorrel, then it could be sorrel.

13 The plant material that Dr Branch extracted was sent
14 to Kew for DNA testing. However, they could not extract
15 sufficient DNA from the samples for comparison purposes.

16 In the meantime, sorrel was not positively
17 identified on mass spectrometry of samples of the
18 contents of the stomach or digestive tract, despite
19 comparing it to the chemical composition of the sorrel
20 in the control jar. Whilst the absence of quercetin
21 glycoside, a constituent of sorrel, in the samples might
22 be explained by its having been broken down in the
23 digestive system, Dr Kite, a senior chemist and
24 laboratory manager at Kew Gardens, would still expect
25 a component part of that compound, quercetin, to have

1 remained present in the stomach contents if
2 Mr Perepilichnyy had consumed sorrel. He thought it
3 unlikely that quercetin would be broken down further.
4 No quercetin was identified.

5 That, however, is not an end of the matter, because
6 Mr Perepilichnyy is known to have vomited several times
7 as Mr Walsh gave mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. And much
8 of his stomach contents and the beginning of his
9 duodenal contents were washed out with either a hose or
10 sponge by Dr Ratcliffe, the first pathologist.

11 In addition, pieces of plant material were extracted
12 by Dr Branch which were not identifiable. If any sorrel
13 was left in the stomach or intestinal samples, as
14 Dr Kite indicated, it may have been below the level that
15 would have been detected in mass spectrometry. Finally
16 the rate at which food passes through the digestive
17 tract cannot readily be predicted and so it is not clear
18 where it would most likely have been present in
19 Mr Perepilichnyy's stomach or gut.

20 From the alternative perspective, in my judgment it
21 would be very surprising indeed if Mrs Perepilichnaya
22 had not used sorrel as she said. I am satisfied that
23 she did use it when she made the soup and that she
24 consumed some of the soup which contained sorrel without
25 ill effects.

1 That leaves the issue of Gelsemium and the testing
2 done in the laboratory at Kew Gardens. I have heard
3 detailed evidence about the mass spectrometry testing
4 carried out at Kew from Dr Kite and from
5 Professor Cowan, a pharmaceutical toxicologist with
6 expertise in mass spectrometry. By the conclusion of
7 that evidence it was clear that no compound from the
8 Gelsemium species, or indeed any identifiable plant
9 toxin, had been found in Mr Perepilichnyy's stomach or
10 in any other sample from his gut, blood or urine.

11 I do not need to rehearse why there was a widely
12 reported link between a compound found in
13 Mr Perepilichnyy's stomach and the Gelsemium species.
14 As a result of tests he has carried out, Dr Kite is
15 satisfied beyond reasonable doubt that the compound in
16 question, originally thought to have the same atomic
17 weight and molecular formula as Gelsemicine, amongst
18 other compounds, $C_{20}H_{26}N_2O_4$ was in fact a cluster of two
19 molecules with half the atomic weight and therefore in
20 fact of molecular formula $C_{10}H_{13}NO_2$. That means that
21 the compound in question is, after all, entirely
22 unrelated to Gelsemicine or any of the other four
23 compounds from the Gelsemium species listed in the
24 Dictionary of Natural Products, or indeed the more
25 recently discovered Scotanamine A.

1 Professor Cowan agreed with Dr Kite's analysis that
2 the compound was a cluster of two smaller ones. I am
3 satisfied that the unidentified compound in
4 Mr Perepilichnyy's stomach that has been the subject of
5 so much attention in these proceedings, can be assigned
6 the molecular formula $C_{10}H_{13}NO_2$. This has nothing to do
7 with Gelsemicine or Scotanamine A.

8 As to the positive identification of the compound,
9 Dr Kite is satisfied that it is an acetyl derivative of
10 tyramine. Tyramine is widely distributed and, he
11 thought, present in cheese and meat. Professor Cowan
12 accepted that conclusion. So do I.

13 In any event, the presence of an unidentified
14 compound in the stomach would not be surprising.
15 Dr Kite found over 300 compounds in Mr Perepilichnyy's
16 stomach which he did not go on positively to identify.
17 That does not mean that they could not be identified,
18 just that they were not identified and that number is
19 quite a low one for biological material. For example in
20 the average plant Dr Kite would typically expect to see
21 500 to 1,000 unidentified compounds or even more. The
22 important point is that no matches were made to any
23 known plant toxins from the Kew spectral library or
24 standard databases.

25 Dr Kite said there would likely be compounds in the

1 stomach that he would not know, and which could well be
2 a common stomach compound. Professor Ferner was sure
3 that was a possibility, but professed no particular
4 expertise. Dr Rice considered that it was almost
5 certainly the case that with sophisticated mass
6 spectrometry techniques it would not immediately be
7 possible to identify compounds in the stomach and
8 intestine. As with many aspects of the evidence in this
9 Inquest, this does not exclude with certainty any
10 possibility of Mr Perepilichnyy having ingested an
11 unidentified plant toxin, or one that had degraded by
12 the time his body samples were tested.

13 However, there is no basis on which to make
14 a positive finding that Mr Perepilichnyy's stomach
15 contained a poison.

16 For the sake of completeness, I unhesitatingly
17 accept Dr Kite's evidence that some findings in the
18 urine samples were of no significant. They are at such
19 low level they were, for example, indistinguishable from
20 electronic noise.

21 Dr Black found an unidentified compound in one of
22 the urine samples, but the presence of an unidentified
23 peak is not suggested to be suspicious of itself. I am
24 left with the absence of any positive identification of
25 a toxin, set against the scientific possibility that

1 there could have been one there.

2 11. Buzzfeed article.

3 During the course of the hearing in June 2017,
4 an online news organisation, BuzzFeed, released
5 an article which they reported that according to two US
6 intelligence officials, a highly classified report on
7 Russian State assassinations was compiled for the US
8 Congress by the office of the director of national
9 intelligence, ODNI, in 2016.

10 It was said to have asserted with high confidence
11 that Mr Perepilichnyy's murder was sanctioned by
12 President Putin. Buzzfeed also reported that US spies
13 said that they had passed MI6 high grade intelligence
14 indicating that Mr Perepilichnyy was likely
15 "assassinated on direct orders from Putin or people
16 close to him" and lambasted the British police for their
17 botched investigation. MI6 officers were silenced,
18 however, because according to a US intelligence official
19 "their efforts to publicly declare that Perepilichnyy
20 was assassinated on British soil had deeper political
21 implications".

22 It was reported that the British Government was
23 anxious not to inflame diplomatic tensions with Russia
24 and was suppressing "explosive intelligence that
25 Mr Perepilichnyy was assassinated on Putin's orders".

1 A senior US intelligence official is quoted as saying:

2 "We strongly believe that Perepilichnyy was
3 assassinated on direct orders from Putin or people close
4 to him."

5 I asked BuzzFeed for any material relevant to
6 Mr Perepilichnyy's death. The request was declined on
7 the grounds of journalistic privilege. I have
8 investigated these allegations with the British and
9 American governments. In my open PII judgment
10 I explained the investigations I had undertaken. The US
11 Government's response that I was able to make public and
12 that I was satisfied that the suggestion about the USG
13 (United States government) reporting raised in the
14 BuzzFeed article was incorrect. In fact the report that
15 I saw referred to media reports that Mr Perepilichnyy
16 was assassinated, but with no USG reporting about the
17 death.

18 Since the BuzzFeed article appeared, Mr Skripal was
19 reportedly poisoned by a Russian nerve agent in
20 Salisbury and the British Government has pointed the
21 finger squarely at the Russian government without any
22 apparent reluctance. This does not accord with the
23 suggestion that they were at the same time suppressing
24 "explosive intelligence" in this case so as not to
25 inflame tensions with Russia.

1 Stories from anonymous sources said to be connected
2 with law enforcement and intelligence agencies attract
3 attention for obvious reasons and are always newsworthy.
4 Sometimes they can be difficult to assess. However, the
5 motivation here for an alleged cover up does not
6 withstand scrutiny and has been undermined by events
7 which took place after the article appeared.

8 12. Overall findings.

9 State agents or criminals from one country obviously
10 have committed offences, including offences of murder
11 and serious violence, in other countries. If the
12 background includes a very substantial fraud, those
13 involved may have considerable financial resources
14 available to them with which to try and protect the
15 proceeds, and their own positions, if they are under
16 threat. It is possible that they might resort to
17 violence in the process of doing so. There is also no
18 doubt that increasingly sophisticated methods are being
19 devised with which to kill people. The nerve agent used
20 in Salisbury is recent proof of that. And it is
21 possible for one person to poison another person, and
22 for the means by which they did so not to be detected.

23 There is no direct evidence that
24 Alexander Perepilichnyy was murdered, let alone by who.
25 None at all. Instead, I have to weigh up the available

1 circumstantial evidence to see if it is possible and
2 safe to come to an overall conclusion as to the cause of
3 his death. I must have in mind all the various factors
4 that have emerged in the evidence, different directions
5 in which they may point and their competing strength.
6 The evidence must receive the most careful and anxious
7 scrutiny. Any suggestion that someone has been murdered
8 has to be examined in this painstaking way, because of
9 the value we put on human life. Proper investigations
10 also have a deterrent value where crime is concerned.

11 If Mr Perepilichnyy was murdered, it is safe to say
12 that he must have been poisoned in some way.
13 Nonetheless there is no evidence of any act of
14 administration. No one says they saw anything of that
15 kind happen. No sign of it appears on
16 Mr Perepilichnyy's body. Nothing was found at the
17 immediate scene. No one says they saw any
18 reconnaissance of him or his home address in the days
19 leading up to his death, nor is there any trace in his
20 body of any identified poison and no one who had contact
21 with him of any kind came to any harm, including those
22 who dealt with him after he collapsed, one of whom even
23 tasted his vomit. His wife consumed the same soup he
24 had eaten, and she came to no harm. These are obvious
25 but very important points, and they have cumulative

1 value.

2 One possibility to be considered is whether in 2012
3 an undetectable but lethal poison was administered to
4 him which gave rise to no observable symptoms at all
5 before death. If used successfully in this case, it
6 might perhaps obviate the need to use novichoks, which
7 appear not always to cause death and to carry very
8 substantial risks of contamination. The evidence does
9 not suggest that Mr Perepilichnyy had made enemies of
10 a kind and at a level who would be likely themselves
11 have ready access to materials which had been created
12 and then administered so as to kill someone without
13 leaving a trace. I suppose the KOCG might be able to
14 get their hands on something like this, but the
15 impression I have is that the KOCG works in cruder ways.
16 And experience shows that even the best resourced
17 intelligence agencies may find it extremely difficult to
18 murder someone without leaving a trace of the crime and
19 the culprits, so I think that is unlikely.

20 Another possibility is that a less sophisticated
21 poison was administered, and that the poison and the
22 criminals have gone undetected not because of the
23 technical ability of those involved and the extremely
24 high quality of the material used, but because of
25 shortcomings in the investigation. In my judgment this

1 is also unlikely. I think it unlikely that what would
2 otherwise be more direct evidence that Mr Perepilichnyy
3 was murdered should in combination have fallen through
4 the cracks, that householders, for example, who were not
5 interviewed at the time, and who have not since come
6 forward, might have witnessed strangers in the area in
7 the days leading up to the death, or that they might
8 have witnessed Mr Perepilichnyy engaged in
9 an altercation of some kind with someone who was
10 administering a poison to him very shortly before his
11 death and which all the testing has failed to discover.

12 I accept that there are also gaps in the evidence we
13 have of Mr Perepilichnyy's communications, and about his
14 finances. We do not now have every message that he sent
15 or received. But in what we do have, or know about,
16 which is very considerable, there is nothing to suggest
17 that any threat had been made to him in nature, content,
18 and timing which could reasonably be said to connect
19 directly with his death. It may not be possible to rule
20 out a particular factual possibility when considered in
21 isolation, but it may become much less likely if it is
22 looked at against the background of all the evidence
23 which has now emerged.

24 Mr Perepilichnyy had on his own account become
25 involved with the proceeds of the fraud using the stolen

1 Hermitage companies. He also appears to have lost money
2 for some people. He had become involved in the Swiss
3 investigation. I am not aware of any other conceivable
4 motive, but there were on any view a number of powerful
5 people who had reason to be hostile to him. Threats
6 were made. But as at the time of his death, the Swiss
7 investigation had not reached a crisis point. He was
8 not due, for example, to give evidence the next day, or
9 on an arranged date, at important criminal or civil
10 proceedings. Whilst Mr Perepilichnyy might have thought
11 it wise to take out a large amount of life insurance, no
12 one could have possibly communicated to him any credible
13 suggestion that he was in imminent danger. That would
14 be wholly inconsistent with travelling openly to Paris
15 as planned and then taking no extra steps to protect him
16 or his family, either when he was away or on his return.
17 Leaving his house, for example, and taking his own
18 daughter with him without any precautions at all on the
19 very afternoon that he died.

20 In the final submissions made on behalf of
21 Hermitage, it was suggested that although there was not
22 sufficient evidence to justify a positive conclusion of
23 unlawful killing:

24 "The possibility of poisoning cannot be completely
25 excluded."

1 I think it is important to underline that that is
2 how Mr Browder's lawyers put the matter at the
3 conclusion of all of the evidence, even if he himself
4 would put it more confidently. Having given the matter
5 the most careful consideration, I do not think that
6 I can completely eliminate all possibility that he was
7 poisoned, although I do regard that as unlikely on all
8 the evidence I have heard.

9 In my judgment once the focus is directed towards
10 the actual circumstances of Mr Perepilichnyy's death, it
11 becomes clear that there really is no direct evidence
12 that he was unlawfully killed, and nor is there any
13 compelling circumstantial evidence to establish that it
14 happened.

15 When carefully examined, the circumstances really
16 amount to speculation and guesswork. There is also
17 an absence of the positive evidence of various kinds
18 that would be expected if he had been unlawfully killed.
19 It is unlikely that such evidence would all have been
20 missed or overlooked, or alternatively that a perfect
21 crime was committed using the most advanced resources of
22 the Russian State.

23 In my judgment the probability is that he died of
24 natural causes, and that he was not unlawfully killed.
25 It has been suggested that if I cannot exclude all

1 possibility of him being poisoned, then I could not
2 conclude that he died of SADS, because that only comes
3 into operation when all other possibilities have been
4 excluded.

5 On the particular facts here, I do not accept that
6 submission. Unlawful killing and natural causes are
7 necessarily connected in this case. His death must be
8 attributable to one of them. As unlawful killing
9 becomes less likely, so natural causes becomes more
10 likely. As natural causes becomes more likely, so
11 unlawful killing becomes less likely. I do not have to
12 find positive evidence of SADS. In many cases there
13 will be no positive evidence of it. I am satisfied that
14 Mr Perepilichnyy was unlikely to have been poisoned,
15 taking into account all the evidence that I have heard.
16 Given the overall unlikelihood that he was unlawfully
17 killed, and by poisoning, I am satisfied on the evidence
18 I have heard that I can properly and safely conclude
19 that it is more likely than not that he died from
20 natural causes, namely sudden arrhythmic death syndrome.

21 I shall read out the short form record of Inquest.

22 The following findings and determinations are made:
23 name of the deceased: Alexander Vladimirovich
24 Perepilichnyy. Medical cause of death: sudden
25 arrhythmic death syndrome.

1 Alexander Perepilichnyy died after collapsing near
2 to Hillcrest Cottage on Granville Road, St George's Hill
3 Estate in Weybridge, Surrey, at about 4.40 pm on
4 10 November 2012, following a cardiac arrhythmia, whilst
5 out jogging. Attempts at resuscitation by passers by
6 and then by paramedics were unsuccessful and
7 cardiopulmonary resuscitation was stopped at about
8 5.37 pm.

9 Conclusion of the coroner as to death: natural
10 causes.

11 Then there are various personal particulars which
12 I have filled in. Thank you.

13 Next, I have to consider whether or not to make
14 a report with a view to preventing future deaths. My
15 duty to write such a report arises in the circumstances
16 set out in paragraph 7(1) of schedule 5 to the Coroners
17 and Justice Act 2009, which states:

18 "(1) where (a) a senior coroner has been conducting
19 an investigation under this part into a person's death
20 (b) anything revealed by the investigation gives rise to
21 a concern that circumstances creating a risk of other
22 deaths will occur or will continue to exist in the
23 future and (c) in the coroner's opinion action should be
24 taken to prevent the occurrence or continuation of such
25 circumstances, or to eliminate or reduce the risk of

1 death created by such circumstances, the coroner must
2 report the matter to a person who the coroner believes
3 may have the power to take such action."

4 "(2) a person to whom the senior coroner makes the
5 report under this paragraph must give the senior
6 coroner a written response to it.

7 "(3) a copy of a report under this paragraph and of
8 the response to it must be sent to the chief coroner."

9 Regulation 28.3 of the Coroners Investigations
10 Regulation 2013 provides that I may not write a report
11 until I have:

12 "Considered all the documents, evidence and
13 information that in the opinion of the coroner are
14 relevant to the investigation."

15 I have now done that, and I have received
16 submissions addressed to this issue from two interested
17 persons.

18 Hermitage submit that there were a number of
19 failings in the investigation by Surrey Police which
20 give rise to a risk of future deaths.

21 Surrey Police submit that there were no such
22 failings.

23 I do not have concerns that circumstances creating
24 a risk of other deaths will occur, or will continue to
25 exist in the future. In the circumstances, I do not

1 think that action should be taken to eliminate or reduce
2 that risk in the future under paragraph 7(1)(c) of
3 schedule 5. Surrey Police have a policy that all sudden
4 or untimely deaths should be treated as suspicious until
5 shown otherwise and if there is the slightest doubt as
6 to the circumstances of death it should be treated as
7 suspicious.

8 Amongst other actions, that would trigger a forensic
9 post mortem examination. It was judged by a detective
10 chief inspector who attended the scene in this case that
11 it was not a suspicious death. However, he accepted
12 that had he known about Mr Perepilichnyy's involvement
13 with the Swiss authorities and the money laundering
14 investigation, then, coupled with greater knowledge
15 about poisons gained subsequently from media coverage in
16 other cases, he would have treated the death as
17 suspicious. This was on any view an unusual case, and
18 in my judgment a sudden death without signs of injury
19 would now be liable to be treated with considerable
20 caution by any police force and not least by Surrey
21 Police, given the attention that has since been directed
22 towards this case.

23 The importance of making proper background checks
24 about the deceased is self-evidently important.

25 I have considered very carefully the other

1 criticisms of the Surrey Police investigation raised by
2 the interested persons in their questioning of witnesses
3 and in their submissions. These relate to individual
4 decisions in the circumstances of this particular case,
5 many of them taken six years ago. As a result, I am not
6 concerned and I do not think that circumstances exist
7 which create a risk that other deaths will occur in the
8 future by reason of how investigating officers would go
9 about their work now in a case like this, or in a case
10 remotely resembling it.

11 I entirely accept that proper investigations have
12 a deterrent value. I am satisfied that there is a much
13 greater public awareness in 2018 than hitherto that
14 a death without an obviously apparent violent cause
15 might nonetheless be suspicious and I am sure that this
16 will already be appreciated by those charged with the
17 duty of investigating possible crime.

18 Mr Skelton, finally I said at the beginning that
19 I wanted to thank all the interested persons, and
20 particularly the legal representatives.

21 I repeat that now, but I do in particular want to
22 thank yourself, my own team, yourself, Mr Wastell and
23 Mr Suter for the unstinting assistance that you have
24 given me and, I have no doubt, everybody else concerned
25 in these proceedings.

1 Thank you all very much indeed.

2 (2.41 pm)

3 (The Hearing concluded)

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