

Purpose

1. The purpose of the Independent Review is to:
 - a. consider the findings of the Court of Appeal in *R. v Akle & Anor* [2021] EWCA Crim 1879 (10 December 2021); and
 - b. make recommendations to the Attorney General in the light of those findings, including as to the SFO's policies, practices, procedures, and related culture.

Objectives

2. The review will consider and provide recommendations in relation to the following matters:
 - a. What happened in this case and why? In particular, the review should assess the two key failings identified in the judgment:
 - i. what occurred as regards SFO contact with third-parties and why; and
 - ii. why did the SFO disclosure failures identified in the Court of Appeal judgment occur?
 - b. What implications, if any, do the failings highlighted by this case have for the policies, practices, procedures and related culture of the SFO?
 - c. What changes are necessary to address the failings highlighted by the judgment and any wider issues of SFO policies, practices, procedures or related culture identified by the reviewer?

Governance and methodology

3. The Independent Reviewer will be appointed by the Attorney General.
4. The Independent Reviewer will be supported by a small team agreed between them and the Attorney General (the "Support Team").
5. The Independent Reviewer or, at their direction, a member the Support Team, will examine all appropriate material held by the SFO which, in the view of the Independent Reviewer, is relevant to the Review.
6. The Independent Reviewer or, at their direction, a member the Support Team, will interview any person, who in the view of the Independent Reviewer, can provide information relevant to the Review.
7. The Independent Reviewer or, at their direction, a member the Support Team, will update the Attorney General on progress of the review at the beginning of each month.

Report

8. The Independent Reviewer will provide a written report to the Attorney General. The report should provide recommendations on changes, or signpost how they believe the matters set out above should be addressed. Any recommendations should be evidence-based and proportionate, with consideration given to their implementation.

Timing

9. The report, including any recommendations of the review, will be submitted to the Attorney General by the end of May 2022. The Attorney General will provide the findings of the review and government response to Parliament.