

PRESS RELEASE

INQUIRY INTO HYPONATRAEMIA-RELATED DEATHS

In particular into the events surrounding and following the deaths of

Adam Strain, Lucy Crawford and Raychel Ferguson

Following a meeting with the PSNI on 14 December 2004 the Inquiry was formally requested by the police to defer its investigation of the circumstances surrounding the death of Lucy Crawford until such time as the police investigation into her death was complete. This request was made in a [letter dated 12 January 2005](#). At that time the police also said:

“As regards the deaths of Adam Strain and Raychel Ferguson police have established no links in the cases from our perspective and there are currently no plans to investigate either deaths. We therefore can have no objection to your proceeding with those cases.”

On that basis and with the agreement of all the relevant parties the Inquiry has made plans to hold public hearings from 3 October 2005 onwards at which all the issues other than Lucy’s death will be considered.

Unfortunately the Inquiry has now received a further [letter, dated 26 July 2005](#), from the police asking that these hearings should be postponed because the police have started formal investigations into the deaths of Adam and Raychel. Obviously the Inquiry respects the responsibilities and role of the police but the timing of this request, so close to the start of the hearings and with so much preparatory work done, is a matter of considerable disappointment. The Inquiry will now be seeking the views of the various interested parties. Specifically it will consider whether in the light of the position it has adopted in relation to Lucy’s death, there is any option but to follow the same course in respect of Adam and Raychel. If necessary a public hearing to hear the various views and representations will be held on a date to be confirmed, most probably in August 2005. In the meantime the Inquiry will try to obtain specific information about the likely timescale of the investigation and of any subsequent DPP consideration of police files.