

MC7



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COPY LETTER CC MR KERNIGHAN TO MP MR VIGGERS RE COSTS

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Your ref:

Our ref: CC/BDS/smg/133.07

8 May 2007

Mr Peter Viggers MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

Dear Mr Viggers

Your letter dated 7 February 2007, together with subsequent letters regarding the investigation at the Gosport War Memorial Hospital, refer.

I have been briefed by the Senior Investigating Officer in relation to the costs incurred during Operation Rochester and write to update you in turn.

Ninety two reports of suspicious death at Gosport War Memorial Hospital between September 2002 and December 2006 were investigated by Hampshire Constabulary. Her Majesty's Coroner is currently considering inquests in respect of ten of those cases. All available medical records were seized and examined by medical experts and 119 family members of the deceased were kept up to date with the investigation's progress.

Ten full case files comprising 368 witness statements, half of which were taken by enquiry team members, were considered by the Crown Prosecution Service. On the basis of the information it was determined that the evidence did not satisfy the two-fold prosecution test in terms of evidential sufficiency and public interest. As a result, there have been no criminal prosecutions of healthcare staff.

During the period of the operation, Hampshire Constabulary staff were not seconded to the investigation team on a full time basis and, as a result, the below staffing related costs are estimates. The total cost of the operation was £1.275m and included:

Police and Police staff basic salaries (15 staff variously deployed)	- £642,000
Transport costs	- £61,000
Expert witness fees	- £298,000
Accommodation and conference facilities	- £18,000
Information Technology	- £24,000
Legal services	- £78,000
Subsistence	- £6,000
Overtime	- £61,000

The average cost of each one of the 92 investigations was therefore £13,860 which, by comparison with other investigations following a death, is relatively low.

I am also advised that each member of the enquiry team worked an average of 5.4 days on each of the 92 cases investigated.

Yours sincerely

Paul Kernaghan
Chief Constable