

Gosport War Memorial Hospital deaths – letter from Mark Hoban MP

MoJ contribution to DH reply

In August 2007, following the coroner's report to the Secretary of State under section 15 of the Coroners Act 1988, a meeting was held between the coroner and representatives of Hampshire County Council, Hampshire Constabulary, the Ministry of Justice and the Department of Health to discuss a number of issues surrounding the deaths at Gosport War Memorial Hospital. At that meeting the Department of Health's view was that a public inquiry into the deaths was unnecessary because the doctor at the centre of allegations about improper conduct was under investigation by the General Medical Council. Inquests could take place once those investigations were complete. Moreover, the Department of Health felt that a public inquiry would be of limited value, given the passage of time since the events in question, and other enquiries and investigations which had been undertaken.

The Secretary of State subsequently gave a direction under section 15 of the Act for inquests to be held into the seven deaths that were reported by the coroner. A report in respect of an eighth death is currently under consideration.