



BRIEFING PAPER

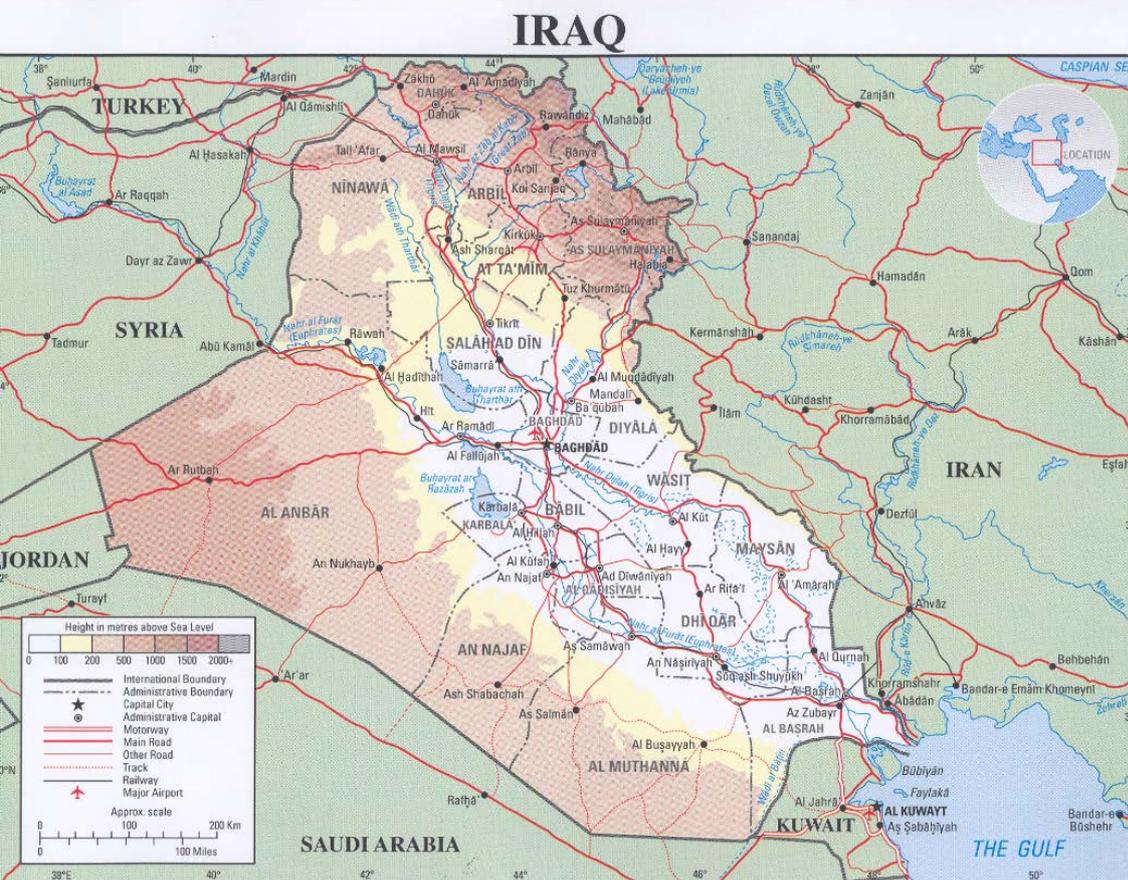
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Chilcot Inquiry

By Ben Smith

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Summary

The Iraq Inquiry, chaired by Sir John Chilcot, was set up in 2009 to look at decision-making in relation to the invasion of Iraq and was originally expected to publish its report quite quickly. There have been repeated delays, caused by the broad scope of the inquiry, arguments about the disclosure of documents, and the so-called Maxwellisation process, whereby individuals criticised in the report get an opportunity to respond before publication. Some hoped that it would be published before the 2015 general election but that did not happen. In October 2015 the inquiry chairman said that it would be published in June or July 2016. In May the date of 6 July 2016 was finally set for the report's publication.

1. The establishment of the inquiry

There were persistent calls for an inquiry into the initiation and conduct of the Iraq war, starting when troops were still in the country.¹ The government's policy was that there would be an inquiry when the time was right, after troops had withdrawn. After Gordon Brown replaced Mr Blair in Number 10 in June 2007, pressure for an inquiry continued and an inquiry was announced in June 2009. In his statement on the setting up of the inquiry, the then Prime Minister said that the inquiry would help learn lessons that would strengthen the United Kingdom's democracy, foreign policy and military forces:

I am today announcing the establishment of an independent Privy Counsellor committee of inquiry which will consider the period from summer 2001, before military operations began in March 2003, and our subsequent involvement in Iraq right up to the end of July this year. The inquiry is essential because it will ensure that, by learning lessons, we strengthen the health of our democracy, our diplomacy and our military.

The inquiry will, I stress, be fully independent of Government. Its scope is unprecedented. It covers an eight-year period, including the run-up to the conflict and the full period of conflict and reconstruction. The committee of inquiry will have access to the fullest range of information, including secret information. In other words, its investigation can range across all papers, all documents and all material. It can ask for any British document to be brought before it, and for any British citizen to appear. No British document and no British witness will be beyond the scope of the inquiry. I have asked the members of the committee to ensure that the final report will be able to disclose all but the most sensitive information—that is, all information except that which is essential to our national security.²

1.1 Legal basis

The inquiry is non-statutory; it was not set up under the Inquiries Act 2005 but is a Privy Counsellor inquiry commissioned by the then Prime Minister, although it operates independently of government. So its functioning is not determined by the provisions of that act and was largely left up to the committee and its Chair, Sir John Chilcot, to decide. The inquiry set out its rules in a number of protocols, which are available on the Inquiry's website.³

David Miliband, the then Foreign Secretary, said in an Opposition Day debate on the inquiry, that the government had not chosen to use the Inquiries Act because that legislation was a framework for inquiries to mediate between competing interests:

The right hon. and learned Gentleman knows well that the Inquiries Act 2005 sets out what is effectively a quasi-judicial procedure that may be appropriate for an inquiry that is set out to mediate between competing interests, but that is not what this inquiry is about. That Act also assumes legal representation for all parties concerned and restrictions on who may be questioned. For those reasons, among others, we chose the inquiry.⁴

1.2 Terms of reference

The terms of reference of the inquiry were described by Chairman Sir John Chilcot when the inquiry was launched:

¹ For more information on the calls for an inquiry and other comparable investigations, see the Library standard note: [Iraq: calls for an inquiry](#), June 2007

² HC Deb 15 June 2009, c21-38

³ Iraq Inquiry website, [Background](#)

⁴ [HC Deb 24 Jun 2009, c817](#)

Our terms of reference are very broad, but the essential points, as set out by the Prime Minister and agreed by the House of Commons, are that this is an Inquiry by a committee of Privy Counsellors. It will consider the period from the summer of 2001 to the end of July 2009, embracing the run-up to the conflict in Iraq, the military action and its aftermath. We will therefore be considering the UK's involvement in Iraq, including the way decisions were made and actions taken, to establish, as accurately as possible, what happened and to identify the lessons that can be learned. Those lessons will help ensure that, if we face similar situations in future, the government of the day is best equipped to respond to those situations in the most effective manner in the best interests of the country.⁵

The claim that the terms of reference were “agreed by the House of Commons” is maybe contentious. David Cameron complained in his response to the statement that, unlike the Franks Inquiry, the Chilcot Inquiry's terms of reference had not been debated on a substantive motion by the House:

Finally, are not the limitations of this inquiry reflected in the way the House of Commons is being treated by the Government over this issue? Before the Franks inquiry—we are told that this is a Franks-style inquiry—there was a proper debate on the terms of reference of the inquiry on a substantive motion in the House of Commons. This time – *[Interruption.]* The Prime Minister laughs, but this time there is just a statement and no debate, even though last Wednesday he promised us a new era of parliamentary accountability and democratic renewal. What happened to that? It has not lasted even a week.⁶

1.3 Membership

The membership of the inquiry is the following:

- [Sir John Chilcot \(Chairman\)](#)
- [Sir Lawrence Freedman](#)
- [Sir Martin Gilbert](#)
- [Sir Roderic Lyne](#)
- [Baroness Usha Prashar](#)⁷

In the June 2009 Opposition Day debate on the inquiry, William Hague, then Shadow Foreign Secretary, spoke to a motion that said that the membership of the Committee should be wider and more diverse than the Government had proposed.⁸

⁵ Iraq Inquiry website: [About the Inquiry](#)

⁶ HC Deb [15 June 2009, c26](#)

⁷ Iraq Inquiry website: [Committee members](#). Click on the links above to see biographies

⁸ HC Deb [24 June 2009, c800](#)

2. Controversies

In 2009 there was disagreement about how public the evidence to the inquiry should be. In his launch statement, Gordon Brown said that the inquiry would hear evidence in private:

Like the Franks inquiry, this inquiry will take account of national security considerations—for example, what might damage or reduce our military capability in the future—and evidence will be heard in private. I believe that that will also ensure that evidence given by serving and former ministers, military officers and officials is as full and candid as possible.⁹

The Public Administration Committee published a report in June of that year disagreeing with that decision:

The need for effective accountability and public confidence demands that the inquiry be conducted as openly and publicly as possible. We recommend that the Government reconsiders its decision to conduct the Iraq inquiry in private.¹⁰

The committee also called for the inquiry to be divided into two halves, one on the original decision to go to war and the other to deal with the conduct of the war and its aftermath. It also said that Parliament should have been involved in the setting up of the inquiry and in setting its remit.

There has been comment about the release or otherwise of sensitive documents to the inquiry. Cabinet Office minister Francis Maude set out the government's position on the release of information in February 2011:

The protocol between the Iraq Inquiry and HMG regarding documents and other written and electronic information sets out the arrangements under which the Inquiry may request that the Government declassify documents for the Inquiry's public use and the grounds on which such requests may be refused. Documents that the Government have declassified are available on the Inquiry's website. The majority of the Inquiry's declassification requests has been met. Where no agreement is reached about a form in which the information can be published, it would remain open to the Inquiry to refer, in its report, to the fact that material it would have wished to publish has been withheld from publication.¹¹

2.1 The hearings

The inquiry's first round of hearings began in autumn 2009 and continued into early 2010. After a break for the general election, the inquiry resumed its public hearings in June 2010 for five weeks. The Inquiry held its final round of public hearings between 18 January and 2 February 2011.

The hearings of some salient witnesses and their jobs at the time are listed below. Click on the date to go to the evidence and relevant declassified documents for that day:

Jack Straw MP

Foreign Secretary

[02 February 2011](#)

⁹ [HC Deb 15 June 2009, c23](#)

¹⁰ Public Administration Select Committee [The Iraq Inquiry](#), Ninth Report, HC 721 2008–9,

¹¹ [HC Deb 1 February 2011, c780W](#)

		8 February 2010
Tony Blair MP	Prime Minister	21 January 2011
		29 January 2010
Dr Hans Blix	UN Monitoring Commission	27 July 2010
Eliza Manningham-Buller	Security Service	20 July 2010
Carne Ross	Diplomat at the UN	12 July 2010
Gordon Brown MP	Chancellor of the Exchequer	5 March 2010
Air Chief Marshal Jock Stirrup	Deputy Chief of Defence Staff	1February2010
Elizabeth Wilmshurst	Legal adviser, FCO	26 January 2010
Alistair Campbell	Director of Communications	12 January 2010
Jeremy Greenstock	Diplomat at the UN	27 November 2009

There have been calls for former Prime Minister Tony Blair to be recalled,¹² but these were not acted upon and there are no plans for further hearings.

¹² [HC Deb 1 February 2012, c646W](#)

3. The inquiry report

There was growing controversy throughout 2014 and after as the publication date for the inquiry's report seemed to be repeatedly postponed. There were two main reasons for the delays:

arguments over what documents could be included, particularly sensitive communications between Tony Blair and the then US president, George W Bush, and

the prolonged process of giving those criticised in the report advance notice to allow them to prepare a response.

On 2 February 2011, Sir John Chilcot said:

It is going to take some months deliver the report itself. I don't want to set an artificial deadline on our work at this stage. What I can say is that my colleagues and I want to finish our report as quickly as possible.¹³

An update on the inquiry website explained the delay:

Pulling together and analysing the evidence and identifying the lessons, for a report that covers so wide and complex a range of issues and a time period of some nine years, is a significant task. The Inquiry has advised the Government that it will need until at least summer 2012 to produce a draft report which will do justice to the issues involved. Very considerable progress has already been made, but there is still much to be done.

As well as drafting the report, the Inquiry will need to negotiate the declassification of a significant volume of currently classified material with the Government, to enable this to be quoted in, or published alongside, the Inquiry's report. That process has begun, but there will be a series of further major requests as drafting progresses. The Inquiry has made clear that it will need co-operation from the Government in completing this in a satisfactory and timely manner.¹⁴

Another reason for the delay was the illness of one of the committee members, Sir Martin Gilbert.

3.1 Maxwellisation

Before the report is published, opportunity was given to those criticised in the report to read and respond to those comments. This is known as the 'Maxwellisation process'. It has for some time been standard practice to alert those criticised in inquiry reports either by simple notification, or by showing them the text and giving a chance to respond.

Robert Maxwell took a civil legal action against the Department of Trade and Industry after it had said in a 1969 inquiry report that he was unfit to lead a public company. The judge criticised the inquiry, saying it had damaged his reputation without giving him enough opportunity to respond. Since then, one of the procedures for warning individuals that are criticised has been known as Maxwellisation.

If the inquiry had been set up under the *Inquiries Act 2005*, the procedure would have been different, with a simple warning letter and a reasonable time to reply. The Iraq Inquiry set out its own rules, however, and established its procedures for Maxwellisation in one of the Inquiry's protocols, the [Protocol for witnesses giving evidence to the Iraq Inquiry](#). Paragraph 27 covers evidence from other witnesses:

¹³ Iraq Inquiry website: [Frequently asked questions](#)

¹⁴ [Iraq Inquiry website](#)

Witnesses will not routinely be provided with transcripts of the evidence given in private hearings by other witnesses where they cover similar subject matter. However, in the interests of fairness, where a witness gives evidence which is potentially adverse to or critical of another witness, the Inquiry will disclose relevant extracts of that evidence to the witness in order to permit him or her to respond to it. Where necessary and appropriate, the identity of the maker of the adverse comment may be disclosed. Disclosure will be effected by the witness viewing the relevant part of the transcript at the Inquiry's offices.

Paragraph 30 covers criticism in the Report itself:

If the Inquiry expects to criticise an individual in the final report, that individual will, in accordance with normal practice, be provided with relevant sections of the draft report in order to make any representations on the proposed criticism prior to publication of the final report.

No timescale is given for the representations to be made and it is not entirely clear whether it means that publication must wait until all representations have been made or if individuals should just be given an *opportunity* to respond before publication.

In a 2012 letter to the Prime Minister, Sir John Chilcot said that the inquiry would not write to these people until the middle of 2013 and that the process of gathering individual responses and dealing with them might be quite drawn out.¹⁵

On 15 July 2013, Sir John wrote to David Cameron saying that the Inquiry would begin writing initial notification letters at the end of that month, with further letters containing the substance of the provisional criticisms to follow in October 2013.¹⁶ However, it seems that the process did not begin until late 2014. In October 2014, the Minister for Civil Society, Rob Wilson said: "When declassification has been completed, Maxwellisation can begin."¹⁷

So although the Maxwellisation process has been controversial, it seems that it is not responsible for most of the delay in publication. Far more time appears to have been taken up by arguments about the content of the report and by arguments about the release of documents.

When the individuals have responded to criticisms in the report, it will be submitted to the Prime Minister as soon as possible, although no date has been given for publication.

3.2 Release of documents

A press report suggested in October 2011 that publication might not happen until "much later" than summer 2012. The story attributed the delay to: "Damning criticism of Tony Blair and the way his government led Britain into invading Iraq and continuing rows over the disclosure of secret documents..."¹⁸

The government has denied that it is unduly blocking the release of documents, although there are persistent stories in the press about rows between the Cabinet Office and the Inquiry over the declassification of documents, including private messages from Tony Blair.¹⁹ Civil servants are said to be worried that the revelation of private conversations between the then Prime Minister and US President would do lasting damage to the relations between the UK and the US.

¹⁵ [Letter from Sir John Chilcot to the Prime Minister](#), 13 July 2012

¹⁶ Iraq Inquiry website, [Update on Inquiry Progress - July 2013](#)

¹⁷ [HC Deb 29 Oct 2014 : Column 66WH](#)

¹⁸ "[Iraq war inquiry report delayed](#)", *Guardian*, 16 November 2011

¹⁹ 'Families' anger at Iraq war report delays', *Daily Telegraph*, 27 December 2012

3.3 Freedom of information request

A freedom of information request was lodged by a member of the public concerning some of the documents relevant to the Chilcot Inquiry to which the government responded by deciding to withhold them. Referral to the Information Commissioner resulted in a decision that the Government was entitled to withhold most of the information, to avoid damage to the UK's international relations, policy formation processes and the effective conduct of public affairs.²⁰ The Government was instructed to release one document, however, but lodged another appeal, which has still to be decided.

A campaigner against the war said that the delay is hurtful for the families of those affected:

The report was supposed to be published in 2011, when it was still a very hot potato, but by the time we eventually see it, people might think it was all a long time ago and that it doesn't really matter any more.

I can understand why Mr Blair and a few others don't want things to come out, because there was deceit behind closed doors. But for me and the other families, the delays just keep poking a wound that you're trying to heal. You try to put things in a box, but until this is done and dusted, you can't move on.²¹

3.4 Public Administration Committee

The House of Commons Select Committee on Public Administration has taken a strong interest in the use of inquiries by both the government and by Parliament, and has published two full reports that bear on the conduct of the Iraq Inquiry: [Government by Inquiry \(First Report of Session 2004-05, HC 51-I\)](#), and [Parliamentary Commissions of Inquiry \(Ninth Report of Session 2007-08, HC 473\)](#).²²

In June 2009, the committee held a seminar specifically on the Iraq Inquiry, aiming to explore how the government should conduct the inquiry. The outcome of the seminar contributed to the committee's report on the Iraq Inquiry, published 18 June 2009.²³

On 15 May 2014, Bernard Jenkin MP, Chair of the House of Commons Public Administration Committee, criticised the continued delay in publication. He said:

It's very serious that this report is now at least four years overdue, so we've written to the minister to ask for an explanation as to why these delays have occurred, what is holding up the publication of the report and how these issues are going to be resolved.²⁴

Sir Jeremy Heywood, Cabinet Secretary, was particularly mentioned as being behind the obstruction of the release of records of conversations between Tony Blair and George W Bush. Mr Jenkin said that he might summon Francis Maude, Cabinet Office minister, or the civil servant, to explain the situation:

We may well call for the minister or indeed for the cabinet secretary to come and give us evidence to explain how they're going to sort this out.

²⁰ Information Commissioner's Office, [Freedom of Information Act 2000 \(FOIA\), Decision notice](#), 20 March 2012

²¹ ['Families of Iraq war dead dismayed as Chilcot Inquiry hit by further delays'](#), *Daily Telegraph*, 27 December 2012

²² ['PASC considers the conduct of an Iraq Inquiry'](#), Public Administration Select Committee press release, 11 June 2009.

²³ House of Commons Public Administration Select Committee, [The Iraq Inquiry](#), Ninth Report of Session 2008-09, HC 721 2008-9

²⁴ ['Iraq inquiry delay very serious, says senior Tory'](#), *BBC News Online*, 16 May 2014

3.5 Agreement reached on release of sensitive documents

On 29 May 2014 it was announced that a tentative agreement had been reached on the release for publication of information on communications between Tony Blair and George W Bush. In a letter to Sir Jeremy Heywood, Sir John Chilcot said that agreement had been reached that 'gists or quotes' from the communications would be published, that quotes would be kept to a minimum and that the views of George W Bush would not be reflected.²⁵

Some criticised the agreement. Andrew MacKinlay, who was a Labour MP until 2010 and a member of the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee, said that it was a "bad, bad day for democracy and justice," arguing that the security services and the Establishment had won.²⁶

Others have argued that accounts of the sensitive conversations between Blair and Bush had already been published, for instance in the diaries of Blair's former press secretary Alistair Campbell.²⁷

Publication was still not expected to happen before the end of 2014. William Hague, Leader of the House of Commons, said: "I certainly hope it reports before the general election, but I am not in control of that."²⁸

Philippe Sands, a professor of international law at London University, suggested that party political considerations might be involved in the delay: "Who exactly is responsible for the delay (in the Chilcot report) is unclear, but it is hard to avoid the suspicion that political considerations might have come into play," and argued that publication should now be postponed until after the general election in 2015.

On 8 September 2014, Sir Jeremy Heywood appeared at a one-off evidence session with the House of Commons Public Administration Select Committee, where the Chilcot Inquiry was the subject of some questioning. He declined to say when the report would be published, but said that it would be more open than people thought, revealing things that would not normally come out:

There has been a delay of sorts as we processed tens of thousands of requests for declassification of very complicated and sensitive documents. I don't think that has held up the inquiry. It is a very difficult thing. The controversy around this continues today. It is very important that the whole story is told.

So we have tried our level best to break through normal conventions and the legal requirements and the international relations and the nine different categories that the original protocols suggested might be a reason for not publishing material - we have had to work through all of that in good faith as fast as we possibly can to try and make sure the whole story is laid bare.²⁹

²⁵ [Letter from the Iraq Inquiry to Sir Jeremy Heywood](#), 28 May 2014

²⁶ '[Chilcot inquiry accused of whitewash over letters between Blair and Bush](#)', *Guardian*, 29 May 2014

²⁷ See [Boris trumps Dave with call for report to be published](#), Chris Lamb comment, Iraq Inquiry Digest, 11 May 2014

²⁸ [HC Deb 16 October 2014, c457](#)

²⁹ HoC Public Administration Committee, [Work of the Cabinet Secretary and the Head of the Civil Service](#), 8 September 2014

4. Further delays and the general election

When it was clear that the report would not be coming out in 2014, more controversy broke out. MPs and campaigners feared that publication would be delayed until after the general election in May 2015. In January 2015, the Prime Minister said that he did not control the date of publication; this was up to the inquiry: “It is not within my power to grant the publication of this report. It is independent and under Sir John Chilcot, and the process has to be finished—then the report will be published.”³⁰

However, it was not quite as simple as that. The Inquiry is responsible for the timing of the delivery of the report to the government. But as Lord Wallace of Saltaire, a minister for the Cabinet Office in the House of Lords, said, the government would not publish the report if Sir John Chilcot had not delivered it to them by the end of February 2015:

The Government have taken the decision, as my honourable friend Rob Wilson and I have both said on previous occasions, that if it is submitted after the end of February it would not be appropriate to publish it until after the election because part of the previous Government’s commitment was that there would be time allowed for substantial consultation on and debate of this enormous report when it is published.³¹

However, Lord Dykes thought that the delay was a ‘disgrace’ and could look politically motivated:

I am certainly not blaming my noble friend, and least of all Sir John Chilcot, but is not this continuing delay an utter and total disgrace after so much time has elapsed? Is my noble friend aware that more and more people think that it is some kind of attempt to prolong the agony for Mr Blair facing possible war crimes charges?³²

Former Foreign Secretary Lord Hurd said it was ‘becoming a scandal’:

This has dragged on beyond the questions of mere negligence and forgivable delay; it is becoming a scandal. This is not a matter of trivial importance; it is something to which a large number of people in this country look anxiously for the truth. Is it not time that the Government exerted themselves to make sure that that reasonable demand is met?³³

4.1 Delay until after the election

On 20 January, Sir John Chilcot wrote to the Prime Minister saying that there was ‘no realistic prospect’ of delivering the report before the general election,³⁴ and that the Maxwellisation process was continuing. The letter implied that not all the responses to Maxwellisation letters had been received and that responses would still need to be evaluated. This would take ‘some further months’.

Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg and former shadow Home Secretary both said that the delay was “incomprehensible”.³⁵ The day before the Chilcot letter was published, Sir Richard Ottaway, the Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee, had said that there could be “no justification whatsoever” for the delay.

In April 2015, there were reports that an official close to the inquiry had said that “nobody thinks it will come out this year.” The person said that the inquiry had given up

³⁰ [HC Deb 7 January 2015, c270](#)

³¹ [HL Deb 6 January 2015, c249](#)

³² *Ibid.*

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ [Letter from Sir John Chilcot to David Cameron](#), 20 January 2015

³⁵ [‘Chilcot Inquiry into Iraq war will ‘not report before election’](#), *Independent*, 20 January 2015

trying to speed proceedings once it was clear that the 2015 election deadline would not be met.³⁶

Breaking ranks with the other parties, the Liberal Democrats called in April 2015 for the publication of evidence to the committee to be published immediately.³⁷ That did not happen.

³⁶ 'Long-awaited Chilcot report into Iraq War may not be published until next year', *Daily Telegraph*, 22 April 2015

³⁷ '[Chilcot evidence must be released now, insist Lib Dems](#)', *Guardian*, 25 April 2015

5. Timetable announced, national security checking and ECHR compliance

On 28 October 2015 Sir John Chilcot wrote to the Prime Minister setting out a timetable for publication.³⁸ He said that expected to be able to complete the text of the report in the week of 18 April 2016. After national security checking, the Inquiry and the Prime Minister would be able to agree publication in June or July 2016, according to the letter.

In reply, the Prime Minister said that the families of those who served in Iraq would be disappointed that the report would not be published sooner and asked the inquiry to do what it could to speed up the process.³⁹ He offered more resources if that would help.

5.1 National security checking

Once completed, the text of the report was sent to a team of officials for checking that the content would not damage national security when published. The letter explained that this process was different from that for declassifying material for inclusion in the report.

On checking for national security the Prime Minister said that it had taken two weeks for the Savile Inquiry into the events of Bloody Sunday in Northern Ireland, and that it should take no longer for Chilcot.

On 6 May the Prime Minister wrote to Sir John Chilcot, saying that the security checking had been completed within two weeks, as predicted, and that no redactions had been made.⁴⁰

5.2 Compliance with the ECHR

The report was checked to make sure that it fulfils the government's obligations under Article 2 of the [European Convention on Human Rights](#). This article enshrines the right to life, and the circumstances in which deprivation of life may not imply a contravention of the Article, such as killing someone in self-defence. No derogation from it is permitted 'except in respect of deaths resulting from lawful acts of war'.

The courts have interpreted Article 2 as also imposing an obligation on states to conduct a full, independent and effective investigation if agents of the state have taken a life. In particular, in 2011 the European Court of Human Rights determined that the UK government had a duty under Article 2 to investigate allegations of deaths and ill-treatment involving British service personnel in Iraq in the period 2003-09 (*Al-Skeini and others v UK*, European Court of Human Rights, Grand Chamber, Application no. 55721/07, 7 July 2011). The Court set out that this duty meant that, even in difficult security conditions, all reasonable steps must be taken to ensure that an effective, independent investigation is conducted into alleged breaches of the right to life (para 164). The investigation should also be prompt and open to public scrutiny.

The Chilcot inquiry would not have to meet all the ECHR obligations on its own – individual instances of the use of force are investigated by other inquiries such as the Iraq Historical Allegations Team and the Iraq Fatalities Investigations. More information on these and the obligation to investigate under human rights law is available in the Commons Briefing Paper [Iraq Historic Allegations Team](#), January 2016.

³⁸ [Letter from Sir John Chilcot to the Prime Minister](#), 28 October 2015

³⁹ [Letter from David Cameron to Sir John Chilcot](#), 29 October 2015

⁴⁰ [Letter from David Cameron to Sir John Chilcot](#), 9 May 2016

6. Publication

The date of 6 July was set for publication in a letter from Sir John Chilcot to the Prime Minister dated 6 May 2016.⁴¹ The report runs to some 12 volumes, but a summary will also be provided.

The Government will make its initial response to the report on publication, but will not announce further steps to allow for fuller consideration of and response to the report until it is published.⁴²

6.1 Copies for families

On 22 June, the Cabinet Office wrote to families of service personnel who lost their lives in the conflict asking them whether they wanted a copy of the report.⁴³ The families will also be able to see an embargoed copy of the report on the day of publication.⁴⁴

⁴¹ [Letter from Sir John Chilcot to David Cameron](#), 6 May 2016

⁴² [HC Written question – 38696](#), 26 May 2016

⁴³ [Copies of the Iraq Inquiry report for families](#), Ministry of Defence, 22 June 2016

⁴⁴ [HC Written question – 38697](#), 26 May 2016

7. Parliamentary consideration of the inquiry and the report

7.1 Calls for an Inquiry

The Iraq Inquiry is only part of the response to the Iraq war. Parliament held many debates on the progress of the war.⁴⁵ There was also a series of Opposition Day debates calling for a broad inquiry, before the Chilcot Inquiry was launched in 2009. A list of these and discussion of comparable inquiries, for example the Franks Inquiry into the Falklands war, are set out in the Commons Briefing Paper [Iraq: calls for an inquiry and historical precedents](#), June 2015.

7.2 Debates between announcement and publication

As mentioned above, David Cameron complained in his response to the statement that, unlike the Franks Inquiry, the Chilcot Inquiry's terms of reference had not been debated on a substantive motion by the House.

18 June 2009: a debate in the House of Lords on learning lessons from the Iraq war.⁴⁶

24 June 2009: an Opposition Day debate on the government's terms of reference for the inquiry.⁴⁷

25 January 2011: an adjournment debate on the inquiry and the Civil Service Code.⁴⁸

11 February 2014: a short debate in the House of Lords about delays to publication.⁴⁹

1 July 2014: a short debate in the Lords on a question about the date of publication.⁵⁰

29 October 2014: a House of Commons adjournment debate on the costs of the inquiry.⁵¹

29 January 2015: a House of Commons backbench debate on a motion regretting delays to publication.⁵²

22 October 2015: a short debate in the House of Lords on a question suggesting that the Chairman of the Inquiry should be discharged and the Cabinet Secretary should take over publication.⁵³

14 April 2016: an unallotted backbench debate on the Iraq Inquiry report, on a motion calling for the Government to conclude the National Security checking of the Iraq Inquiry report as soon as possible.⁵⁴

⁴⁵ See the Commons briefing paper [Timeline of House of Commons Responses to the Iraq War](#), 25th June 2009

⁴⁶ [HL Deb 18 June 2009, c1226-64](#)

⁴⁷ [HC Deb 24 June 2009, c800-910](#)

⁴⁸ [HC Deb 25 January 2011, c52-8WH](#)

⁴⁹ [HL Deb 11 February 2014, cc605-619](#)

⁵⁰ [HL Deb 1 July 2014, cc1693-1710](#)

⁵¹ [HC Deb 29 January 2014, cc57-67WH](#)

⁵² [HC Deb 29 January 2015, cc1035-1089](#)

⁵³ [HL Deb 22 October 2015, cc851-874](#)

⁵⁴ [HC Deb 14 April 2016, cc530-565](#)

7.3 Post-publication consideration

As far as parliamentary debate of the report is concerned, the Leader of the House of Commons Chris Grayling said in answer to a question from Alex Salmond that opportunities would be provided:

Let me be clear first of all that there will need to be discussions between the parties about exactly how we handle advance sight of the document, but it is of course essential that the House is able to question and discuss the report, even though it is not a Government report. I give the right hon. Gentleman the assurance that such opportunities will be provided.⁵⁵

⁵⁵ [HC Deb 9 June 2016, c1352](#)

8. Cost

The total cost incurred by the Inquiry from its establishment on 15 June 2009 up to 31 March 2015 is £10,375,000.⁵⁶

Detailed expenditure for the financial year 2013/14 is set out in the following table:

Iraq Inquiry costs 2014/15

Inquiry Secretariat staff costs	£892,400
Committee and Advisers' remuneration	£119,300
Public hearings	£0
Private hearings	£0
Other events	£0
Travel	£0
Office accommodation	£241,300
IT & telecommunications (includes website management & development)	£94,300
Publications (includes books, subscriptions & Stationery (includes postage & general office	£9,500
Other costs	£900
	£800
Total	£1,358,500

Costs for 2015/16 have not yet been released.

⁵⁶ [Iraq Inquiry website](#)

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