

Attorney General launches Review into Unaoil failings at the Serious Fraud Office

Press release

The Attorney General has appointed Sir David Calvert-Smith to lead the Independent review into the Serious Fraud Office's handling of the Unaoil case.



On the day of the Court of Appeal's judgment in the Unaoil case (R. v Akle & Anor [2021]), the Attorney General, Suella Braverman QC MP, commissioned an independent review of the Serious Fraud Office (SFO) failings identified in the case, including disclosure failings.

Today, the Attorney General is announcing that Sir David Calvert-Smith will lead this review. Sir David is a former Director of Public Prosecutions and High Court judge who has led several independent reviews including one into racism within the police service. Sir David has previously been named a 'changemaker within criminal justice'.

The Review will look at what went wrong in the Unaoil case and what changes are needed at the SFO to ensure that the failings identified in the judgment cannot happen again, especially in relation to contact with third-parties and disclosure.

The Review will seek to answer the following questions:

1. What happened in this case and why? In particular, the review will assess the two key failings identified in the judgment: a) What occurred as regards SFO contact with third-parties and why; and b) Why did the SFO disclosure failures identified in the Court of Appeal judgment occur?
2. What implications, if any, do the failings highlighted by this case have for the policies, practices, procedures and related culture of the SFO?
3. What changes are necessary to address the failings highlighted by the

judgment and any wider issues of SF0 policies, practices, procedures or related culture identified by the reviewer?

Sir David will have the support of a small team including the Deputy Chief Inspector of Her Majesty's Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate (which inspects the SF0), Anthony Rogers. Sir David will aim to report to the Attorney General by the end of May 2022 and the Attorney will update Parliament on his findings and the Government's response.

Commenting on the Review, the Attorney General said:

"I announced this Review on the day of the judgment as it was clear to me that swift action was needed. We must ensure lessons are learned so that the failings we saw in the Unaoil case can never happen again.

"I am pleased to appoint Sir David to lead this important review. Sir David is a former High Court judge and former Director of Public Prosecutions. I am confident he will be forensic and robust."

The full Terms of Reference can be found [here](#).

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