



## **Press Release**

**29 April 2025**

### **Kingsmill Investigation Complaints Upheld By PONI**

KRW LAW ADVOCATES (KRW) represents Karen Armstrong, the next-of-Kin of John McConville, who was murdered at in the Kingsmill Massacre on the 5 January 1976. We also represent Alan Black, who survived the massacre, despite being shot over 17 times. Ten Protestant textile workers were killed in the attack including John McConville.

An inquest into the Kingsmill Massacre opened in 2016 and concluded hearing in 2023. The coroner found, in 2024, that it was an overtly sectarian attack mounted by the IRA. Since then there have been demands for a statutory public inquiry into the Kingsmill Massacre to answer the questions that the relatives of the victims still have, and which have not been answered. They consider the inquest was flawed because of the refusal of the coroner to name the perpetrators.

Former Police Ombudsman Baroness Nuala O'Loan questioned the withholding of the perpetrators' names: She said: "An awful lot of material is described as not being capable of being revealed because of a threat to national security and I do not think such a threat exists 48 years after an atrocity ... The coroner has said there was no collusion or state involvement in this, so this is a question of what did the IRA do and why did they do it, and the question has to be asked - why is the state covering this up even now?"<sup>i</sup>

Now the current Police Ombudsman Marie Anderson has delivered her conclusions on the original RUC investigation into the Kingsmill Massacre. She met with the McConville family and Alan Black today. The prolonged delay in delivering the OPONI conclusions whilst deeply frustrating has been in many ways worth the wait.

Today's findings were delivered by way of a letter to family members rather than an expected Section 62 Statement which is available under the Police Act 1998 and would form part of the public record.

Speaking today after the publication of the report, Associate Solicitor Barry O'Donnell KRW LAW said,

"Our clients have waited patiently for the release of this statement from the Ombudsman. They feel completely vindicated given the content of today's

statement. The Ombudsman has substantially upheld all complaints about police investigative failings. "

These collective failings in summary include inadequate investigation of forensic links to suspects; failure to link ballistics with other incidents; complete failure to arrest at least five key suspects; lack of explanation as to why many witnesses were not interviewed; deficiencies between police interfacing with An Garda Síochana in relation to suspects, weaponry and intelligence; together with many other deficiencies, forensic or otherwise.

Unfortunately, the Police Ombudsman cannot go further in terms of making a fully informed assessment of these serious failings. She is bound by a recent decision of the High Court which currently precludes her from making findings of "collusion" or "collusive behaviours." In many ways today's statement rubber stamps exactly what our clients have said for decades. They are content now to reach their own conclusions on the real reasons why there was such a litany of failures around the investigative response to the Kingsmill atrocity. We say emphatically that taken as a whole the report supports allegations of some as yet unidentified intelligence agenda underpinning the atrocity and its aftermath. To that end their pursuit for justice recovery and closure will continue. This very important PONI statement allows them to upscale their previously stayed high court civil actions and to engage in specific discovery applications in the high court through Closed Measures Proceedings otherwise known as closed court applications.

## **Contact**

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<sup>i</sup> [Kingsmills massacre a sectarian IRA attack - inquest - BBC News](#) (last accessed 24 April 2025)