



## **NEWS RELEASE**

**NOT FOR PUBLICATION BEFORE 12.00 NOON 2 JULY 2007**

### **PUBLICATION OF THE EIGHTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SCOTTISH CRIMINAL CASES REVIEW COMMISSION**

The Scottish Criminal Cases Review Commission today announced the publication of its eighth annual report, covering the period from 1 April 2006 to 31 March 2007.

The Commission was established in April 1999 to review alleged miscarriages of justice in Scottish criminal convictions and sentences independently of Government and the Crown.

The report set out the Commission main functions and performance over the reporting year, including the annual accounts. Additional information is provided on case statistics and the decision making process, as well as future plans.

The Commission's Chairman, The Very Rev. Dr Graham Forbes CBE, said today:

“The past year has again been an exceptionally busy and successful one for the Commission in the continuance of our role in investigating alleged miscarriages of justice and promoting public confidence in the criminal justice system. The level of new cases submitted to the Commission has returned to what we anticipate will be our normal level, and we have continued to exceed our key targets in terms of processing and concluding case reviews. All this has been achieved through the continuous review of our key processes to ensure that they are effective and efficient, and through the hard work, dedication and commitment of all Members and staff. Each case investigated by the Commission is done so in a consistent manner with the same level of scrutiny and impartiality afforded.

Our Annual Report for 2006-07 clearly sets out our achievements for the year as well as highlighting key statistics and trends in the review process. We continue to find that there has been no miscarriage of justice in the majority of cases we review, which is reassuring. For those cases we refer back to the High Court, the Commission has demonstrated the importance of its independent review in the attainment of justice. I must also pay tribute to the external bodies with whom we work, including Crown Office, Justiciary Office, the Police Service and the defence solicitors and advocates, without whose co-operation we would be unable to make such achievements.”

The Chief Executive of the Commission, Gerard Sinclair, added

“The Commission is presently reviewing cases more speedily and more effectively than ever before. I am pleased to report that, through hard work and improvements in efficiencies, we have been able to end the year without a backlog of cases, and each case accepted for review is now immediately allocated for investigation. We have managed this at a time when we were completing our work on the Lockerbie review. Whilst this one case may have attracted the vast majority of the media attention, the other 100 plus cases we receive each year are equally as important to the Commission, in terms of our time and effort. Our annual report provides more information than ever before on these other cases, and on the workings and review process of the Commission.”

The report is available free of charge from the Commission at 5<sup>th</sup> floor Portland House, 17 Renfield Street, Glasgow, Tel: 0141 270 7030, Fax: 0141 270 7040. E-mail: [info@sccrc.org.uk](mailto:info@sccrc.org.uk)

## **NOTES FOR EDITORS**

The Scottish Criminal Cases Review Commission was established in April 1999 as an independent body to review alleged miscarriages of justice in Scotland. Previously the Secretary of State for Scotland held the responsibility for reviewing alleged miscarriages of justice and for referring deserving cases to the High Court for determination.

Under section 194 A to L of the Criminal Procedure (Scotland) Act 1995 (as inserted by section 25 of the Crime and Punishment (Scotland) Act 1997) the Commission can refer a case to the High Court if it believes that a miscarriage of justice may have occurred and that it is in the interests of justice that a reference should be made.

As at 31 March 2007 the Commission had received a total of 887 cases and had issued final decisions in 841 cases, 67 of which were referrals to the High Court.

The Commission will issue a short news release after a case has been referred to the High Court. The news release will give notice of the fact that a named applicant's case has been referred and it will give details of the conviction and sentence. No further information in respect of the case will normally be disclosed by the Commission due to the statutory non-disclosure provisions under which the Commission operates. The Commission will also put the information contained in the news release on its website.

The Commission operates with a Board of 8 Members, one of whom is the Chairperson, a Chief Executive, a Director of Administration, a Senior Legal Officers, 8 Legal Officers and 3 admin support staff.

**For further general information contact Mr Chris Reddick, Director of Administration, SCCRC, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, Portland House, 17 Renfield Street, Glasgow, G2 5AH, telephone 0141 270 7030, email [creddick@sccrc.org.uk](mailto:creddick@sccrc.org.uk) or visit the Commission's website at [www.sccrc.org.uk](http://www.sccrc.org.uk)**