



NEWS RELEASE

NOT FOR PUBLICATION BEFORE 12.00 NOON 1 JULY 2008

PUBLICATION OF THE NINTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SCOTTISH CRIMINAL CASES REVIEW COMMISSION

The Scottish Criminal Cases Review Commission today announced the publication of its ninth annual report, covering the period from 1 April 2007 to 31 March 2008.

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, with the conclusion of the Lockerbie case during 2007, we are seeking to improve upon our key targets in terms of processing and concluding case reviews.

Our Annual Report for 2007-08 clearly sets out our achievements for the year as well as highlighting key statistics and trends in the review process. The Commission has now reviewed a total of 939 cases, and moving into our tenth year expect to receive and conclude the review of our 1000th case. 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."

The report is available free of charge from the Commission at 5th floor Portland House, 17 Renfield Street, Glasgow, Tel: 0141 270 7030, Fax: 0141 270 7040. E-mail: 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 2008 the Commission had received a total of 986 cases and had issued final decisions in 939 cases, 75 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, including details of the conviction and/or sentence, and a brief overview of the grounds of referral. 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 7 Members, one of whom is the Chairperson, a Chief Executive, a Director of Corporate Services, 2 Senior Legal Officers, 7 Legal Officers and 3 admin support staff.

For further general information contact Mr Chris Reddick, Director of Corporate Services, SCCRC, 5th Floor, Portland House, 17 Renfield Street, Glasgow, G2 5AH, telephone 0141 270 7030, email creddick@sccrc.org.uk or visit the Commission's website at www.sccrc.org.uk