

NEWS RELEASE

The Chief Executive of the Scottish Criminal Cases Review Commission ('the Commission'), Gerard Sinclair, announced today that he will be retiring from the Commission later this year in September. Mr Sinclair joined the Commission in 2003 and will have served over 18 years when he retires, which the Commission believes makes him the longest serving Chief Executive of such an arm's length body in the public sector in Scotland.

Mr Sinclair said - "It has been a great privilege to serve as the Chief Executive of such an important part of the criminal justice system during its first two decades. I joined the Commission just a few months before it received the first application for review from Mr Megrahi, who was convicted of the Lockerbie Bombing, so it seems appropriate that I will be retiring from the Commission on my 60th birthday just a matter of months after the High Court finally decided the appeal in this long outstanding matter.

It is, however, only one of over 2800 cases investigated, considered and decided during my time, by a wide range of highly diligent, talented and experienced staff and Members of the Board. It's a testament to their dedication that, having originally intended to stay for only a handful of years I have remained here until my upcoming retiral. I am making this announcement now in order to allow the Commission sufficient time to advertise and appoint my successor before I step down. My final task will be to lead the Commission out of the current Covid lockdown; hopefully stronger, fitter and ready for the many new challenges ahead."

Mr Bill Matthews, the Chairman of the Commission said - "I am the third Chair of the SCCRC to have had the privilege of working with Gerry, and I know that all current and former Members of the Commission will be very sad to see him leave. He has dedicated nearly two decades to leading the work of the Commission in its examination of many hundreds of cases, and has become a respected ambassador for our work in countries as far afield as Canada, Norway and New Zealand. Throughout this period he has shown exceptional skill, diligence, sensitivity and fairness in his advice to the Commission whilst providing exceptional leadership to the staff of the organisation. We are hugely grateful for his public service and appreciative of the early notice he has given us, allowing us to begin the challenging search for a replacement early."

The Commission will be advertising the post of Chief Executive of the SCCRC next month.

Notes for Editors

The Scottish Criminal Cases Review Commission was established as an independent body on 1 April 1999 to review alleged miscarriages of justice in Scottish convictions and/or sentences. 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. Once a case is referred to the High Court by the Commission, it will proceed as a normal appeal.

The Commission operates with a Board of 8 Members, one of whom is the Chairperson, a Chief Executive, a Director of Corporate Services, a Head of Casework, 2 Senior Legal Officers, 3 Legal Officers and administrative support staff.

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