

Q & A

Who is the official?

The official works in MoD.

What is his name and current post?

We wouldn't normally volunteer a name

If the correct name is given, we can confirm it and say that he is senior advisor to the Proliferation and Arms Control Secretariat.

How long has he been in MOD?

He has been in his current position for 3 to 4 years. Before that he was a member of UNSCOM.

Did the official play any part in drawing up the dossier?

He was involved in providing historical details of UNSCOM's activities prior to 1998.

Is he a senior figure?

He is not a member of the SCS – he is a middle - ranking official.

Is he still working for MOD?

Yes

Is he in Iraq?

No, though he visited Iraq recently for a week.

Is he a member of the ISG?

No

Do you believe he is the single source?

It is not for us to say – only the BBC can confirm that.

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So he hasn't volunteered to being the source?

No. He volunteered that he met Mr Gilligan and discussed the September dossier.

It is unprecedented for a Government Department to make a statement of this sort. Why have you done it?

There is no comparable situation that springs to mind. We have set out the facts as they have been put to us, on an issue of considerable public concern. The official involved volunteered the information to us.

Can we interview the individual?

No – this is not appropriate as the consequences will be dealt with by MoD internally.

Will he be disciplined/sacked?

Appropriate management steps will be taken. On the basis of our current understanding of the situation, he will not be sacked.

Where did he meet Mr Gilligan?

He says they met in the Charing Cross Hotel, central London.

In what form did this official come forward?

The official approached his line manager, which is the standard procedure for raising concerns. He has also been interviewed by the relevant members of senior staff.

Why has the official come forward now?

It followed his reading of the detailed evidence Mr Gilligan gave to the FAC

What was it in that evidence that made the official consider that his conversation might be relevant?

The official felt that a number of elements of the conversation he had with Mr Gilligan were consistent with Mr Gilligan's evidence to

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the FAC when describing his single source. Though a number were not. For details – see the statement.

Are you suggesting Mr Gilligan deliberately “sexed up” his story?

We are making no accusations. We are merely setting the information that has been put to us.

When did he come forward?

At the beginning of last week.

Why has it taken you a week to produce the information?

It was necessary to arrange for the official to be interviewed to establish, as far as we can, the details of his meeting with Gilligan.

When was he interviewed?

On Friday and Monday.

Which senior staff were informed?

The PUS was informed on Thursday. He informed the Secretary of State that evening.

When were No 10 told and if they were, why?

No 10 were told on Friday. It is only natural that they would be informed of a development on an issue of major concern.

Which other government departments were told?

As you would expect, Cabinet office and FCO.

Why did you not tell the FAC over the weekend?

A further interview was required and that took place on Monday afternoon.

What if the BBC deny he is the source?

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We have not claimed he is – I refer you back to our statement

Can the FAC/ISC interview him?

We will be willing to consider any such request.

Were No 10 involved in this announcement?

The decision to issue a statement was made by the MoD.

How can you be sure that there has been no breach of the OSA?

On the basis of the information we have been given, there is no evidence to suggest a breach.

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