

PRESS STATEMENT

An individual working in the MOD has volunteered that he met with Andrew Gilligan in a hotel on 22 May to discuss Gilligan's experiences as a correspondent in Iraq. This was one week before Gilligan's story claiming that the September 2002 Iraq dossier had been "sexed up". The account of the meeting given by this official does not match the account given by Gilligan to the Foreign Affairs Committee of his "single source". The official has told us that he made no allegations or accusations about the dossier and, in particular, did not suggest that any material had been added to the dossier by Alastair Campbell or Downing Street against the wishes of the intelligence community. He is not a member of the Intelligence Services or the Defence Intelligence Staff.

This discussion was not authorised in accordance with departmental guidance for contact with the media. This is being dealt with appropriately by line management.

There is no reason to suspect that a breach of security is involved.

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