Thursday, 22 November 2012

1. (10.00 am)
2. MS LIZ GIBBONS (called)
3. Housekeeping
4. MR POLLARD: Good morning, Liz, and Susan. I think we will probably be here for a couple of hours. I have some questions to ask you, as you know. Most of the questions will be by Mr Maclean, QC. I will dive in with an occasional question as we go along. As you know we are taking a transcript and you will be able to see that on a screen in front of you.
5. Before we start, just a few procedural comments from Mr Spafford.
6. MR SPAFFORD: Thank you. Obviously you know who is here.
7. In addition to the people mentioned, Dane Janet Smith is sitting in as well. As Nick says, there will be a transcript. At the end of the process that will be made available. That will go to Susan to correct any typographical errors.
8. That apart, obviously the whole process is confidential as you know and you have kindly provided a confidentiality agreement. It is very important that that be stressed, that nothing that is said here by you or any document that you've seen be revealed by you, subject to that agreement.

1. Is that understood and confirmed?
2. A. Yes, absolutely.
3. MR SPAFFORD: Thank you, great.
4. MR POLLARD: Alan, over to you.
5. Questions by MR MACLEAN
6. MR MACLEAN: Can I ask whether you have any of your own timelines or statement of account?
7. A. I have a timeline, yes.
8. Q. We have three. Can we check which one you have?
9. A. I have one I prepared myself, rather than a --
10. Q. Do you have a spare statements of account bundle, Richard?
11. I will show you which one we have, and show you if it is the same as the one you have.
12. A. This is our own.
13. MR MACLEAN: Well, we have seen three things from you --
14. A. Sorry, my timeline, as in my statement? Yes, I have -- yes.
15. Q. Yes. We have seen three. I think the one for us is a two page one dealing with the original investigation and then the blog.
16. A. Right.
17. Q. Is that right?
18. A. Yes, that's the one I sent to you. There was a previous one I sent to litigation at an earlier stage.

1. Q. That is right. An email to Nicola Cain?
2. A. Yes.
3. Q. Then we also have this from you as well, which is more in note form, a timeline.
5. Q. This one? Covering the same ground, the nature of the original commission, MPRI and the Impact team.
6. A. That was written before I had managed to retrieve some sent items.
7. Q. Which one is the most reliable?
8. A. The most reliable is the later one I sent directly to the enquiry.
9. Q. To us?
10. A. Yes. And there is a second document as well, outlining what I knew about the editing process, which I believe I sent you as well.
11. MR SPAFFORD: If we have had it, it is probably in the bundle.
12. MR POLLARD: I think that is at tab --
13. MR MACLEAN: We will probably come across it.
14. MR POLLARD: That is at tab 2.
15. MR MACLEAN: I have tab 2.
16. Can I ask you to take bundle 1, please, A1, and turn to page 267.
17. A. 267?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q. -- web memoir?</th>
<th>1. certainly reflects one element of concern I had about the commission which I flagged up to Peter on the 7th</th>
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<tr>
<td>A. No.</td>
<td>when I got back from holiday. I think my key concerns about it was the timing; the fact that Jimmy Savile had just died and I felt to embark on a story of this nature the minute he died did raise some issues of taste, and raise some issues of how his relatives, for example, might feel if we were to broadcast a story so soon after his death.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Q. At any stage?</td>
<td>The other issue I had was the view that we shouldn’t just be doing a story which, you know -- because there were no longer libel implications to do with somebody, and that we shouldn’t start thinking that journalistic standards should necessarily be dropped just because somebody had died. So they were my key concerns which I relayed to Peter on the 7th.</td>
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<td>A. No, not until I got it as part of the stuff for the enquiry.</td>
<td>Q. So what was your understanding of what the story was about?</td>
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<td>Q. We will come to this. What you did get at some stage was the evolving script, such as it was?</td>
<td>A. On the 7th he told me that Meinirion had had some evidence from girls at a school, an approved school, that suggested that there had been sexual abuse taking place on the premises -- sorry, I don’t know whether he said on the premises -- with the girls from that approved school that Jimmy Savile regularly visited.</td>
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<td>A. Yes, I got two copies, as it turned out, of the draft script.</td>
<td>Q. You knew this was something that had taken place years ago --</td>
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<td>Q. ROUGHSAVILE?</td>
<td>1. and years ago --</td>
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<td>A. ROUGHSAVILE, yes.</td>
<td>A. Yes.</td>
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<td>Q. Right. So let’s go then to the 9th, at 267, which is a Wednesday. There is reference here in Liz MacKeans email to a meeting which she had just had, or had with you and Peter Rippon?</td>
<td>Q. -- as opposed to something more recent?</td>
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<td>A. No. When I -- on the 7th, when I came back from holiday, Peter Rippon told me -- we were catching up in a planning meeting with a few other people there and he told that he had commissioned a piece looking at Jimmy Savile and allegations of sexual abuse.</td>
<td>A. Yes.</td>
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<td>Q. What does that mean? You say in your statement he had commissioned it. What does that mean?</td>
<td>Q. What about any question of the police or CPS investigations into Savile?</td>
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<td>A. That means he’s got a team to start working on it. It does not necessarily mean that it will end up on air, but it means that he’s -- he’s got a team involved in working on it.</td>
<td>A. I don’t recollect that being discussed at the time.</td>
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<td>Q. Right. So when you come into work on the morning of the 9th, what you know about Jimmy Savile was that Peter Rippon had commissioned a piece about it while you were on holiday?</td>
<td>I know that they were looking initially at the idea that -- you know, what they could establish about this; what may or may not have gone on at this school.</td>
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<tr>
<td>A. Yes, when we had had a conversation about it on the 7th, actually, when I came back from holiday.</td>
<td>Q. What about the fact that Meinirion Jones had been on the trail of this story for some time?</td>
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<td>Q. So at this meeting on the 9th -- do you remember that?</td>
<td>A. I didn’t know that, no.</td>
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<td>A. I don’t actually recollect having a meeting with Liz and Peter, no. I recollect a separate conversation that I had with Liz about various stories she was working on, in which she mentioned the Jimmy Savile investigation which obviously I already knew a bit about from Peter.</td>
<td>Q. And that he had a family connection?</td>
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<td>A. I don’t recollect that I was in a meeting with the two of them together, but I certainly recollect an early conversation with Liz about the investigation.</td>
<td>A. I didn’t know about the family connection until much more recently.</td>
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<td>Q. This email records you as saying: &quot;We shouldn’t do JS story on grounds of taste.&quot; We will see the word &quot;taste&quot; appearing a bit later as well. First of all is that what you said, what you articulated as you view, and secondly, if it is, what does it mean?</td>
<td>Q. Did you know about that at any time in 2011?</td>
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<td>A. I don’t know whether I used the word &quot;taste&quot;, but it</td>
<td>A. No.</td>
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<td>1. certainly reflects one element of concern I had about the commission which I flagged up to Peter on the 7th when I got back from holiday. I think my key concerns about it was the timing; the fact that Jimmy Savile had just died and I felt to embark on a story of this nature the minute he died did raise some issues of taste, and raise some issues of how his relatives, for example, might feel if we were to broadcast a story so soon after his death.</td>
<td>Q. Now, Liz MacKeans email says that she persuaded her -- is that you -- otherwise, especially given police line?</td>
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<td>-- and years ago --</td>
<td>A. It may well be true that in the course of that conversation -- which I don’t recollect, but as I say I do believe it was just a one to one conversation -- she told me that there was some evidence that the police had looked into the allegations of abuse at this school.</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>And it sounds likely to me that I would have thought</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>at least commenced the research for it -- while you were</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>that that was a slightly more reassuring line to pursue.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>away?</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>If there was a suggestion that the police had, at some</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>A. Yes.</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>point, been looking into these allegations.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Q. Then you come back before it has really got very far.</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Q. Why would that be more &quot;reassuring&quot;, as you put it?</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Why didn't you become the executive producer of it when</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>A. Because it suggests that there was a genuine issue there</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>you came back?</td>
<td></td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>that the police felt was sufficiently credible to</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>A. Because he had commissioned it and it's not unusual for</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>investigate in some form.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>him to continue to work on a story if he has</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Q. So that would help to assuage your concerns about --</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>commissioned it. He often did actually exe Meirion's</td>
<td></td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>A. It didn't entirely assuage them, but it certainly --</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>projects, probably more of Meirion's projects than</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>I can imagine that that was something I thought was --</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>I did, I would say.</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>made me less concerned about the fact that we were</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Q. So what did you have to do to hold the story in the</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>investigating it at all in that timeframe.</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>next -- between 9 November and, say, 9 December, which</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>Q. Next sentence is:</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>is, as it happens, the day that the CPS confirmation</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>&quot;PR agrees that it is worth it but [of course] they</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>comes in that the investigation hadn't been pursued, not</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>are concerned about women's credibility.&quot;</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>because Savile was old and infirm, but because of lack</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>This would suggest that you were more sceptical than</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>of evidence?</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>Peter Rippon was about this story, but both of you had</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>A. I recollect a conversation with Peter around the issue</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>real concerns about it?</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>of, um, when the fact that the BBC1 tribute was coming</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>A. I think that is fair to say.</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>up, how that left things, in terms of what higher</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>Q. Is that a fair way of putting it?</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>management do about those sorts of situations if there</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>A. Yes.</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>are two things going on at the same time. And</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>Q. How did your attitude change, if it did, in the next few</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>I recollect a conversation with him in late November</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>weeks?</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>where he told me that he was feeling that this element</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>A. Well, to be honest I did try and I think I made this</td>
<td></td>
<td>of trying to ensure whether the CPS didn't prosecute</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>clear to Peter, I mean, I, um -- he had a separate</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>because Savile was too old became, for him, the key</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>conversation with the other deputy editor when she came</td>
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<td>thing to establish as to whether the piece would go</td>
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<td>back from leave. She was also on leave at the same</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>ahead or not.</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>time, she returned about a week later. I think her view</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Q. Right. So two things there. We will come to late</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>on whether we should be pursuing the story was slightly</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>November, but this first conversation, can you pin that</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>different to mine, so I felt at that point, um, that it</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>down at all, when that was?</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>was -- it was something I felt that Peter needed to</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>A. I can't pin down the timing exactly, but I think</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>pursue as the editor and I didn't particularly get</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>a colleague in the office told me that a Jimmy Savile</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>involved from then on in the gathering of material or</td>
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<td>tribute had gone into that -- had gone into the schedule</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>the -- or the discussions with Meirion and Liz about</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>and I don't know if it was the next day or a few days</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>where the investigation was going.</td>
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<td>later or whatever in a conversation with Peter that may</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Q. So did you form the view that this story was an</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>well have been about something else. I asked him, just</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>inappropriate one for Newsnight, or that it was going to</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>out of interest, what the issue -- what would happen in</td>
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<td>be -- cause a problem or simply it was somebody else's</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>those circumstances in terms of: would News management</td>
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<td>responsibility?</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>talk to Vision or not? And I believe he said he would</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>A. I thought -- I felt that I had raised the concerns that</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>talk to Steve about it and --</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>I had with Peter about the story which I have already</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Q. He had talked or he would talk?</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>expressed.</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>A. I think -- well, I don't know whether in this</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>Q. As I understand it, normally you are the executive</td>
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<td>conversation or whether he then went away to talk to</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>producer of this sort of piece for Newsnight?</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Steve, I can't recall. But I remember the words, um</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>A. For a majority of pieces, but not all, I would say 80</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>&quot;Chinese walls&quot; being used.</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>to</td>
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<td>Q. Who is the colleague in the office who told you about</td>
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<td>particularly investigations, Peter would -- would exec</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>the tribute?</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>produce.</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>A. It was no one working on the Savile investigation.</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>Q. So this story had been commissioned, as you put it --</td>
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<td>Q. Who was it, though? Do you remember?</td>
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</table>
Q. Who was it?
A. Do I have to -- it was a colleague called Adam Livingstone.
Q. What did he -- what did he do?
A. He was just a producer on the -- on the programme. He just happened to see it, I think, when he was working late one night and I was on duty late at night.
Q. Saw it on some BBC --
A. I think so, yes.
Q. -- notice board. Some document goes round, does it?
A. Or just saw it in the schedules, I don't actually know.
But he had obviously seen it on some sort of schedule, yes.
Q. We have heard that Meirion Jones and Liz MacKean, on the way back from interviewing -- which you may or may not know was on 14 November -- heard on the BBC radio, as it happens, coming back from that interview about the tributes; some sort of trail. And that's when they first appreciated that the BBC was running these tributes.
A. Okay.
Q. Does that help?
A. I hadn't heard that. But it could well be. That feels like it could be about right in terms of dates.

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Q. Now the discussion between Mr Mitchell and Mr Rippon was probably on or about 21 or 22 -- well it was on about 21 or 22 November.
A. Right.
Q. Can I just show you the document -- I will show you the document shortly, but there is an email that says that, "Peter and Steve talked about the Vision issues", with a capital V and a small I -- Vision issues surrounding Savile. Do you understand what that means?
A. I wrote that, didn't I?
Q. You did.
A. That was in response -- because I'm in charge of updating the Managed Programmes Risk List, which I send to Sara Beck who is Steve Mitchell's assistant. So when it came round to update the Managed Programmes Risk List, I guess it would have been that day, I put the Savile investigation -- I didn't say very much but I put it on the list which then -- she decides -- well, she then collates and sends to wherever the MPRL goes. And she replied to me to say she was taking it off.
Q. I'm coming to the MPRL. That is obviously an important part of the story, I'm coming to that.
A. Yes.
Q. I'm just asking you about what the Vision issues were.
A. What I meant by that was that I -- that Peter had already suggested to me that the idea would be that there would be "Chinese walls" between what we were doing and what Vision were doing. So when she came back to me and said, "This is being taken off the MPRL because it goes quite high in Vision", I said, "Okay, that makes sense", because it corroborates what Peter had told me about his conversation with Steve.
Q. So the "Chinese walls", that was an expression you think was used to you by Peter Rippon?
A. I believe so. It could be that it was -- it was something that I have -- it was certainly -- I certainly had a sense that this would proceed as, certainly in terms of, you know, straightforward dealings that it would not be mentioned to --
Q. It wouldn't be mentioned?
A. No. Not to that degree, which is why I was interested to ask Peter what -- what the form was in these circumstances.
Q. Was he also unfamiliar, did you think, with this situation?
A. I wouldn't be able to say for sure.
Q. We'll come to the list, obviously I want to ask you some questions about the list.
Can I just ask you to put bundle 1 away and take bundle 2. Please go to page 57. Now, this is four days later than the email we looked at earlier, from Meirion Jones to Roger Law. Roger Law is a lawyer at the BBC?
A. That is right, yes.
Q. Just dealing with him for a moment, was it your understanding that there was ever any difficulty in running the Savile story, that had been identified by BBC lawyers?
A. No. Not as far as I was aware.
Q. So there wasn't any legal impediment to running the story?
A. Not as far as I was aware.
Q. And the most obvious legal impediment didn't exist because the man was dead?
A. Yes.
Q. This was sent to you. And it is dealing with three different things. "Newaght Vultures." That was a story that Meirion Jones was working on that eventually did go out, I think?
A. Yes.
Q. "Savile" and then something called "Anna". It may be that that is entirely irrelevant?
A. It is entirely irrelevant. It was a story that never ran.
Q. Another story?
A. Yes.
Q. You see what he says. It starts off talking about his vulture film. Why was this sent to you?
A. I was looking after the vulture film.
Q. You see he says:
"I'm filming one of the Savile victims in tomorrow. I will be in the office on Tuesday. Then there is a reference to "Meirion's gambit", at the bottom. Did you recognise that description?
A. Not specifically, no.
Q. So the reason you got this was that you were concerned with the first three of the stories?
A. Yes, I would imagine what Meirion was doing -- which with would not be unusual for him -- would be to be writing a sort of catch-all email to keep us up to date on the various projects he was working on and where he was at with them.
Q. Right. Did you know -- were you aware on 14 November -- that Jones and MacKean had gone off to interview a Duncroft girl?
A. No.
Q. There is an email from Liz MacKean the following day.

15 November, page 85 of the same bundle.

MR POLLARD: Sorry, could I just ask about your answer to that question. You say you didn’t know that they had gone off to interview a Duncroft girl?
A. Well, it does say -- it says in that email, but it’s not necessarily something I would have taken in. I mean --
MR POLLARD: Yes. You weren’t involved?
A. No.
MR POLLARD: Okay.
MR MACLEAN: Page 85 there is an email from Liz MacKean to Hannah Livingston. Was she --
A. No, I never even met her, actually.
Q. She did quite a lot of the research?
A. So I gather, yes.
Q. But you don’t know her?
A. No, I never met her.
Q. You see she says, Liz MacKean says:
"There is more enthusiasm for the story in the office which is good. Any letter progress yourself?"
Were you aware of ebbing and flowing of the degree of enthusiasm?
A. Not especially, no. She could have meant other colleagues.
Q. What about the letter progress?
A. I now know what it would mean.

Q. They were chasing a letter?
A. Yes.
Q. One of the important staging posts in the story is that on 25 November, if you take bundle 3, page 11, this is only concerned with the Jimmy Savile story, this email?
A. Um-hm.
Q. It is sent to Peter Rippon and to you. And he says:
"Confidential. Off the record. The Surrey Police have now confirmed that they did investigate Jimmy Savile about sexual abuse of minors and that they interviewed the girls from Duncroft as part of that enquiry. The" and hopefully tell us more on Monday."
Q. Did you know what the off the record source was?
A. No.
Q. Did you know who Mark Williams-Thomas was?
A. No, I didn’t know he was working on the investigation.
Q. I asked did you know who he was?
A. At that point, um, yes, he had already done -- he had done a piece for us about six months previously.
Q. But you didn’t know he was working on this?
A. No.
Q. So why was this sent to you, do you think, by Meirion Jones?
A. Again, it wouldn’t be unusual for him to copy me in on the progress of an investigation, even if it was being exceeded and overseen by Peter.
Q. He doesn’t copy in Shaminder Nahal.
A. She didn’t have any responsibility for working on commissioning films or -- she had an entirely separate --
Q. But you say, I think, you didn’t have any responsibility for this film, so why is he bothering to copy you?
A. As I say, it wouldn’t be unusual for him to do that. Because we both worked on film stuff together. I mean he would have -- that doesn’t necessarily mean that I had responsibility and was taking account of every single move in the -- in what they were working on.
Q. You saw Mr Rippon’s response over the page, page 12.
A. Yes.
Q. "Excellent. We can then pull together the transmission plan."
That is something that you would be involved in, isn’t it?
A. Yes.
Q. How would you be involved if pulling together the transmission plan?
A. I would establish a potential TX date, which would obviously be subject to change or cancellation at any point, and I would establish how many days of editing

Page 18

Page 19

Page 17
1. I have explained the reasons why I had concerns and
2. I explained them to my boss.
3. Q. Didn't you think this was a story that basically you
4. wouldn't have touched with a bargepole?
5. A. I wouldn't necessarily go that far. But I had concerns
6. about it, which I expressed to Peter.
7. Q. Would it be fair to say you wouldn't have gone near this
8. story in the first place?
9. A. I think, had I been in Peter's chair that day,
10. I probably would have said, "I don't want to look into
11. it yet." But that said, Meirion is a very persuasive
12. character and a good journalist so I cannot say for
13. certain what I would have done.
14. Q. Well, just take bundle 8 for a moment, please. If you
15. go to page 101, now, there is an email from
16. Meirion Jones to Sanchia Berg, do you see? Do you see
17. that? (Pause).
18. A. It's not -- there appears to an email I have sent.
19. Q. No, no. 101. Then if you go over the page to 101.001.
20. A. Sorry, got you.
21. Q. There is an insert. It is headed, "This house", at the
22. top.
23. A. Yes.
24. Q. Just before I ask you some questions about that, let me
25. just find out what the process has been. How did you go

1. about producing documents to the BBC to furnish to this
2. review?
3. A. I went through all my sent items that I still had and
4. asked for any new ones to be -- and looked under
5. "Savile".
6. Q. Right.
7. A. And asked the, um, IT department to try to dig out any
8. deleted items.
9. Q. So you went through some of it yourself, the ones that
10. weren't deleted, is that right?
11. A. Yes.
12. Q. Inbox and outbox?
13. A. Yes.
14. Q. And then got IT to dig out the deleted ones?
15. A. Yes, but they didn't manage -- as I think I say in my
16. statement -- they didn't maybe to establish everything.
17. Q. This one didn't get pulled out, maybe because it is not
18. headed "Savile". Mr Prendergast is, presumably a friend
19. of yours that works at the National Theatre?
20. A. Yes.
21. Q. Some of this is quite chatty, between friends which I'm
22. not interested in. But I am interested in your email of
23. 3 October at page 101.001. Do you see?
24. A. Yes.
25. Q. You have you have been asked to go to the email below.

Page 22

Page 23
1. Q. Was it ever suggested that lower editorial standards were being applied to this story?
2. A. There was -- my fear was that I didn't want us to end up making a programme which would not have stood were we alive.
3. Q. The reference to public interest defence:
4. "I didn't think there was a public interest defence in allegations involving a dead celebrity."
5. Q. Why would there need to be a public interest defence against a dead celebrity who couldn't sue?
6. A. I suppose for the reasons I go back to on taste grounds.
7. Q. If I didn't feel that there was a, um, a reason to expose this, which obviously now in retrospect there was because there was a lot of institutional failure involved. I didn't feel that it was something that I would have pursued myself.
8. MR POLLARD: Could I just ask, you are drawing a distinction -- or perhaps you should draw a distinction between your view at the start and your view when the story came to be dropped.
9. A. Um-hm.
10. MR POLLARD: Am I right in thinking that you were against it at the start. When you heard it, you just had a sort of gut feeling: this is not the right story for us, for all sorts of reasons?

---

1. A. Yes.
2. MR POLLARD: And then later, if you like, the start of the process was when you didn't know whether there was any real evidence or not?
3. A. Um-hm.
4. MR POLLARD: When it got to be dropped you were able to have -- although you weren't closely involved -- have a sense of: actually I think Peter Rippon's view is right, because the evidence doesn't support it.
5. I just want to take you back to the start of the process, and I think you came close to saying just now, effectively, that, actually it was a worthwhile story, as it turned out. The story of Jimmy Savile as an historic and long term molester of young people was right. So do you think your initial reaction was wrong?
7. After the ITV documentary. Yes.
8. MR POLLARD: Do you think, with hindsight, actually it was a valid Newsnight story?
9. A. I did not feel like it was an obvious thing for us to pursue in the terms that we had it at that point.
10. MR POLLARD: But that was the starting point, really, in the early days of November?
11. A. Yes.
12. MR POLLARD: Do you think your strong resistance to the story right at the start coloured your view of it through November, or would it be fair to say you had an open mind about it, because you clearly were visceraally against it, a string of expletives at the start and so on --
13. A. That may have been exaggerating for a friend. But, no, I think it is fair to say I didn't have an especially open mind and when the other deputy came back from leave and took a different view, I remember thinking, right, this is kind of one for Peter, really.
14. MR POLLARD: You didn't want to get involved. Okay.
15. MR MACLEAN: Why did Shaminder Nahal take a different view?
16. Was it that she thought that a story which -- you know, "Dead man was paedophile", that might have been the story. "Dead man was paedophile involving abuse at approved school-type places", might be the story. "Dead man who was BBC star was paedophile", or "Dead man who was BBC star involving allegations of abuse at the BBC", might be the story?
17. A. You would have to ask her what she thought and why she felt it was a story. I wasn't in the room when Peter and her had the discussion.
18. Q. Your initial thought was that a story that was, as it were, simply, "Recently dead man was a paedophile", was not a story you wanted to touch?

---

1. A. Yes I was very just dubious about it, which I think I have explained, yes.
2. Q. About that story?
3. A. Yes.
4. Q. Now, your reluctance to get involved, was that partly conditioned by the attitude of people in other parts of the BBC? For example in BBC1?
5. A. No, not remotely. I don't know anyone in BBC1.
6. Q. You know who the important people are in BBC1?
7. A. I know their names.
8. Q. So your reluctance to get involved in this story was --
9. A. It was --
10. Q. -- born of what?
11. A. Born of the fact that I had concerns about the fact -- that I have expressed -- that we had embarked upon it. I knew that there was a difference of view in the senior team about whether that was -- whether that was the right view, so I took a view, "This is Peter's project, he can oversee it and take the ultimate decision".
12. And also in previous stories and investigations where -- we have had issues where there hasn't been a clear line of command in terms of who is taking a story on, and that occasionally -- not necessarily with this team but with other teams that are involved in investigations -- you can get into a situation where,
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<tr>
<td>1 you know, the team might be playing me off against Peter</td>
<td>1 a potential date.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 or vice versa. So I didn’t feel it was an unusual --</td>
<td>2 MR POLLARD: I wondered about that. But as far as you</td>
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<td>3 I mean, it -- it's not an unprecedented situation for me</td>
<td>3 recollect --</td>
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<td>4 to feel this is something that he is overseeing.</td>
<td>4 A. No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Q. The team playing a deputy editor off against the editor.</td>
<td>5 MR POLLARD: You haven't put in --</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 You mean the investigation team?</td>
<td>6 A. Not -- not at that stage, no. No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 A. Yes, that had happened in the past on Newsnight. You</td>
<td>7 MR POLLARD: So you were being told about that, rather</td>
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<td>8 know you put -- a reporter might come to me and say X</td>
<td>8 than --</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 and then go to Peter and say, &quot;Well, Liz says X&quot;, and</td>
<td>9 A. Yes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 try to influence the process by sort of, you know,</td>
<td>10 MR POLLARD: That's how it struck me.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11 telling us different things.</td>
<td>11 A. No, I think that's probably accurate, yes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Q. It doesn't sound like an office that is replete with</td>
<td>12 MR POLLARD: Okay, thank you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 trust?</td>
<td>13 MR MACLEAN: You are looking at this timeline, which I don't</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 A. I think that is probably how a lot of offices work.</td>
<td>14 have. Is there anything on that between 25th and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Q. It is an accurate characterisation of mine?</td>
<td>15 29th --</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 A. I don't think it is, actually.</td>
<td>16 A. Um --</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 Q. Do you still have bundle 2? We were looking at page 12</td>
<td>17 Q. -- apart from the point Nick has just raised?</td>
</tr>
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<td>18 and the transmission plan.</td>
<td>18 A. No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 So from 25 November it looks like, notwithstanding</td>
<td>19 Q. So at 9.51 on the 29th, Meirion Jones sent to several</td>
</tr>
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<td>20 your hostility to this story, it is all systems go,</td>
<td>20 people, including you, a copy of ROUGHSAVILE. If you</td>
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<td>21 isn't it?</td>
<td>21 keep a finger there, and then go further on in the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 A. At this stage.</td>
<td>22 bundle, I think at 11.30, page 159, he sends another</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 Q. We looked at page 12, 25 November, Peter Rippon to</td>
<td>23 email. On the subject of filming he says:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 Meirion Jones, &quot;We can pull together the transmission</td>
<td>24 &quot;If you haven't looked at ROUGHSAVILE, this</td>
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| 25 plan." | 25 ROUGHSAVILE 2 is better."

Page 29

| In other words the second one overtakes the first |
| one? |
| A. Yes. |
| Q. Why has this been sent to you? |
| A. Again, because that was very much Meirion's way to |
| keep -- to be maximalist about who he sent stuff to. |
| Q. But he didn't send it to Shamindeh Subal. |
| A. Again, as I say, she didn't have any involvement in |
| commissioning or exer丝 or planning of films. |
| Q. Neither did you, according to you, in this instance? |
| A. But that wouldn't be unusual for him to -- on a project |
| that I was exer丝 that Meirion was doing, he would |
| probably copy Peter into a script. |
| Q. He's the editor of the programme. So what was your |
| understanding of what you were expected to do with, |
| let's take -- I don't know did you read the first one or |
| the second one or neither of them? |
| A. I recollect skimming a version. |
| Q. Maybe it doesn't matter which version. If we take the |
| second version then at 159, what did you understand |
| Mr Jones's purpose was in sending this to you? What did |
| he want you to do? |
| A. You would have to ask him. |
| Q. Well, you must have had -- when you got this email, did |
| you think: I'm being sent this so that I can keep it in |

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<td><strong>Page 33</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Page 35</strong></td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>course he hadn't said, are ending with the words, &quot;Why</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>was it all hushed up?&quot;</td>
</tr>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Do you see that at 160?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>A. Yes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Q. Then if you go over a few pages to the end at 163 --</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>sorry, 165, what is anticipated is that the piece is</td>
</tr>
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<td>7</td>
<td>going to end with &quot;PTC&quot;, piece to camera:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>&quot;Duncroft or TVC [TV Centre], not sure yet, with any</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>statement from police or CPS.&quot;</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>So it happens that what is contemplated is quite</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>early on in this story we are going to have the supposed</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>expert saying something has been hushed up?</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>A. Yes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Q. And then at the end we're going to have the police and</td>
</tr>
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<td>15</td>
<td>the CPS giving some statement. So it looks, does it</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>not, if this is a piece which, sure, is about Jimmy</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>Savile being a paedophile, but the sting of it is that</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>the police and the CPS have dropped the ball?</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>A. Yes, or, as we now know, the suggestion was the CPS had</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>decided not to prosecute because Savile was too old.</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>Q. That's what it says at 160. Those are the words which</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>Mr Williams-Thomas is going to say --</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>A. Yes.</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>Q. -- specifically, do you see?</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>A. Yes.</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>A. The kind of thing Meirion would send, yes.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Q. The kind of thing Meirion would send?</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>A. Yes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Q. And that is the kind of thing you would then expect the</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>executive producer to take a decision on the basis of?</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>A. Go through in detail and discuss and establish whether</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>there was enough and what more was needed.</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Q. If it was established that this was enough, then would</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>that be subject, of course, to scheduling and something</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>else happening which means it cannot run on the night,</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>because of some other news event? That would be it,</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>would it? It would be green light?</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>A. Not necessarily. You can watch something in a suite and</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>think actually it doesn't feel right. You can see</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>something on a script and it can feel enough and then</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>you can see it in an edit and think actually it doesn't</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>feel like it's enough to go with. There is no</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>hard-and-fast rule about these things.</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>Q. So the executive producer would look at the piece one</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>it was put together?</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>A. Yes, or a rough -- I mean an early version. It depends</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>per project, per project really and how tight the timing</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>on the editing is. But, yes, they would watch</td>
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<td>a version.</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>Q. You see the words from Mr Williams-Thomas, which of</td>
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| 1 | Q. "Savile was too old and infirm."
| 2 | A. Yes. Which he hadn't yet said. |
| 3 | Q. Which he hadn't yet said. |
| 4 | If you look in this script, there is reference to |
| 5 | [you look at page 164, towards the |
| 6 | bottom, this is taken from the -- I think it is called |
| 7 | the sync pull, isn't it, that Meirion Jones had done. |
| 8 | He pulled this from the interview with [who we now |
| 9 | know is [redacted] You see what he says about |
| 10 | [redacted] being particularly horrible and so on, and |
| 11 | the reference to Jimmy Savile's dressing room. |
| 12 | Was that aspect, that there was an allegation of |
| 13 | something particularly nasty having taken place at the |
| 14 | BBC, was that something on your radar screen? |
| 15 | A. Not especially no. I had an early -- in that early |
| 16 | conversation with Liz she had suggested that there was |
| 17 | a Savile-related suggestion that something may have gone |
| 18 | on at Television Centre, but ... |
| 19 | Q. It doesn't appear that that aspect was really picked |
| 20 | up -- |
| 21 | A. No. |
| 22 | Q. -- not only by you, who on any view wasn't directly |
| 23 | involved in this story -- but by Ms MacKean or |
| 24 | Meirion Jones or Peter Rippon, is that right? |
| 25 | A. I agree with that. |

---

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Q. Is that right? So although this is one of the aspects which has been given a lot of publicity recently, it wasn't the focus.
A. No.
Q. Did Meirion Jones or Liz MacKean ever suggest, so far as you were aware, that that should be the focus --
A. No.
Q. -- that was something they had in mind?
A. No.
Q. What about the, in their -- the non-Jimmy Savile aspects of this?
A. Yes, I wasn't aware of the non-Jimmy Savile. I mean obviously it is in the script but I -- again I'm not sure it's something that they were pursuing.
Q. Is it your understanding -- maybe you didn't have an understanding -- that all of the Duncroft girls had already been spoken to by the police or investigated by the police to some extent?
A. I didn't know about that. I wasn't aware of what the police situation was at all, in relation to the girls we'd spoken to.
Q. But you understood later that --
A. I...
Q. -- a reason for the story not running was that this CPS, police/CPS aspect couldn't be stood up?
Page 37
A. Yes.
Q. That only makes sense, or at least makes more sense, if all of the girls have been spoken to by the police.
A. Certainly if some -- if -- my assumption was that we'd found out about the police investigation through a victim.
Q. So you would agree then that this script looks as if it's got two twists, if I can put it like that. Is one that Savile was a nasty paedophile and the second one was that the police and the CPS had not pursued him for, as it were, perhaps a bad reason. Not that there wasn't enough evidence to go against him, but because he was too old and infirm?
A. Yes.
Q. And that was going to be --
A. As I say, I don't remember -- I don't recollect looking at it in detail, but I certainly knew that there was a police element to the story that we had.
Q. Now on the 29th it was clear by this stage, wasn't it, that word had got out to a part of the BBC called Impact, is that right?
A. Um-hm.
Q. Is that something that should have happened by this stage of the story?
A. Um, what normally happens with Impact is I would have Page 38
theless, conversations with them on a sort of formal, weekly level and occasionally on an informal level about what was coming up.
Q. When would you do that? Was this story ready for that conversation?
A. I would say not. But it's not unprecedented for, you know, people to have conversations with -- directly with a team on something that they are looking into. Particularly if they have a relationship with them through past projects.
Q. Had you told Impact about Jimmy Savile?
A. No.
Q. But somebody clearly had.
A. Yes.
Q. Who do you think was that? Who do you think --
A. I assume it was the production team.
Q. So either Meirion Jones or Liz MacKean?
A. Yes.
Q. It is fair to say that the Impact team was anticipating a huge amount of interest in story, if it ran, wasn't it?
A. One of the members of the Impact team was. Yes, that was her view.
Q. Did anybody on the Impact team take a different view?
A. She was the only person that I was aware of that knew Page 39
A. Yes.
Q. Go to 179 please. Jo Mathysa is a senior producer in the Impact team.
A. Yes.
Q. Is Helen Weaver -- is she in the same team?
A. She's in the same team.
Q. She's in the same team.
A. Yes.
Q. You were copied this at the time. You have probably seen this in the last couple of days, have you?
A. Yes.
Q. "Hi Peter, I have just had a very interesting chat with Meirion about Jimmy Savile. I won't mention anything to Programmes until you and he are ready for me to do so." Just help me with what part of the BBC that is.
A. Programmes means News programmes. It just means -- it's Page 40
1. an overarching term for, I mean in some -- in some context it can mean the non-bulletins, but I would imagine in these terms she'd mean bulletins and structured programmes.

5. Q. So it doesn't mean programmes in the sense that Helen Boaden has explained to us that Steve Mitchell is head of programmes --

8. A. Sorry, yes, head of programmes -- so there is essentially the head of programmes which is, um, non-bulletin types things: Newsnight, Today, World at One, PM and so on. The newsroom is basically online and bulletins.

13. Q. You think that means programmes in a more ordinary sense?

15. A. I think it means --

16. MR POLLARD: Other news outlets?

17. A. I think it means all news outlets, yes.

18. MR MACLEAN: We can read the emails where she explains that she thinks it is safe to assume there is going to be a huge amount of interest and they want Liz MacKean to do pieces on put on the radio and television and online and so on.

21. If you go to page 230, for some reason the reply to this is in bundle -- can I just tell you what it says.

23. On the 29th, at 14.45, Peter Rippon replies to this email we were just looking at --

1. this story was going to run?

2. A. Well, he certainly had a conversation with me in which he -- I'm now speculating that it would have been around 4 this time, having seen how things developed, where he said he was only content to run with the story as it stood if he could get the CPS line stood up.

7. Q. Did you form a view as to how or why -- how and why he'd come to that conclusion?

9. A. Well, because I think it then obviously established that a police investigation had decided to cover up the idea that Jimmy Savile was a paedophile, because they felt he was too old, rather than that there wasn't sufficient evidence.

14. Q. Did he discuss with you the desire or need to take Mr Mitchell's view again?

16. A. No.

17. Q. Do you know whether he spoke to Steve Mitchell around this time?

19. A. No.

20. Q. Steve Mitchell was in Belfast, I think, on 29 November?

22. A. Right.

23. Q. Do you recall that?

25. A. No.

24. Q. So what would -- how would you characterise Peter Rippon's attitude to this story? We saw the

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Liz MacKean email at the beginning which suggested that you were, as it were, at the sceptical end. He was perhaps a little less sceptical but still sceptical. We know Shaminder Nahal, I think a bit later, was less sceptical than either of you.

Peter Rippon described his attitude to us at the beginning as being lukewarm. What was your view of Peter Rippon's attitude to the story?

A. I -- I wouldn't feel comfortable characterising it.

Q. Did it -- whatever it was, did you perceive it changing in any way, either warming up or cooling down?

A. Not -- not from a warmth to a cold. I think he was weighing things up, one way or the other, all the way through to be honest.

MR POLLARD: Can I just push you on the reluctance to categorise it. If you like you are a witness to all the way through November, from the day you get back from holiday. I appreciate you were not talking about this story all the time because there were lots of other things going on. But it would be helpful to get a sense of, you know, at that key level of editor, deputy editor, when the story came up or, you know, when there was a development in it, I think all we're asking is how did he see? I mean on a scale of 1 to 10 of very cold and red hot, was it --
A. That's true.

Q. -- an extensive investigation?

A. Yes.

Q. The investigation knew that the police had investigated, but it didn't know why it hadn't gone any further. So that sentence -- I appreciate it's not your email -- isn't accurate.

A. Um-hm.

Q. Right?

A. Um-hm.

Q. It also refers to two victims -- two victims on tape --

A. Yes.

Q. -- when in fact there was only one victim on tape.

A. Yes, that is right, yes.

Q. And it says that the women are, "Credible..."

A. Where does it say that?

Q. The pre-penultimate paragraph.

A. Yeah, okay.

Q. "... And have no motive for speaking to us, other than they want the truth to be known."

Were you ever aware of, or party to, any discussion about the fact that some of the women may have had some other motive for speaking to the BBC?

A. Only subsequently. Since.

Q. And that was what?

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A. As in -- in recent months.

Q. No --

A. One of them had a... point, was it?

Q. It was the... point, was it?

A. Yes.

Q. You don't remember that being a factor discussed at the time?

A. No.

Q. We see the reference to "credible". Liz MacKean's email at the beginning of the story has both you and Peter Rippon being concerned about the credibility of the women.

A. Um-hm.

Q. Do you know how Peter Rippon would have come to the conclusion, if he did, by 29th, that the women were credible? Did he have a discussion with you about it saying, "I'm now cheered up by the credibility"?

A. No.

Q. Did you know that he had or hadn't looked at the film of...?

A. I didn't know whether he had or not.

Q. If you had been in his position, would you have done that?

A. Not necessarily.

Q. Not necessarily at all or not necessarily at this stage?

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<td>1. A. Not necessarily at this stage.</td>
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<td>2. Q. So he said, I think -- I will be corrected if I'm</td>
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<td>wrong -- that he had the script. In fact he had a later</td>
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<td>iteration of it, ROUGHSAVILE 5 -- I can't remember if</td>
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<td>you saw that, but it is to much the same effect. And he</td>
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<td>hadn't looked at the film then but he said he would have</td>
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<td>done, once they got the edit and pulled it all together,</td>
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<td>he would have looked at the piece before it was</td>
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<td>broadcast.</td>
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<td>10. A. Yes, a rough cut and then made changes and approved it for</td>
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<td>12. Q. If you had been in his position you might have done the</td>
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<td>same?</td>
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<td>14. A. Yes.</td>
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<td>15. Q. But it might be said that before you form a view about</td>
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<td>the credibility of a witness that you have on tape, one</td>
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<td>of the best ways of doing that is to look at the tape?</td>
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<td>18. A. Yes, that's true.</td>
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<tr>
<td>19. Q. So you didn't see this email and you didn't see,</td>
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<td>20. I assume -- no reason why you should have done --</td>
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<td>Steve Mitchell you see over the page says he's in</td>
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<td>Belfast, 'Can call you later'. And then there is</td>
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<td>another email from Peter Rippon in which he's copied</td>
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<td>bits from the ROUGHSAVILE script and he's --</td>
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<tr>
<td>24. A. Yes.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>25. A. Yes.</td>
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</table>

1. A. Yes. |
2. Q. And then you see what you are doing here is you are |
3. sending on the 11.30 email to Peter Rippon. |
4. A. Yes. |
5. Q. And you say: |
6. "Are you going to exec this? I'm not sure Joe M is |
7. right about other outlets clamouring to run it, but |
8. I may be wrong, especially pre-watershed. Anyway I have |
9. no problem with the 5pm embargo if you don't." |
10. The reference to pre-watershed is to do with the |
11. subject matter of the piece? |
12. A. Yes. |
13. Q. It looks as if it hasn't been decided who is going to |
14. exec the piece at this stage. |
15. A. No I wouldn't say that is right, I just wanted to be |
16. absolutely clear that I could not get involved in |
17. re-versioning of various versions and that he would take |
18. control of it, because there was occasionally situations |
19. where he would be overseeing a project and then it would |
20. come to me at the last minute, and I wanted to be |
21. absolutely clear that he had the line of control in this |
22. case. |
23. Q. So you didn't want the hospital pass further down the |
24. line; is that your concern? |
25. A. For all the reasons I have explained before, I felt |

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there had to be a clear line of command on a story of this nature.

Q. Was one of the reasons that you didn’t want to get involved in this that you didn’t want to trample on the toes of BBC1?

A. Not remotely. I had 101 other projects to be excising at that time, including a very controversial one with The Guardian.

Q. And you didn’t want Newsnight to be running a story that would be seen to piss off BBC1?

A. No. That had absolutely no impact on my view. It wasn’t even an issue when I came back from holiday, when I expressed my concerns.

Q. You probably know why I’m asking you that question?

A. Yes, I do.

Q. You have seen the email from Liz MacKean to one of her friends, a Mr Hughes, a little bit down the track on 6 December where she says:

"Having commissioned this story Peter Rippon keeps saying he’s lukewarm about it. He’s trying to kill it by making impossible editorial demands. When we rebut his points he resorts to saying it was 40 years ago ...

he hasn’t warned BBC1 about the story so they are beavering away on the special oblivious. Liz G has said to Meirion, I’m having nothing to do with this.

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I don’t want to piss off Danny Cohen, it is down to Peter."

So she’s recording in her email to her friend what Meirion Jones appears to have reported to her about what you said to him. So what do you --

6. A. That’s not remotely true.

7. Q. What did you say so Meirion Jones?

8. A. I don’t remember any conversations with him in the course of the investigation. I remember him coming up to me around the time it looked like the CPS line was not going to stand up, expressing concerns that it would look like a cover up and I said I didn’t think it would, because it wasn’t.

9. Q. Can you account for why Meirion Jones might have said this to Liz MacKean?

10. A. No.

11. MR POLLARD: It just seems a bizarre thing, doesn’t it, to pluck out of the atmosphere? I can understand all the reported conversations about he doesn’t want to run it, he won’t listen to the evidence or he has things up his sleeve. But to suddenly suggest that you had made a reference to Danny Cohen, clearly something involving BBC1 -- you had no conversation, no mention about

12. Danny Cohen or BBC1?

13. A. No, I have never even met Danny Cohen.

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1. Programmes Risk List?
2. A. Um, that is to alert -- I don't actually know, to this
day, who gets it, but it's to alert people within the
organisation to potentially controversial stories.
3. Q. Why?
4. A. So that those that may have a view on elements of --
aspects of them that the programme team may need to know
are in a -- are in a position to seek that advice or
knowledge.
5. Q. So --
6. A. For example, if there were -- if we were working on
a story about the phone hacking for example and it
turned out Panorama was too, if you see what I mean?
7. Q. Yes.
8. MR POLLARD: Do you want a short break?
9. MR MACLEAN: We're about to come to some of the detail of
this. We need to have a break every so often for the
transcribers. So can we just have ten minutes?
10. A. Yes, sure.
11. (11.40 am)
12. (A short break)
13. (11.50 am)
14. MR MACLEAN: Can we look at this list in a little bit more
detail? There are a variety of things. Can I just show
you, first of all, in bundle A4, page 29.004 --
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1. current affairs, and you see the Newsnight stories at
page 16; academies, phone hacking and so on.
2. Then by the time you get to page 12 you are on to
BBC3.
3. A. Yes.
4. Q. Then it is radio and so on.
5. A. Yes.
6. Q. As we understand it, this is the -- the Editorial
Standards Board is the ultimate highest level consumer
of the Managed Programmes Risk List?
7. A. Right, that makes sense, yes.
8. Q. And that is presumably not something that you would see?
9. A. No.
10. Q. That's well above your level on the programme?
11. A. Yes.
12. Q. In between, in order to get to this stage as we
understand it -- but tell me if your understanding is
different -- a programme has to put a piece that it is
going to do on to this list at base camp, if you like.
In Newsnight's case that's done by you, usually by you,
and you send it to somebody called Sara Beck who works
in Steve Mitchell's office?
13. A. That's right.
14. Q. And then the Newsnight feed into this list is then
collated with the feed in from people in a similar role
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1. to you in other programmes, and then that gets sent by
Steve Mitchell's office to the News list, which goes to
a News board chaired by Helen Boaden. Then from there
fed up to this at the top of the tree.
2. A. You know more about it than me, but that sounds right.
3. Q. So your role is what I unfairly characterised as "base
camp" here; feeding the information to Sara Beck. Once
you have done that, that's it, is it, so far as you your
involvement?
4. A. Yes.
5. Q. So --
6. MR POLLARD: I just ask: can you add things -- from your
purpose in this, your role, can you add things at any
7. time?
8. A. I wouldn't normally. I would normally wait for, um, her
to send me round a list to say, "Is this updated, is
this up to date?" And then I would -- I would check it
and update it. So I won't necessarily go to her and
say, "By the way, there is a new one for the MPRL".
9. MR POLLARD: Okay. But because obviously Newsnight has
quick turn around items --
10. A. Yes.
11. MR POLLARD: -- I'm just wondering whether, if you had
a particularly controversial item and you thought you
were going to transmit it in, say, a fortnight, and you
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15 (Pages 57 to 60)
A. That would have been -- that would be referred to Steve anyway. So it would -- you know.

MR POLLARD: But would you send Sara Beck a quick email and say, "I know we did the MPRL two days ago".

A. I might do.

MR POLLARD: But I have another one to --

A. I might do, but I wouldn't necessarily as a matter of course, but, yes, sometimes I would, yes.

MR MACLEAN: I am afraid I have forgotten. How long you have been at the BBC?

A. Since 1997.

Q. So do you know when this Managed Programmes Risk List came in?

A. No.

Q. Or why it came in?

A. No.

Q. So if I was to suggest to you that it might have been an innovation of Mr Byford, does that ring any bell?

A. It could well be.

Q. What kind of risk, as it were, qualifies to be on this list?

A. Um, I think it's loosely characterised as potentially controversial stories. So anything with a legal perspective or an editorial policy perspective, or

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controversial in any way. Which would normally, to be honest, involve some sort of legal or ed pol issue.

Q. So running a story that a live person, someone who is still alive, was a paedophile, whether they had ever been to the BBC in their lives, that would be a controversial story in itself?

A. Yes.

Q. Because if you get it wrong there is a reputational risk to the BBC and if you get it right there is a reputational risk to the living person?

A. Yes.

Q. So whichever way it goes it is controversial. If you add to the mix that the person worked at the BBC, was a BBC celebrity, then that's all the more clearly --

A. Yes.

Q. -- a controversial story?

A. Yes.

Q. So the fact that a story might have a reputational risk for the BBC might qualify a story to be on the Programme Risk List?

A. Yes, but it would -- I think whether Jimmy Savile had worked for the BBC or not, I think it would have ended up on the MPRL, a story of that nature.

Q. For the reasons I have just been exploring?

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A. Yes.

Q. You know, and we know, that the Jimmy Savile story was on what I characterised as the base camp list.

Can I just show you what we have about this? I don't think we have the full picture. It's not a criticism of you in any way.

If we go to bundle 2, page 188, you got back from holiday on I think we decided Monday 7th.

A. Um-hm.

Q. This is the following week. Now, can you just help us to unpick this? At the bottom of the page there is an email from you to Sara Beck on 17 November at 25 past 6 in the evening.

A. Um-hm.

Q. And Fiona Connory. She works for Peter Rippon, is that right?

A. Yes.

Q. Can you help us with what is going on here?

A. Yes.

Q. There is all sorts of different fonts. It may be people are replying by writing into somebody else's email.

A. What is --

A. What that is, is every week Steve Mitchell would put out a note to the entire programmes team in which the highlights of that week, of the week's show would be

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celebrated in this list.

Q. So the David Miliband business is celebrating what happened the week before?

A. Yes, exactly.

Q. Right.

A. So this is something that -- well it would normally be whoever was least busy, but Peter and I and sometimes Shaminde would do. We would get a prompt from Fiona, or whoever was Peter's PA, to say, "Could you do your pick of the week?" And we would do it and send it on to her.

Q. Right. So, "Our biggest coup of the week", that is Newsnight's biggest coup of the week?

A. Yes.

Q. And Vulture Funds is Newsnight?

A. Yes.

MR POLLARD: Just so I'm clear, there would have been a previous email from Sara Beck to you saying --

A. Sara might have emailed Fiona and said --

MR POLLARD: "Can you give us your highlights?" Got it, right.

MR MACLEAN: In your email with the pick of the week starting with the youth unemployment case. These are your words, are they, "Here you are Sara?"
1. Q. Is that you? Is this also you, "Can you send me the latest MPRL, by the way. Ta."?
2. A. I assume that is me. It is hard to know, actually.
3. Q. It is hard to know. Then it appears, but this might not be right, that the following day at 9.56 she sends you an email saying: "Welcome back, here you are, although it has been rather mad these last two weeks and all a bit neglected."
4. So it looks as if she then sends you the list with the Newsnight stories, on which you can see is 11. Jimmy Savile. 13. A. Yes. 14. Q. In the last column, that last column is identifying the exec producer, I think, or the commissioner?
5. A. Yes. 17. Q. Maybe that is the same thing, is it?
6. A. Yes, normally. 19. Q. So it might be, it looks as if the Newsnight story has been put on the list and sent to Sara Beck by somebody else while you are away, is that right?
7. A. Yes, it does seem that way. 21. MR POLLARD: You have not added it in the 11 days since you got back from holiday?
8. A. It doesn't look like it from this, does it? Page 65

1. MR MACLEAN: Not from, "Welcome back". 2. A. It is possible that Peter added it while I was away. 3. Q. The risk that is identified is, "Legal/taste". So those would have been the words used by whoever put it on the list at what I call base camp?
4. A. Um-hm. 5. Q. I had rather assumed, at least for some time, that that might have been you, given the word "taste" in the MacKen email, but it may be that it wasn't?
6. A. I actually assumed it was me. But I'm beginning to think maybe it wasn't. 7. Q. Then you say: "I've been back for two weeks believe it or not... "
8. So it does look as if this is the first contact you have had with Sara Beck: "... But been slow to get nose to grindstone properly. Will have a look at this later and update." 9. Now if you then go to bundle 3, at page 66, who is Emma Wilson?
10. A. Um, I don't know. 20. Q. And Stephanie Harris?
11. A. She works, I think, in Helen Boaden's office. 22. Q. So this is, "Subject: Programmes MPRL. MPRL News programmes Nov.doc. Here's our list, hope it makes sense, Sara."

1. Q. -- that you were, "Slow to get your nose to grindstone... "
2. A. Yes. 4. Q. "... Will have a look at this later and update"?
3. A. Yes. 5. Q. Now 18 November was -- it was a Friday. So 21st would be the Monday.
6. A. Right. 9. Q. So having said at lunch time, 12.13 on the Friday: "Will have look at this later and update".
10. I infer that you got down to it -- 11. A. I got round to it on the Monday, yes.
12. Q. At 13.21. So you then say to Sara Beck:
13. "Here you are, I feel that there is something I have forgotten. It will come back to me."
14. If we compare the list that she sent you with the one that you sent her -- 15. A. Um-hm.
16. Q. -- some of the same things are on.
17. A. Some additional things. 20. Q. Some have dropped off, for example Egypt.
21. A. No, that is still there. 22. Q. Sorry, you are right. You are right that has come on.
23. Some of the ones are still the same. But anyway 24. Jimmy Savile is still there and you say, "Something
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<td>1. I have forgotten, it will come back to me”. And then 2. the one that comes back to you, you remember, which is 3. Tottenham.</td>
<td>1. happening in Vision and equally that Vision would not 2. want to be in a position where they knew something which 3. would mean that they would be trying to influence what 4. was happening in News.</td>
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<td>4. A. Yes.</td>
<td>5. MR MACLEAN: Did that not strike you as just bizarre, as 6. a matter of logic?</td>
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<td>5. Q. And then, on 22nd Sara Beck tells you that: 6. &quot;Just so you know, have taken Jimmy Savile off for 7. now and will put back on when its imminent. The 8. document goes quite far in Vision, et cetera, and we 9. thought it might be best to keep off just for now.&quot;</td>
<td>7. A. Well, I asked Peter the question when it came up as 8. an issue, because I genuinely didn't know how the BBC 9. dealt with situations of this nature.</td>
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<td>10. What did you understand was happening and why?</td>
<td>10. MR POLLARD: But even not knowing how the BBC dealt with it, 11. the implication would seem to be that the way was being 12. cleared for Vision to make programmes saying what the 13. great bloke he was and telling everybody at Christmas, 14. while Newsnight, with a carefully built wall between the 15. two, was doing a programme about what a horrible 16. disgusting person he was. And the mechanism by which 17. that might be prevented had been kept -- had been 18. stripped away, if you like.</td>
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<td>19. A. I agree. But I can see that the alternative would be 20. potentially problematic as well.</td>
<td>19. MR POLLARD: Why would it be problematic?</td>
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<td>21. MR POLLARD: What is the logic of that, then?</td>
<td>22. A. Because there would be a perception of influence one way 23. or the other.</td>
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<td>24. A. I understand Steve and Sara, but I don't know 25. for certain.</td>
<td>24. MR MACLEAN: But look at it from Vision's point of view.</td>
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<td><strong>Page 71</strong></td>
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<td>1. Q. And it would be Steve's decision to take these things 2. off the list. I mean Sara Beck, she tells us in her 3. statement, she wouldn't take anything off the list 4. without Steve Mitchell telling her to; he was her boss. 5. Had you come across this situation before, of 6. a programme being put on to the MPRL and taken off 7. again, not because the story didn't run or had been 8. canned or whatever, but for this type of reason? 9. A. Not that I can recollect. But that's not to say it 10. didn't happen.</td>
<td>1. programmes to this national icon which I'm going to have 2. on BBC1 on Boxing Day. And in another part of the BBC 3. journalists are uncovering evidence that the fellow was 4. a particularly nasty paedophile. If I know that, that's 5. got obvious implications, hasn't it, for my scheduling. 6. I'm not going to run tributes to somebody who has been, 7. or is about to be, exposed as a paedophile, am I? 8. A. If it was felt that there was sufficient evidence to 9. broadcast, then, no.</td>
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<td>10. Q. Did this strike you as odd?</td>
<td>11. Q. So there is every reason why the BBC's journalism in the 12. News side should influence the Vision scheduling of the 13. tribute programme. It is a different matter whether 14. Vision should be influencing Meirion Jones and 15. Liz MacKean and Peter Rippon, doing their journalism, 16. exerting some pressure on them to can the story or 17. something, but so far as Vision is concerned, the people 18. in Vision would be less than pleased, wouldn't they, if 19. they weren't given the heads up that News was planning 20. this story. Can you see that?</td>
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<td>19. MR POLLARD: Just explain to us what you understood by -- 20. this may be blindingly obvious, but explain anyway the 21. purpose of this Chinese wall, as you understood it, at 22. that point.</td>
<td>20. A. I can, but I can see it's a difficult situation.</td>
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<td>21. Q. Did it not strike you as slightly curious that to impose 22. Chinese walls in this sense was in fact preventing 23. Vision from having visibility of the Newsnight story on 24. the MPRL? That's a -- 25. A. That's not a question for me, really.</td>
<td>21. Q. But to take the Jimmy Savile story off the Risk List 22. might be thought to be subverting its whole purpose.</td>
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<td>23. A. As I understood it, the idea was not to -- my 24. understanding of it, which may be wrong, would be that 25. there would not be a desire to influence what was</td>
<td>23. A. I mean, I feel I did my job by ensuring it was on the 24. MPRL, and what happened to it afterwards -- 25. Q. I'm not suggesting you took it off. I'm just asking you</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. A. Well, if it was felt in News management that there was sufficient evidence for that, for Vision to be warned, that would have been a matter for them to decide.</td>
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<td>2. Q. But the next person up the line was Steve Mitchell, who was never even sent the script. He doesn't get the script. So News management was never going to be in that position to do that, were they? The only people who knew what Newsnight had were in Newsnight and to some extent Steve Mitchell?</td>
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<td>1. tributes. It is hiring Shane Ritchie and making arrangements to do the programme and so on. The later it gets, the bigger the problem, surely?</td>
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<td>2. A. Potentially.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Q. What did you understand by the reference to, &quot;Goes quite far in Vision et cetera&quot;? It goes quite high, is that the same as far?</td>
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<td>4. A. I took far to mean that a lot of people in Vision would get it, rather than a small number.</td>
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<td>5. Q. Why should that be a problem, that a lot of people knew or were given the information: &quot;Newsnight Jimmy Savile. Investigation by Liz MacKean. Legal/taste&quot;?</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. That is all they would see on this form. No reference to paedophilia, young girls, BBC premises, none of that: &quot;Jimmy Savile. Investigation by Liz MacKean. Legal/taste.&quot;</td>
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<td>7. A. Well, for whatever reason the decision was taken that it should not go far in vision, that -- even in that form of words.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Q. Is that because as soon as anybody in the BBC in Vision saw that, they would know what the investigation was likely to be about, without having to be told anything more?</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. for your views, as an intelligent observer of these facts as they now transpire; that it does seem, whether intentionally or otherwise, to have subverted the whole purpose of this list, by keeping Vision in the dark.</td>
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<td>2. A. Well, for whatever reason that decision -- the decision was taken that was the right thing to do.</td>
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<td>3. Q. We've asked a number of people this question. We know that, for whatever reason the Newsnight story doesn't run and by about 9 December when the CPS information comes through, that is the, as it were, the tin hat on it from Peter Rippon's point of view. The story has been, perhaps, you might think, dying a death for a few days, but that's the end of it.</td>
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<td>4. But nonetheless Newsnight had gathered information, evidence, which at the very least suggested that Jimmy Savile was a nasty paedophile, right? Whether it was enough to run with is another matter. It doesn't appear that there was any discussion or thought at the Newsnight end of going to Vision at that stage and saying, &quot;We're not running this story because we don't think editorially it's strong enough, but we ought to tell you that actually we've got some evidence that this fellow probably was a nasty paedophile and you ought to know about it, because you are still planning these tribute programmes.&quot;</td>
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<th>Reed Smith Meetings</th>
<th>22 November 2012</th>
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| 1. A. Not necessarily. | 1. Newsnight -- nobody has got the information which kills the story eventually. So the position, so far as that's concerned, is that Newsnight is still pursuing the CPS angle. |
| 2. Q. But isn't that what this was about? Since everybody, as it were, knew that Jimmy Savile was a paedophile, as soon as people in Vision saw these words at 227, they would immediately know that there was going to be a Jimmy Savile sexual abuse story? | 5. You are familiar with -- I haven't actually showed you Peter Rippon's email of the 30th -- |
| 7. A. Potentially, yes. But I took it as a -- as a decision to ensure that there was no undue influence exerted one way or the other. | 7. A. Yes, I know about it, yes. |
| 10. Q. I understand that, but it is important this: was that your understanding of what underlay this; this concern about going quite far in Vision? | 8. Q. "Pondered overnight..." |
| 13. A. Yes, that was my -- yes, that was my understanding. | 9. A. Yes. |
| 14. Q. So it would go quite far in Vision and Vision would understand, just from this entry on the MPRI, that this was -- they would understand what the investigation was about? | 10. Q. "... The key being the CPS." |
| 17. A. I don't think they necessarily would, no. | 11. A. Yes. |
| 18. Q. Because otherwise, if they -- it might be into somebody's, I don't know, an investigation into somebody's tax affairs or whatever. If they would have no idea what the investigation was, it's hard to see why the fact that it goes quite far in Vision matters a jot, isn't it? | 12. Q. So that key, one way or the other, has not been produced yet? |
| 22. A. Except if they were working on a tribute programme and the idea that we were investigating Jimmy Savile would suggest that we weren't looking into anything particularly nice. | 13. A. Um-hm. |
| 24. Q. So academies is the first one, boxing is the last one. | 15. Q. 8 December, from Sara Beck to you. Does this need changing? So she then sends you the extract which is -- presumably the story is then on this list from Newnight. Sorry, page 55. |
| 26. Q. Because that's not a story at all. What was the concern about what Vision would then do that involved -- that necessitated the Chinese wall being built? | 20. Q. So academies is the first one, boxing is the last one. |
| 27. A. I took it, as I say, as an issue of protocol. If it were not on there then there could be no suggestion of undue influence being exerted either way. | 21. A. Yes. |
| 29. Q. And there had been some rather heated exchanges, hadn't there? | 10. Q. On 30 November between -- |
| 30. A. No. | 13. A. It was the 30th? |
| 31. Q. This wasn't quite the end of the story. Do you have bundle 4? Take bundle 4, please. Go to page 55. This is 8 December. As it happens, this is the day before the CPS note comes through which is the tin hat from Peter Rippon's point of view. So he hasn't got -- | 14. Q. -- Meirion Jones and Liz MacKean, on the one hand, and Peter Rippon on the other. And Liz MacKean sends some emails to her friend Jackie Long on the 30th. |
| 32. A. That sounds about right, yes. | 17. A. Yes. |
| 33. Q. Do you have some more detail there that I haven't got? | 18. Q. Is that right? |
| 34. A. No, I'm just looking -- yes, that looks about right. | 19. A. That sounds about right, yes. |
| 35. Q. Then Sara Beck replies to you, over the page, page 56: "Thank you very much. Will keep Savile off until we know for sure." | 20. Q. Then Sara Beck replies to you, over the page, page 56: "Thank you very much. Will keep Savile off until we know for sure." |
| 36. By this time, the original transmission date has | 25. By this time, the original transmission date has |
1 passed.
2 A. That's right, yes.
3 Q. So what's the state of play now then?
4 A. Well, I think Peter had previously sent an email saying,
5 "Let's stop working on other elements until we know
6 about the CPS."
7 Q. Did anything else happen? I infer that, given what
8 happened on 9 December, there was no need for any
9 further communication with Sara Beck about the MPRL, so
10 far as Savile was concerned?
11 A. Probably not. Not that I can recall.
12 Q. Just going back to 30 November for a moment. Put
13 bundle 4 to one side and take up bundle 3, page 214
14 first of all. This is what we refer to as the,
15 "Pondered overnight", email. At least I do.
16 A. Yes, yes.
17 Q. It is not copied to you, but presumably you became aware
18 on 30 November, did you, that Peter Rippon had come to
19 this view?
20 A. It must have been around that time, yes.
21 Q. "The key is whether we can establish the CPS did drop
22 the case for the reasons the women say. That makes
23 a much better story."
24 Pausing there, we may have touched on this earlier,
25 but just let me be absolutely clear. Did you have any

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1 understanding about how, or in what circumstances,
2 Mitchell come to the view that this was the key?
3 A. Um, no. But I can see why he would think it was the
4 key.
5 Q. Because it would make it a better story?
6 A. Because it would establish that there was sufficient
7 evidence to prosecute, but the decision was taken not to
8 prosecute on the grounds of his age, rather than that
9 there was insufficient evidence to prosecute.
10 Q. And we see that he says:
11 "Our sources are just the women and a secondhand
12 briefing."
13 As we touched on earlier, this led immediately to
14 some heated exchanges in the office.
15 A. Yes.
16 Q. Were you a spectator or a party to any of those?
17 A. I wasn't a party to them. I would say most of the
18 office was a spectator to them in some form.
19 Q. If you look at 215, Liz MacKean's email to Jackie Long
20 that morning at 10.30:
21 "PR in an absolute spin. He has already done
22 the surrender gesture and told me and Mel, 'If the
23 bosses aren't happy (they won't be) I can't go to the
24 wall to this one."
25 Did you witness that --

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1 A. No.
2 Q. -- discussion? Peter Rippon doing the surrender
3 gesture?
4 A. No.
5 Q. Whether it was this or that (indicates).
6 A. No.
7 Q. At page 220, the reference to, "A very long political
8 chain"?
9 A. Yes, again I have only seen or heard that allegation
10 since.
11 Q. Did you -- you say most of the office witnessed these
12 exchanges. What do you remember witnessing?
13 A. I don't -- I wasn't party to any conversations that were
14 had between Liz and Meirion and Peter. There was
15 just --
16 MR POLLARD: When you said a spectator, most of the office
17 was a spectator, do you mean raised voices --
18 A. I do not remember raised voices, but I think -- it's
19 a small office, people knew that Meirion and Liz were
20 working on this story and that Peter was keen for the
21 CPS line to be established before going for it to be
22 broadcast. That was well known in the office and the
23 fact that it had caused tensions was also very
24 well known. Whether people knew the specifics of what
25 had been asked to be proven or not, I don't know. But

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1 people certainly knew that it had reached a peak.
2 Q. Who is Hannah MacInnes?
3 A. She's a researcher on Newsnight.
4 Q. Jo Mathys we know is on the Impact team.
5 A. Yes.
6 Q. If we go to 222 in that same bundle, this, I think, is
7 the only email we have from you that day.
8 A. Right.
9 Q. You are obviously in the office, or at least you are
10 working.
11 A. Yes.
12 Q. Who is Jennifer?
13 A. Jennifer? She's -- she was working -- she was at that
14 point compiling the list that goes to -- that is
15 compiled by Impact and goes to all programmes about what
16 is coming up on the following week's programme.
17 Q. She's working with or for Jo Mathys?
18 A. Yes.
19 Q. They are in the same part of the empire?
20 A. Exactly at that point, yes.
21 Q. Then you say:
22 "I'm not going to mention Jimmy Savile investigation
23 in next week's prospects for Jennifer because is still
24 sensitive and legally complicated and may not run, so
25 can we not mention it at the meeting please."
1. So what was the meeting, first of all?
2. A. So basically this -- on a Wednesday I would alert the
3. Impact team to the prospects that we were planning for
4. the next -- so any kind of big items that we were
5. planning to run that week I would send to Jo Mathys and
6. I would copy in Hannah MacInnes because she would be the
7. representative from Newsnight at that Thursday morning
8. 10am meeting, where the programmes' planning teams meet
9. to discuss what is coming up.
10. And I don't know whether I pre-empted what I was
11. about to send or whether this was an additional email
12. that I sent after I sent the planning grid to Jo; to
13. make it clear that I wasn't going to add it to the list.
14. Q. You obviously have an understanding in this email that
15. it was legally complicated?
16. A. Yes, I mean, it wasn't legally complicated. I probably
17. just wrote that as a -- it wasn't legally complicated.
18. Q. Nobody had ever suggested to you it was legally
19. complicated, had they?
20. A. No.
21. Q. And you don't understand that it was legally
22. complicated?
23. A. No.
24. Q. Did you know that Meirion Jones had run it past Mr Law?
25. A. I knew that Roger had seen it, had been copied in on it.

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26. Q. He hadn't raised any objections?
27. A. He may have done to Meirion and not copied me in on the
28. response. I don't know whether it had gone to the point
29. of being lawyered.
30. Q. We were told that there was a potential problem of
31. somebody who was still alive but they weren't going to
32. mention them in the script. Jimmy Savile was dead and
33. the view was taken that there wasn't much to fear from
34. bringing a libel action so it was okay to
35. mention him, for perhaps obvious reasons.
36. That was not a reference to sensitive in the
37. Newsnight office, that was a reference to sensitive
38. across the BBC.
39. A. No. That was a reference to -- this is the kind of
40. story that we can't -- a lot of people get that email
41. and we don't necessarily alert everyone on that list to
42. things that are coming up. I mean, I would do that
43. actually quite frequently with stories that I felt that,
44. you know, we wouldn't necessarily want people at that
45. level in News to know until the day. This is pretty
46. common.
47. Q. This is back to the Chinese walls?
48. A. No. Well, it is different. So any kind of
49. controversial investigation really that was -- that
50. I felt that it would not be good if our colleagues in

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21. Q. In what circumstances might you, in your experience,
22. want to do so? A reason for doing so?
23. A. Um --
24. Q. I am not suggesting you ever have.
25. A. No, I can't think of a reason until recently why I would
26. want to.
27. Q. I won't ask you about that.
28. There's a regular meeting on, I think, a Monday
29. morning which is called an "investigations meeting" at
30. Newsnight. At least it is diarised.
31. A. Yes. It didn't really happen very much. I think it was
32. a -- it was a certainly an aspiration from Peter that
33. Meirion and he and I, if we were around, would have
34. catch up on investigations --
35. Q. And Shaminder, I think, as well?
36. A. If she were around.
37. Q. If we look at Peter Rippon's diary for a Monday,
38. habitually at 11.30, there is an investigations routine,
40. A. It could be in his diary.
41. Q. You are not the first person to tell us it didn't happen
42. very regularly.
43. A. No.
44. Q. So what happened in the aftermath of 30 November, these
45. discussions that we have seen, and then in the next few

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days, leading up to the CPS information and thereafter?
1. The decision was made to drop the story. Was that, 2.
as far as you could tell, accepted by everybody else and 3.
everybody got on with doing other things, or did it 4.
leave a bad taste?
5. A. I don't think Meirion was particularly happy, but nor 6.
did I get the impression he was -- I saw no fights or 7.
arguments or anything that's been reported of that 8.
nature.
9.
10. Q. In bundle 4, at page 32, despite an email we have just 11.
seen from you on 30 November, the Jo Methys and 12.
Hannah Maclunes and Jennifer one -- I think this might 13.
be a different part of the BBC, just help me with how 14.
she fits in.
15. Do you see the email from Helen Deller on 7 December 16.
at 17.02?
17. A. I know the one you mean, because I have seen it since.
18. Hold on.
19.
20. A. Yes.
21. Q. 17.02 to Peter Rippon, Meirion Jones, copied to you and 22.
others.
23. A. Yes.
24. Q. Now, she's described as a publicist at BBC News. So she 25.
is still, it seems, under the misapprehension that -- or
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1. apprehension perhaps at the time -- that the piece was 2.
in the pipeline. And she has been still getting ready 3.
for this story potentially to run, hasn't she?
4. A. She appears to be, yes.
5. Q. How does that chime with the email from you we have just 6.
seen about not putting it on the list for the meeting 7.
the previous Thursday?
8. A. Well, Helen wouldn't be at that. That is a entirely 9.
 separate process, the alerting of the press office to 10.
things. The Impact team is about impact across BBC 11.
programmes, BBC News programmes.
12. Q. This is looking outside, is it?
13. A. Yes, the publicist for BBC News would be thinking about 14.
 external press relations.
15. Q. To the rest of the world?
16. A. Yes.
17. Q. She's looking at external press relations and then you 18.
see Mr Rippon's response at the top of the page, "Cart 19.
before the horse".
20. A. Yes.
21. Q. Then Meirion Jones disagreed with that. He sent 22.
Peter Rippon a reply at page 42. He says:
23. "Still waiting for CPS. Files are not electronic so 24.
they had to physically send out for them. Hope to have 25.
them tomorrow. As you know I already think story is
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1. strong enough and danger of not running it is 2.
substantial damage to BBC reputation, but no point 3.
having that discussion until I have final word from 4.
CPS."
5. That email is not copied to you. We know that two 6.
days later, in fact, the CPS letter came in. Were you 7.
aware of any discussion involving Meirion Jones and 8.
Peter Rippon, or anybody else for that matter, about the 9.
substantial damage to the BBC reputation that he 10.
identifies here?
11. A. No. Aside from the conversation which I have already 12.
related that he came up to me at my desk and said -- 13.
this was after the CPS thing had come back as a no, when 14.
he came up and said this will look bad for the BBC or 15.
whatever the words were. But at this point, no.
16. Q. If you look at page 77 have you seen the this email in 17.
the last few days, one of the ones we sent you?
18. A. Yes.
19. Q. Liz MacKean to Stuart Dennan:
20. "PR said to me and Mel I'm not going to the wall on 21.
this one. LG said I'm having nothing to do with this 22.
story, it's up to Peter."
23. If one were to read that email as being a criticism 24.
your, as it were, moral courage in all of this, what 25.
would you say?
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1. A. I don't know what she meant by it. But it does chime 2.
with things -- with what I have said before in the sense 3.
that I was trying to be very clear that I -- that there 4.
had to be a clearly editorial lead on the story to 5.
prevent different things being said to different people 6.
at different times.
7. Q. Just let me ask you a little bit more about this 8.
executive producer role. In this particular case 9.
Peter Rippon was the executive producer of the piece and 10.
he was also, obviously, the editor of the whole 11.
programme. What would you understand his additional 12.
involvement to be with this story because he was the 13.
executive producer?
14. In other words, compare this story with one where 15.
you were the executive producer and he was the editor of 16.
the programme.
17. A. Sure. Compare it to one I would do. So, um, there's no 18.
hard-and-fast rule, but the normal position would be 19.
I would commission something, establish that he was 20.
happy with it to go ahead. I would then oversee the 21.
gathering of the material, the way things were put 22.
together, what was shot, why it was shot, how it was 23.
shot, the kind of the legal and EdPol aspects and 24.
I would watch a rough cut, make suggestions and sign it 25.
off. Unless I felt that there was -- that it was
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| 1 | a story in which an additional level of sign off would be required from Peter as well. In which case I would bring him in to watch a final version. In the course of anything I was over looking if I felt I needed an additional bit of advice or sign off from him, I would seek it out, but essentially I would be the key point of contact for everything.  
But as I say, there's no hard-and-fast rule because occasionally there could be pieces that he would commission and then ask me to oversee, and then occasionally there would be a piece where he felt it was possibly a more visual piece than his direct skills were and he would ask me to oversee it because that's more my background. So I would come in at a later stage and make something.  
Q. So that email we looked at earlier in bundle 3, page 181, on the 29th when you asked Peter Rippon if he was excising it.  
A. Yes.  
Q. I know he didn't, but if he had said, "Actually, I would rather you did. Why don't you exec it?" It wasn't then, as it were, too late to exec the piece?  
A. Well, I sort of felt it was, really, because he had been across every aspect of the gathering of the evidence. I didn't really feel that it was something I could then pick up at the last minute, you know, aside from the fact I had a lot of other projects running at the same time and I didn't want to be in a position where I was having to pick something up that I hadn't been across the whole way through.  
Q. Were you clear in your mind, when you wrote that email on the 29th, "Are you going to exec this?" Did you think he already was, or did you think nobody was?  
A. Of course I thought he was, but I just wanted to be absolutely clear he was going to oversee the final version and all the versions that were going to be done for other outlets, if indeed other outlets wanted them.  
Q. I'm not sure we actually have a reply to your email. Did he reply?  
A. I can't remember that he would -- that he did, but he may well have done.  
MR POLLARD: Was that a story in which you were keen to get landed with it? And also to some extent -- and I'm just trying to get a sort of sense of the atmosphere and the colour in the newsroom, if you like. You had witnessed at the very least robust exchanges and Meinir in particular pushing very hard -- you might say using every trick in the book to get Peter on board with this story. I get the sense -- correct me if I'm wrong -- that you weren't very impressed by the way that had happened. Were these all factors in your decision really not to get involved with it?  
A. There was the initial factor about the initial concerns I had when I came back and the fact that there were other people on the senior team who had a different view, which made me think perhaps my view is wrong. You know, there was the issue of -- I felt there had to be a clear line of command on the story and there was the issue of I didn't want to end up in a situation with it close to TX where I was having to take on responsibility for overseeing the key story and versions of the story that I had not had involvement in up to that point. And I don't think that's an unreasonable position. So I think the answer is it was probably a combination of all those things.  
Q. So?  
MR MACLEAN: So you were concerned that a firm enough grip might not have been -- got a hold of the story.  
A. No, I wouldn't say that. But sometimes the way things work in the office is I take over a project if Peter is too busy or something and I just wanted to make clear that in this case it was not something I wanted to take over. I felt it was, you know, too significant a story for the editor not to be involved in a key fashion all the way through.  
Q. Right. We're nearly finished. Can I ask you just to look at page 219 in bundle 4? On New Year's Day, 11 minutes past 4, you sent an email to Helen Deller and Karen Rosine copied to Peter Rippon: "Just a heads up from a Newsnight colleague who has heard The Times are looking at running a story alleging that the BBC put Newsnight under pressure to drop the investigation into Jimmy Savile. Apparently they got this story from ___ Pretty sure I know who that is." The person you had in mind there was A. I don't actually know who I meant. I must --  
Q. Well I think I do. I do because if you go to page 223, Peter Rippon says, ___ That is ___ right?  
A. Yes.  
Q. "Still I'm very comfortable with the decision-making process." You say, "I was assuming ___ So that's who you had in mind?  
A. Um-hm. |
Q. Who was the Newsnight colleague who gave you the heads up?
A. Do I have to say?
Q. I'm asking you the question.
A. It was nobody involved in the -- in the Savile story.
Q. So they had heard from The Times, that was your understanding?
A. A friend at The Times, yes.
Q. Did he tell you who the friend was at The--Times?
A. No.
Q. Mr Williams-Thomas denied that it was him, didn't he?
A. Did he?
Q. Look at page 261. This is a different piece, this is The Sunday Mirror piece, but actually The Sunday Mirror eventually did run a story on 8 January. The Times didn't. 261:
"Good morning Peter, you are no doubt aware of the article in The Sunday Mirror. The reason for this email is to say that categorically I have not spoken to any newspaper about what I know and therefore the story has not come from me at all."
A. Okay.
Q. And then you know that there was a piece in The Oldie in February?
A. Yes.
Q. You passed an email, I think it was you, making a remark about The Oldie.
A. Possibly.
Q. And that had been trailed by the Guido Fawkes blog prior to that.
A. Yes.
Q. What did you understand to be the relationship between Meirion Jones and Mark Williams-Thomas about that story?
A. On that story?
Q. Yes, in 2012.
A. I wasn't aware there was one. But Meirion did -- was working with Mark Williams-Thomas on another potential project for Newsnight which -- some of which was filmed and didn't happen, around, sort of April/May time.
Q. Right. Then moving ahead to October 2012, the ITV stuff was heavily trailed in the press, wasn't it, in the days after the Exposure documentary?
A. Yes.
Q. On, I think, Monday 1 October, there was some discussion about whether Newsnight should itself run something --
A. Yes.
Q. -- on this story?
A. Yes.
Q. Some people, for example Jeremy Paxman were very keen that.
A. I don't think -- on that day he wasn't.
Q. The next day certainly he was keen.
A. Yes.
Q. And others were not keen and Peter Rippon was in the latter camp, wasn't he?
A. Yes.
Q. So, for example, bundle 7, page 3, Neil Breakwell had said -- was essentially asking whether Newsnight should cover the story, and he said:
"I think it would be a bit bizarre for us to jump on ITV's wagon at this point."
Q. If you go to page 8, Peter Rippon sent you an email:
"Will go to W1 for pilot kick off."
A. Yes, we were, yes.
Q. Because of the move to New Broadcasting House.
A. Yes.
Q. You replied at 9.30:
A. Um-hm.
Q. I just want to show you one more document, I think, at bundle 11 on 10 October. Newsnight eventually covered the story on the 11th.
A. That sounds right, if it was a Thursday.
Q. The announcement about this review and Darne Janet's review, I think, was made on the 12th.
A. Yes.
Q. The second email down, 11.13 on the 10th, Peter Rippon:
"Okay. At W1 initially then will come over.
Chatted to Shaminder about big Savile take out tomorrow.
We should then do some good sex abuse investigations
like MWT. Bored of being exhausted and on the back
foot."

What is, "The big Savile takeout tomorrow"?
A. The thought was that we could finally do the story that
was growing in size and magnitude and significance day
by day, and take it on and take on the idea of
institutional failures across a broad range of areas.
Q. Right.
A. Okay.
Q. Is there anything else that you want to say?
A. I don't think so.
Q. Anything we haven't covered?
A. No. No, I don't think so.

Questions by MR POLLARD
MR POLLARD: You didn't, I think, have a major role in the
21 correcting of the blog, did you? You mention a couple
of little bits about that in your --
A. Yes, I realised one aspect of the blog was wrong.

MR POLLARD: Which was the --

Page 101
Page 102

A. The Duncroft element. And I -- I did flag that up with
the person that was my boss at the time when I became
aware of that. I think I sent a note about how that all
came about.

MR POLLARD: Yes. And that was roughly when?
A. Um, that would have been -- I think it should be on
there.
MR MACLEAN: "Very late on Thursday 11 October I became
aware that one aspect of the BBC's public statement
about the Savile investigation was incorrect."
A. There was an issue of whether there was a second
interview, which wasn't on the blog, but had been said
by various people and was said by George Entwistle the
following day. And then over that weekend -- sorry, on
the Monday I then became aware that the Duncroft issue
was also incorrect on the blog.

MR POLLARD: You say:
"On the following Monday I saw the transcript of the
second interview and realised there was material in the
second witness interview which meant that aspects of
Peter's blog were incorrect."
A. Yes.
1 beyond what you would call the normal give and take of
2 sort of producer/reporter, producer/investigator and
3 editor? You will have seen a lot of this close up: did
4 you think Meirion pushed Peter too hard or tried to?
5 A. No, I think Meirion's style -- I mean, you know, up
6 until this point it had always been, yeah, enthusiastic
7 and bullish, but also able to draw back. You know, if
8 he -- and able to accept if a story didn't -- you know,
9 a lot of Meirion's stories, I think he would accept, did
10 not stand up at whatever stage in the process that would
11 be.
12 I actually thought they had a very good relationship
13 actually and that Peter was very supportive of his
14 journalism for the most part. Really appreciated him as
15 a key member of the team.
16 MR POLLARD: Was it commonly accepted in the Newsnight
17 office, as some people have suggested to us, that
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19
20
21 A.
22
23
24
25 MR POLLARD: Did you have strong views when the Panorama
26 programme was being commissioned about whether Meirion's
27 role in that was a fair or, if you like, editorially
28 scrupulous way to use him?
29 A. Once I became aware that the Panorama was not going to
30 focus on the historical aspects of the BBC, which was my
31 initial understanding, but have a large focus on what
32 did or didn't happen at Newsnight, I felt it was very
33 inappropriate for Meirion to be a producer on the
34 project. I gather he was taken off and given more of
35 a consultative role, but, yes, I didn't think that was
36 the right way to proceed.
37 MR MACLEAN: Was that a real distinction, giving him
38 a different hat?
39 A. I don't know. I assume it meant something tangible in
40 terms of how he was involved in the Panorama programme
41 after that point. But I wouldn't be able to comment on
42 what that was.
43 MR MACLEAN: Can I just show you one document that arises

1 out of that? Bundle 10, page 127. There was a piece in
2 The Sunday Times in October, wasn't there?
3 A. Yes.
4 MR MACLEAN: Do you remember?
5 A. Yes.
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10
11 MR MACLEAN:
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13
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15 A.
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17
18
19 MR MACLEAN:
20
21 A.
22
23
24 MR MACLEAN:
25

1 A. Um-hm.
2 MR MACLEAN: Then you use an expression which you actually
3 share with Liz MacKean. And you say:
4 "It is up to me to book the suites not him."
5
6
7
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9
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20 A.
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22
23
24 I was concerned that editing had been absolutely fully
25 booked.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MR MACLEAN:</th>
<th>What I really wanted to ask you about was not</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>just to tease you about your coyness about</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Meirion Jones, but to look at the email at 13.31 from</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Peter Rippon --</td>
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<tr>
<td>A. Yes.</td>
<td>---</td>
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<tr>
<td>MR MACLEAN:</td>
<td>-- which goes back to more historic events.</td>
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<tr>
<td>A. Yes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>MR MACLEAN:</td>
<td>It might be suggested it doesn't quite stack up</td>
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<td></td>
<td>with the picture you have just painted of relationships</td>
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<td></td>
<td>in the office.</td>
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<td>Mr Rippon says:</td>
<td>&quot;He was so personally involved I became concerned</td>
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<td></td>
<td>about some of his behaviour -- booking suites when it is</td>
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<td></td>
<td>not his job, refusing to cancel filming, booking cars</td>
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<td></td>
<td>when told not, writing alleged scripts with interviews</td>
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<td>that had not even done -- meant his judgement was</td>
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<td>cloudy. Since</td>
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<tr>
<td>MR POLLARD:</td>
<td>&quot;Very nervous&quot;.</td>
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<td>MR MACLEAN:</td>
<td>&quot;... about his story.&quot;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>That last sentence is a reference back to prior</td>
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<td></td>
<td>events which Mr Rippon, it seems, is suggesting had</td>
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<td></td>
<td>eroded his trust, really, in Meirion Jones' ability?</td>
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<td>A. Yes.</td>
<td>I mean that last bit, I must admit he hadn't ever</td>
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<tr>
<td>Page 109</td>
<td>---</td>
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<tr>
<td>A. Yes.</td>
<td>I suggested to me that happened -- I think I know</td>
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<td>what he's referring to in that.</td>
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<td>MR MACLEAN:</td>
<td>It is</td>
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<td>A. Yes.</td>
<td>And I think --</td>
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<td>MR MACLEAN:</td>
<td>We know quite a lot of this, so don't be coy.</td>
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<td>A. Sure.</td>
<td>I never got -- I wasn't actually on the programme</td>
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<td></td>
<td>when happened. But I actually didn't get the</td>
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<td></td>
<td>impression particularly that Peter felt that that was</td>
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<td>something that could be blamed on Meirion. I think it</td>
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<td>was an unfortunate incident that happened and actually</td>
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<td>Peter was incredibly supportive of that story all the</td>
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<td>way through from what I understand.</td>
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<td>But, yeah, I did say in my previous answer &quot;Up until this point&quot; I thought they had a good relationship.</td>
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<td>MR MACLEAN:</td>
<td>I think the Savile story poisoned that relationship.</td>
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<td>MR MACLEAN:</td>
<td>Clearly it poisoned it.</td>
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<td>But what I'm asking you about is this is some</td>
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<td>evidence that in fact there had been something of</td>
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<td></td>
<td>a fracture in their relationship some time ago.</td>
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<tr>
<td>A. Yes.</td>
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<td>MR MACLEAN:</td>
<td>I think you are saying that was news to you?</td>
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<td>A. Yes.</td>
<td>I must admit it was, yes.</td>
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<td>MR MACLEAN:</td>
<td>Then we can see the point Nick just asked you</td>
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<td></td>
<td>about, about Panorama. We can see your view expressed</td>
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<td></td>
<td>in your reply:</td>
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1. There is no way Meirion should be working on it.
2. That is if the focus of Panorama was Newsnight?
3. A. Yes.
4. MR MACLEAN: That was your concern?
5. A. Yes.
6. MR MACLEAN: And then we can see what you say:
7. "I do think it's weird [at the top] for Meirion to
8. be part of a story about what Newsnight did with the
9. story especially if it does end up in an official
10. inquiry and you want to deploy the line you had lost
11. trust in him."
12. I understand why you say it is weird, but what are
13. you getting at in the last bit there?
14. A. What I mean is, if -- if a boss is allowing one of his
15. staff to go and work on a programme about what happened
16. on -- on Newsnight with this story, and the boss's view
17. is that the person that is about to go and make that
18. story was not trustworthy in the process of that
19. happening, how could he then be going and allowed to
20. make a programme about what did or did not happen on
21. that story? It didn't seem to make sense to me.
22. MR MACLEAN: Who is the boss in that? Who is doing the
23. allowing?
24. A. Well, Peter allowed Meirion to go off to Panorama,
25. I believed, on the understanding that they were doing

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28 (Pages 109 to 112)
MR POLLARD: Just to clear up for us, did he book those or did you?
A. I haven't ever been able to establish how that -- where that booking came from or at what point.
MR POLLARD: Which implies you didn't, you mean?
A. It implies I didn't, but it doesn't mean that I didn't.
I may well have put it in at some point, but that is a constantly changing file that at some point changed and on those days something else was put in the edit instead.
MR POLLARD: Because somewhere in that previous email it says Meirion claims he booked them and they were cancelled. In the end that might be true, possibly?
A. Yeah, I mean Peter sent an email saying "I'll pull editing", which I was copied in on. So I would assume that at that point I thought okay, I've got loads of other projects that need to start getting edited, I'll stick them in."
MR POLLARD: We saw some that, yea. Thank you very much, sorry for just throwing that in at the end. Thank you for coming in and talking to us.
A. It was a pleasure, kind of.
MR POLLARD: Much appreciated.
(1.09 pm)
(The Inquiry adjourned until 1.00 pm,
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Friday, 23 November 2012)

MS LIZ GIBBONS (called) .........................1
Housekeeping .................................1
Questions by MR MACLEAN .................2
Questions by MR POLLARD ..................101