

ADMINISTRATOR OF ASCENSION ISLAND

Administrator's Office

Ascension Island

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WASS INQUIRY REPORT

PROGRESS REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS PUBLISHED

A progress report from the Foreign & Commonwealth Office Special Representative, who was appointed to consider the implementation of recommendations of the Wass Inquiry report, was published on 7 July 2016 in Parliament via a Written Ministerial Statement by the Rt Hon James Duddridge MP (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wass-inquiry-report-progress-report-on-implementation-of-recommendations>).

The report details the progress made in improving child safeguarding on the British Overseas Territory of St Helena and Ascension since the publication of the Wass Report in December 2015. The report also shows that further investment and a plan implemented by the Governments of St Helena and Ascension, working alongside FCO and DFID, have improved child safeguarding and significantly raised standards.

Work continues, to ensure that the improvements made on St Helena and Ascension Island are sustainable and long term. DFID has agreed with the St Helena Government that the increased Safeguarding Directorate budget of £3.75 million should be ring-fenced.

Notes for Editors

In December 2015 the FCO published the Wass Inquiry Report into allegations surrounding child safeguarding issues on St Helena and Ascension Island. This was an expert and independent Inquiry which found no evidence of corruption, conspiracy or cover up of child abuse by St Helena Government, FCO, DFID, the St Helena Police Service or the Ascension Island Government.

The Inquiry did however find evidence of some serious institutional failings in the protection of children and made a number of recommendations.

In January 2016, as part of the UK Government's ongoing commitment to implement the recommendations, the FCO appointed Ms Ginny Ferson to examine progress on implementation on St Helena and Ascension. The report published today is based on her findings.

AIG, 7 July 2016