



1) If there was a media briefing operation to place blame on Dr Crawford, I had no knowledge of it or involvement in it.

2) I did – along with DfE permanent secretary Dr Andrew McCormick - advise DUP officials in late 2016 to proactively and publicly address the issue of alleged political input into the delayed RHI cost controls.

This is the context for my email of 28 December 2016 that Dr Crawford quoted at the inquiry.

Its reference to the “real story” related to my understanding at that time on the political input issue, based on Dr McCormick’s understanding at that time (as my first witness statement explained).

This advice was not about a media briefing operation; quite the reverse.

I was advocating frank official disclosure, on the grounds that the information entering the public domain by other means could have been very damaging.

It would have made no sense to have facilitated such damage through media briefing.

As my first witness statement states: “My view at this time was that a frank disclosure on any political input into the delayed RHI costs controls was the best way forward.”

This has been supported by Dr McCormick’s inquiry evidence.

In his first witness statement, he states: “David Gordon and I urged the FM SpAds that if the facts as we understood them (at that time) were to emerge later, that would be more damaging to the FM, and hence there was a strong case for making the facts known as soon as possible.”

In his third witness statement 3, Dr McCormick adds that “...both David Gordon and I had advised that it might be best (from the point of the Executive collectively as well as for the DUP itself) to address that issue directly: David and I shared the metaphor that the DUP’s unwillingness to address the issue was like steering a ship towards an iceberg”.

Clearly, a media briefing operation would have been illogical in light of this advice.

#### Statement of Truth

I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Signed: David Gordon

Dated: 20/09/2018