

couple of intermediate dates in order to check that matters were on course for Andrea McKee's evidence to be taken on 22 December.

14. At the beginning of December 2003 Andrea was contacted by Detective Constable Patricia Murphy, in order to make arrangements for her to travel to Northern Ireland on 22 December. Andrea gave no indication of any problems.
15. On the morning of 19 December 2003 Andrea McKee was again contacted by Detective Constable Murphy to confirm final travel arrangements for Monday 22 December 2003. Andrea appeared happy with the arrangements and at no time during the conversation did she mention the fact that her son, [REDACTED] was sick.
16. On Sunday morning 21 December 2003 Andrea Jones contacted PSNI and told them that she would be unable to attend court on Monday 22 because her son was ill. At about 10.30 am Detective Constable Murphy contacted her. She stated that he son [REDACTED] had mumps and swollen testicles and that there was a fear that the child could have a fit due to his high temperature
17. On 22 December all legal representatives gathered at Craigavon Magistrates' Court where [REDACTED] was due to sit for the committal proceedings. The information about the child's illness was given verbally to the court by prosecuting counsel, Christine Smyth. It was agreed by the defence that if it was the case that Andrea McKee was unable to travel because of her child's sickness the court should grant an adjournment, but as it was not possible at that time for the prosecution to provide any documentary confirmation of the child's condition the adjournment should be conditional upon the Crown producing satisfactory medical evidence at a later date. The case was then fixed to be mentioned again in early January 2004 and if all was in order it was agreed that the 8 March would be fixed for the resumption of the committal proper.
18. On 23 December 2003 Andrea Jones contacted police to say that she had received a threatening letter posted to her exact home address. This letter which purported to have been sent by the Loyalist Volunteer Force in Portadown, threatened her home if she went ahead to give evidence in the case. It indicated that she was in no danger if she remained in Wales. This letter was recovered by the local police and was returned to the PSNI for investigation.
19. Enquiries made at the Northern Ireland Mail Centre at Mallusk identified that the letter was first processed by the Royal Mail between 00.30 hrs and 00.59 hrs on the 20 December 2003. The automation performance engineer concluded from this information that it was probable that the letter was posted in Northern Ireland on 19 December. It is not possible to state where exactly in Northern Ireland the letter would have been posted. The letter has been scientifically examined. A number of fingerprints have been recovered from the letter and from the inside and outside of the envelope. These have all recently been identified as Andrea's. There is no basis upon which a firm conclusion can be drawn as to whether the letter represents a genuine and effective threat.