

*These notes refer to the Inquiries Act 2005 (c.12)
which received Royal Assent on 7 April 2005*

INQUIRIES ACT 2005

EXPLANATORY NOTES

COMMENTARY ON SECTIONS

Constitution of Inquiry

Section 1: Power to establish inquiry

6. This section enables any Minister to cause an independent inquiry to be held and sets out the circumstances in which the inquiry may be established. The range of inquiries in the past ten years illustrates that it is not possible to specify more precisely the circumstances when an inquiry may be called. An inquiry could be called into a particular event (e.g. Dunblane inquiry 1996) or a series of events (e.g. BSE inquiry 1997). Although most past inquiries have been triggered by events, they have also been held where there is a concern that something has failed to happen or that particular systems have not operated properly (for example, the Climbié inquiry 2001). This section allows for an inquiry to be set up when there are concerns of this type too.
7. The Act is UK-wide. Ministers from the Devolved Administrations will have the power to establish inquiries into matters within their remit.