



The MediaGuardian Innovation Awards
celebrate the most original ideas in
media over the last year.



[Click here to enter your work](#)



guardian.co.uk

Saville delays Bloody Sunday report for a year

- Confidence in tribunal eroding in Derry
- Last witness was heard in January 2005

Henry McDonald, Ireland correspondent

guardian.co.uk, Friday November 7 2008 00.01 GMT

The Guardian, Friday November 7 2008

The official report into Bloody Sunday has been delayed for at least another year, it emerged yesterday, prompting sharp criticism from victims' families.

Lord Saville, whose inquiry cost £181m and stopped taking evidence in 2005, was supposed to complete his report this autumn. But his findings will not now be made public until the autumn of 2009 at the earliest.

The latest delay prompted campaigners in Derry to warn that confidence in the tribunal was being eroded and victims' families were suffering further anguish. Jean Hegarty, whose brother Kevin McElhinney was one of the 13 unarmed civilians killed in Derry 36 years ago, said this latest delay was a huge disappointment.

"It's beginning to raise questions in my mind," she said. "I don't really want to say what they are just yet, but your mind begins to turn around."

An apologetic Saville said: "We have always found it difficult, given the scale and complexity of the material with which we are dealing, to predict accurately how long it will take us to complete our task."

The longest and most expensive inquiry in British legal history is investigating events surrounding the shootings at a civil rights demonstration in February 1972 by the Parachute Regiment. The first witness was heard in November 2000 and the last in January 2005.

Mark Durkan, the SDLP leader and MP for Foyle, said he shared the family's frustrations over the latest delay. "Obviously Lord Saville has to give the weight and scale of the evidence involved diligent consideration.

"And the families and others who participated in the inquiry have confidence in him in that regard. However, the report taking so long and the fears that it may be delayed further is a source of some anxiety and apprehension."

Eamonn McCann, the chairman of the Bloody Sunday Trust and civil rights veteran in Derry, said the families' confidence in the inquiry was being eroded.

"This is an enormous task and it's understandable it should take some time, but this amount of time? The publication date has been pushed back repeatedly, and I think that some people are beginning to ask themselves, what's going on?"

The Northern Ireland secretary, Shaun Woodward, said he was surprised and disappointed by the delay.

"The completion of the report is a matter for the independent inquiry but the Northern Ireland Office will be taking up their offer to discuss the implications of this announcement as a matter of urgency," he said.

Yet another delay to the Saville report and the spiralling cost of the inquiry has led to calls, mainly from unionist politicians in Northern Ireland, for no more similar inquiries. They have described the Bloody Sunday tribunal as a colossal waste of money.

Related information follows Ads by Google

Ads by Google

Northern Ireland

Events, Festivals & Attractions in Northern Ireland. Explore More!

www.DiscoverNorthernIreland.com

The New Jaguar XF

Explore The XF's Sporting Luxury At the Official Jaguar UK Website

www.jaguar.co.uk

NI Car Insurance

Car Insurance for Northern Ireland Cheap online Rates available

www.insuranceni.com

guardian.co.uk © Guardian News and Media Limited 2008