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## Publication of ex-RUC man's evidence blocked

By Allison Morris

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THE controversial Public Inquiries Act has been used to block the publication of evidence given by a former head of Special Branch to the ongoing Billy Wright Inquiry.

Last year anonymity was granted to the former senior RUC officer on the grounds that there was a “moderate” risk to his safety from dissident republicans should he be identified.

The inquiry into the 1997 Maze murder of the loyalist leader is in its 143rd day sitting in Banbridge courthouse.

Inquiry chairman Lord MacLean this week signed a restriction order which prevents sections of evidence given by the witness from being made public.

Using the terms of the 2005 inquiries act a redacted version of the transcript, with certain intelligence evidence removed, will be published on the inquiry’s website.

LVF leader Wright was shot in a prison van in the Maze prison.

Three members of the INLA were convicted of the killing. All were later released under the terms of the Good Friday Agreement.

In 2004 retired Canadian judge Peter Cory recommended that public inquiries be held into six controversial Troubles killings, including Wright’s.

Judge Cory criticised the introduction of the Public Inquiries Act.

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