

Mark Kennedy report to rule out monitoring of undercover police

Police failed to supervise officer who spied on green protesters and Kennedy did not tell superiors what he was doing



📷 PC Mark Kennedy worked undercover with environmental activists for nearly seven years. Photograph: Philipp Ebeling for the Guardian

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A long-awaited inquiry is expected to rule out tough independent oversight of the deployment of undercover police officers in the wake of the case of [Mark Kennedy](#) and environmental protesters, the Guardian understands.

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) will publish its review on Thursday into what went wrong in the Kennedy affair. The report is one of eight official investigations initiated after allegations about Kennedy's role during nearly seven years living undercover, during which time he had sexual relationships with at least two campaigners.

Some senior police officers believed the best way to restore public confidence was to introduce increased accountability. But it is understood the HMIC report has stopped short of accepting recommendations that

there should be rigorous independent oversight in the form of authorisation - either from a judge or ombudsman figure - before an undercover officer is deployed.

Next week's report, written by the new Met commissioner, Bernard Hogan-Howe, when he was at HMIC, is expected to conclude that a failure of supervision allowed Kennedy to be left unchecked for so long within the environmental movement.

But the report, *Undercover Tactics in Public Order and Extremism*, is also expected to place an equal measure of blame on Kennedy for failing to inform his superiors of his activities or keep in regular contact. It is also likely to criticise Kennedy for having sexual relationships during his time undercover, which is contrary to police regulations.

The report is to be published after news that work has begun on a film of Kennedy's story by the director Michael Winterbottom, who has been commissioned by Channel 4 to make a drama about the police spy.

There was anger over Kennedy's infiltration of the environmental movement, with questions asked about the proportionality of such a lengthy and costly operation targeting green campaigners. Undercover officers are more often used to tackle criminal gangs involved in large-scale drug dealing or importing firearms.

"The Kennedy case raises real ethical concerns and should lead us to question the responsibility and accountability of the police force," Winterbottom said. "A huge amount of resources were deployed to infiltrate what is essentially a peaceful movement dedicated to raising awareness of some hugely important issues."

One source familiar with undercover operations said managing police spies was a sensitive and difficult task as, by the very nature of their job, they spent their lives lying and avoiding supervision.

Kennedy has claimed that he had kept those running him fully informed and denied that he had crossed the line to become an agent provocateur.

'My superiors knew where I was at all times - my BlackBerry was fitted with a tracking device - and they sanctioned every move I made,' he said in an interview this year.

"I didn't sneeze without them knowing about it. I feel I've been hung out to dry." He said he was "incompetently" handled by officers and was denied psychological counselling.

Environmental protest groups infiltrated by Kennedy boycotted the HMIC inquiry because they believed it was not independent.

This summer three court of appeal judges quashed the convictions of 20 activists for attempting to occupy the Ratcliffe-on-Soar power station because key evidence recorded by Kennedy had been withheld. Using a

