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SP(B)35/110/76

SECURITY POLICY REVIEW

STATISTICAL SUB-GROUP

I attach for the Sub-Group's information a copy (without annexes) of the final version of the Sub-Group's report, as it appeared in the Security Policy Review. The Steering Group made some minor changes to the text submitted by the Working Group which I circulated on 14 November 1984.

2. Ministers have collectively endorsed the conclusions and recommendations of the 1984 Review of Security Policy in Northern Ireland, including the proposal that the Statistical Sub-Group should continue in being. In line with a request from the Chief Secretary it has been agreed that efforts should be made to develop the statistical analysis and bring it to bear on resource planning.

3. The Security Policy Review Steering Group approved the terms of reference at Flag B and I shall be in touch with members of the Sub-Group shortly to convene a meeting at which we can discuss and launch a programme of work within these guidelines.

4. As a basis for discussion I suggest that the Sub-Group sets itself some fairly specific initial tasks on the lines of those listed below. Some will be ongoing; others should be completed within a few months; thereafter, and in the light of this work, the Sub-Group might refine or expand its activities within the overall terms of reference at Flag B. I therefore suggest that the Sub-Group be tasked initially:

> (i) to update the corpus of statistics in the 1984 Security Policy Review on a half-yearly basis; and to report significant new trends;
>
> (ii) to assess the extent of which existing statistical sources are adequate and compatible; and to suggest means of improving the quality of available information;
>
> (iii) to develop new statistical indicators of security force effectiveness;

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(iv) to produce an agreed picture of the changes in overall security force strengths since the early 70s, and of the changes in the composition of the security forces; and to relate this information to the overall crime rate and the number and type of terrorist incidents;

(v) to develop indicators of security force acceptability;

(vi) to study the geographical dispersion of fatal, successful and attempted terrorist attacks on various categories of person.

5. The Sub-Group will operate under the aegis of, and report to, the Security Co-ordinating Meeting (SCM) in which senior representatives of the NIO, RUC and HQNI meet regularly to discuss security policy issues.

David Hill

D J R HILL
Law and Order Division
NIO
Secretariat

8 May 1985

Enc

Distribution:

Miss C Evans, ST3, HMT
Mr N Hudson, Rm 11/5, HMT
Dr G Mulligan, NIO (DH)
Mr McVeigh, POB
Mr Margetts, RCB
Chief Inspector Sayers   )
Mr Corbett Mrs Donnelly) RUC HQ
Dr Anderson, SCIAD, HQNI
Major Wilkinson, SO2 G3/G5 Plans,
   HQNI
Mr Rickard

Copy for information:

Mr Buxton
SO/DCC, RUC HQ
ADC/CLF)
COS   ) HQNI
Mr Norris
Mr Coulson
Mr Lyon, SIL
Mr Bell, RCB

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SECURITY POLICY REVIEW

REPORT OF THE STATISTICS SUB-GROUP
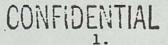
1. The Sub-Group's general remit was

   (a) to comb through the available statistical material with a
   view to identifying any significant trends and ways of
   presenting them clearly to the Working Group; and

   (b) to assess whether there might be any scope for using OR
   expertise in the study of resource utilisation in relation
   to these trends.

2. The Sub-Group included statisticians from the NIO, HQNI and RUC.
HMT was also represented.

Trends in the Security Situation: 1976-84

3. The statisticians on the Sub-Group reduced the mass of statistics
to three complementary papers which revealed a number of significant
trends over the period since 1976. These detailed papers are
available for study if required but a composite summary paper, which
incorporates a number of helpful graphs and charts, was also produced
and is attached as Annex A. For convenience its main conclusions
are as follows:

1. The number of indictable terrorist crimes per year has remained
fairly steady throughout the last ten years though there has been
a marked drop in the rate of murders and attempted murders since
1976. However, the three-fold increase in the overall levels of
recorded indictable crime mean that terrorist crime has dropped
from about $\frac{1}{3}$ (in 1973) to less than 1/5 of the total. (Fig 1.1)

2. There have been major changes in the nature and effectiveness of
terrorist attacks. The numbers of incendiary attacks and
shootings have declined dramatically since 1972 and slowly but
appreciably since 1976. The number of bombings has also declined
somewhat since 1972 (Fig 2.1). But the fatality rate per 100
terrorist incidents has been slowly rising and as a result the
overall level of fatalities per year has not declined as rapidly
as the overall numbers of terrorist attacks. The terrorists
are becoming more efficient.

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3. Security force fatalities as a percentage of total fatalities have also been rising steadily (Fig 4.1). So far this year over 50% of fatalities have been incurred by the security forces. (The final figure for 1979 was also over 50% but that was unduly influenced by the Warrenpoint incident). If _former_ members of the security forces were categorised as 'security force' fatalities, rather than 'civilian' the trend might be even more marked. The terrorists are targetting their victims more carefully and, partly   for political reasons, have been concentrating their attacks on security force targets.

4. As a percentage of total security force fatalities, the local security forces have borne an increasing share (Fig 4.4).

5. Off-duty, part-time members of the UDR and RUC(R) are particularly vulnerable and are at as great - if not greater - risk now than in 1972-5 (Fig 4.5).

Method of terrorist attack

6. The number of bombings has been surprisingly constant over time - although there appears to have been a falling off in 1984 (Fig 2.1) possibly because the greater degree of logistical back up, preparation and professionalism required makes it difficult to adjust the number of bombings in response to short-term demands. There has, however, been a steady increase in the average weight of bombs since 1976 (Fig 2.2), in the percentage of bombs which are remote controlled (Fig 2.6) and in the rate of security force fatalities per remote control bomb used against them (Fig 4.9).

7. The number of shootings has declined in absolute terms and in relation to the number of bombings, but is clearly the more flexible element of the terrorist armoury. At times of tension or heightened terrorist activity it is the number of shootings (and incendiary) attacks which increases (Fig 2.1).

8. There are different types of shooting attack and although the shooting attacks on off-duty, local, part-time members of the security forces living or working in hard areas may have a very h

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fatality rate, the overall fatality rate per 10,000 shooting attacks on the security forces is almost exactly inversely proportional to the number of such attacks (Fig 4.8). In other words an increase - even a large increase - in the number of shooting attacks is likely to result in only a small increase in the number of fatalities, reflecting the fact that only those attacks against the security forces which have been carefully prepared are likely to be successful.

9. If the present trends continue the terrorists, constrained by security force successes (Fig 5.1), seem likely to mount fewer but - as a possible consequence - relatively more successful attacks, increasingly targetted on members or former members of the security forces. The attacks are likely to comprise mainly shooting attacks on off-duty members of the local, part-time security forces, and large remote controlled bomb attacks on on-duty members of the security forces. The overall level of fatalities is unlikely to drop; the percentage of security force fatalities is likely to rise; and the proportion of local security force fatalities is also likely to rise.

Resource Utilisation: Police Performance Measures

4. The Sub-Group made a rapid survey of the existing work on the difficulties inherent in monitoring police efficiency and effectiveness. This is clearly a growth area and the significance of the LOPMS vote in relation to the overall size of the Northern Ireland block makes it imperative that the NIO, PANI and RUC should keep up with developments.

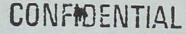5. A major Home Office study was produced during the Sub-Group's

work ("Measures of police effectiveness and efficiency" by
Ian Sinclair and Clive Miller, published by the Home Office
Research and Planning Unit as Paper 25). This detailed and
well-written paper contains a wealth of insights and practical
suggestions. Its broad conclusions are:

(a) "That it is not at present possible to obtain
unambiguous routine measures of the relationship
between inputs to the police and desired final
outputs". The various reasons for this are set
out in full and the conclusion leads the authors to
endorse the Home Office's general approach of assessing
police "efficiency" primarily on the basis of
professional judgements made by Her Majesty's
Inspectors of Constabulary (HMICs), who in turn
operate on the basis of Home Office guidelines
intended to establish objectives and measures of
efficiency; and

(b) "It is possible, however, to produce indicators
relevant to the effectiveness and efficiency of the
police". The paper notes that an essential
precondition would be the identification of clear
aims and objectives. It describes a number of
areas in which statistical information is already used
as an adjunct to assessments of police efficiency
and effectiveness and recommends that these areas
should be extended. In particular it recommends
that the Home Office should take immediate steps
(a) to develop a standard set of statistics for use
by individual forces; (b) to collate good practice
in relation to operation statistics; and (c) to
identify efficiency measures for police "support"
functions.

6. The RUC has already adopted a "policing by objectives"
approach based on the setting and monitoring of objectives on
an annual basis. The Sub-Group believes that this approach
would be assisted by the development of intermediate objectives
and of efficiency and effectiveness indicators on the lines
proposed in the Home Office paper. The main benefit of such
indicators is that they would give the police better information
about the relationship between resources and the achievement

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of their objectives. Some preliminary work on these lines has already started in the context of developing a Management Information System within PANI. The caveat that such indicators can at present only serve as adjuncts to the professional assessment of a force's efficiency may be particularly appropriate in Northern Ireland but the 1984 HMIC report on the RUC should provide such an assessment. This may go some way towards establishing a basis for future work. At a lower level the RUC's own Inspectorate Branch, supported by necessary resources, can offer professional assessments of efficiency within specific parts of the force.

7. Given the launch of the PANI MIS exercise it would not be appropriate for the Sub-Group to make any detailed comments on the measurement of police efficiency and effectiveness but it does seem to us to be desirable that as many indicators as possible should be compatible with those which are expected to be developed in GB. Some kind of 'weighting' will no doubt be necessary before valid comparisons could be drawn but such comparisons would be a very valuable management tool. (The need for weighting would arise primarily because the threat of attacks on policemen in Northern Ireland means that it may take a number of policemen, or policemen and soldiers, to carry out a task which in most areas of GB would be carried out by one policeman).

8. It would also be helpful to develop similar indicators of the efficiency and effectiveness of the Army and UDR when acting in support of the civil power. At a basic level it would be useful to know the relative cost of using soldiers rather than policemen for specific functions. Such comparisons could only be very crude, however, as the potential outputs of soldiers and policemen are very different in kind. It could also be difficult to disentangle the costs of the Army's support for the civil power from the costs which would be incurred anyway. It would be necessary to make a very strong case for the development of comparable indicators if HQNI were to have any chance of persuading the MOD to release the extra staff resources which would be necessary to develop and collect such indicators.

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9. The Sub-Group also looked briefly at one particular measure of police performance - the public attitude survey. The recent inclusion of questions about the police in the Northern Ireland Continuous Household Survey should over time produce an insight into how the public see the RUC's performance.

Security Policy Performance Measures

10. Moving away from aspects of police performance, the Sub-Group felt it would be possible to set up a wider framework for assessing 'security force' performance (or the 'success' of security policy) on the same lines. The number of factors which would not be susceptible to objective analysis or precise measurement is of course even greater and any measurement of the efficiency and effectiveness of security policy will have to continue to be based on a careful judgement of mainly subjective factors. It should, however, be possible to develop some indicators which could be used to inform such judgements.

11. The Sub-Group did not go on to consider such indicators in detail. The Sub-Group did, however, look at an outline frame-work suggested by the HMT representative. (Text at Annex B). This was considered to be a very helpful preliminary effort which might be further developed (a) in the light of existing experience/knowledge of the statistics which are currently available; and (b) in the light of the PANI MIS exercise. The object would be to produce a framework of fairly crude but relevant indicators which would draw to the greatest possible extent on data which was already available (though not necessarily collated) or on the results of work already in hand.

12. As this will not be possible within the timescale of the Review, the Sub-Group considers that it could be most valuable to keep the Sub-Group in being once the Security Policy Review has finished with a remit:

>   (a) to maintain an overview of available statistical information relevant to security policy and to report significant trends; and

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(b) to develop appropriate indicators of the effectiveness of security policy and ways of measuring the relative costs of developments in that policy.

13.   The Sub-Group's first task might be to draw up detailed terms of reference incorporating the general areas which its work should aim to illuminate over the following five year period and as many specific questions as possible. These terms of reference would be cleared with the relevant body, perhaps SCM, to which the Sub-Group would also submit regular interim reports.

Modelling - The Terrorist Career

14.   Another proposal which the Sub-Group considered (Annex B, paragraph 16 onwards) was to develop a model of the typical terrorist career with a view to highlighting areas where the Government might intervene to pre-empt the development of terrorist sympathies. We provisionally concluded that this would not be a productive exercise partly because it seemed likely to lead only to fairly general and already obvious conclusions and partly because the relatively small numbers and deep passions involved meant that the motives of and influences on each individual terrorist would vary considerably (in comparison to the modelling of a typical burglar's career in GB). If the Sub-Group were to continue, however, this proposal could be re-examined.

RECONSTITUTED STATISTICAL SUB-GROUP

Draft Terms of Reference

The Statistical Sub-Group of the 1984 Security Policy Review
should continue in being with a remit:
(a) to maintain an overview of available statistical information
    relevant to security policy and to report significant
    trends, particularly the development of new trends; and
(b) to develop appropriate indicators of the effectiveness
    of security policy and ways of measuring the relative
    costs of developments in that policy.

2. The Sub-Group's first task would be to draw up detailed
terms of reference incorporating the general areas which its
work should aim to illuminate over the following five year
period, and as many specific questions as possible.

3. These terms of reference should be cleared with the
appropriate body, perhaps SCM, to which the Sub-Group would
also submit regular interim reports.

4. Among the general areas which the Sub-Group might be
invited to consider and/or monitor are:
(a) factors which aid recruitment to the terrorist organisations;
(b) the extent of youth involvement in terrorism;
(c) reinvolvement rates for released terrorists;
(d) measures of terrorist effectiveness;
(e) the effects (on crime rates, public attitudes) of any
    substantial redeployment of the security forces;
(f) the scope for making economy savings through further
    redeployments; and
(g) measures of security force effectiveness.

5. The Sub-Group should also study the various current sources
of statistics with a view to making recommendations designed to
eliminate duplication, fill any gaps and generally improve the
quality of available statistical information.