

Cover Sheet

IN THE MATTER OF THE PUBLIC INQUIRY INTO UNDERCOVER POLICING

I, Paul Andrew Croyden, c/o Designated Lawyers, PO Box 73779, London WC1A 9NL,
WILL SAY AS FOLLOWS:

1. This witness statement is prepared in response to a Rule 9 request dated 13 August 2020. It provides my full recollection of the period that I spent in the Special Demonstration Squad ("SDS") of the Metropolitan Police Service ("MPS").
2. I am known in this Public Inquiry by the nominal HN350.

Personal details

3. My full name is Paul Andrew Croyden and I was born on [REDACTED] ¹late [REDACTED] 1946.

Police career before and after serving with the Special Demonstration Squad

4. I have been shown a copy of my personal record summary and my memory has been refreshed by this document. I joined the MPS on 3 January 1966. I joined Special Branch ("SB") on 17 November 1969. I was first posted to Naturalisation Enquires on "D" Squad until 29 September 1970. I was posted to SB research duties on "R" Squad from 30 September 1970 to 8 March 1971. I carried out general enquiries on "C" Squad from 9 March 1971 to 2 December 1973. I was posted to Special Branch duties at Heathrow Airport from 3

[REDACTED]

December 1973 to 2 October 1977. Whilst there, I was promoted to Detective Sergeant on 24 June 1974. I then was posted back to general enquiries "C" Squad from 3 October 1977 to 29 July 1979.

5. I was posted to the SDS from 30 July 1979 to August 1981.
6. I was posted to protection duties from August 1981 to 13 May 1984. I was posted back to general enquiries "C" Squad from 14 May 1984 to 6 March 1985. I was posted abroad in 1985 for a few months, thereafter I was posted on Irish "B" squad until I retired from the MPS in 1989.
7. I had not done any undercover policing or work using a cover identity prior to joining the SDS.

Selection for the Special Demonstration Squad

8. I first became aware of the SDS through my colleague [REDACTED]

[2]

HN45

[3]

[REDACTED] I cannot remember where or how he told me about the SDS. It might have been when we met socially. I recall that he was deployed as a UCO fairly early in his career in SB. I did not see him during his deployment.

[4]

9. I remember being told by [REDACTED] HN45 [REDACTED] that the SDS UCOs were known as the "Hairies" and were involved in undercover work. I did not know any more than that. SB was a secretive unit, so I knew not to ask questions because the

[REDACTED]

questions would not be answered. Before joining, I was not told or made aware why the SDS was formed or what the purpose of the unit was. I do not know how its role was different to that which was performed elsewhere in SB. Aside from 5 HN45 I had no contact with anyone from the SDS prior to my involvement with the unit.

10. In the late 1970s, I was informally approached at Scotland Yard by Detective Inspector ("DI") Angus McIntosh enquiring about whether I would be interested in joining the SDS. When I joined SB, DI McIntosh was my Sergeant in Naturalisation. I worked with him for a couple of years and had also met him socially. We had a good working relationship.

11. He told me that the position was an administrative role primarily involved in collating and arranging the reports from the UCOs. He did not tell me the purpose of the unit.

12. I had enjoyed working for DI McIntosh in Naturalisation. I also thought that it was a good move to progress my career because I would gain more experience. It would also give me an insight as to what the unit was all about. I therefore accepted the role and started in the SDS in July 1979.

Administrative Role

13. I was recruited as a Detective Sergeant replacing Dick Scully. I remained in this role and rank throughout my service with the SDS.

Training and guidance in the Special Demonstration Squad

14. I did not have any formal training for my role in the SDS. On my first day, I had a meeting with DI McIntosh and Detective Chief Inspector ("DCI") Mike Ferguson where they outlined the function of the unit. Mike Ferguson explained that the unit deployed UCOs into various extremist groups. He told me that it was formed as a result of the mass public disorder which occurred at Grosvenor Square in March 1968.

15. I trained on the job. There was a handover period of about three to four weeks with DS Scully. We worked alongside one another and he taught me how to fulfil the role. I do not recall being shown any training materials.

16. I knew DS Scully from my time when I was performing general uniformed duties in 'Y' District in Highgate. We were both based at the section house.

17. My training was not repeated or refreshed during the course of my time in the unit because I fully understood the requirements of the role. I was always supervised by the DI and DCI.

18. I did not receive any training on race equality from the MPS either prior to or during my time with the SDS.

Duties

19. The SDS office was initially based at New Scotland Yard but within a few months of me joining we moved to a secure unit in Vincent Square ("the back office"). [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

6

[REDACTED] We were based on the ground floor alongside the photographic unit. I recall that as one entered, the SDS were on the left and the photographic unit was on the right. Surveillance were based upstairs.

20. We also had two safe houses where the meetings took place. "West" was in

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[REDACTED] West London [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] I cannot recall where "South" was exactly, but think it was South East London. West and South both stayed in the same location throughout my time with the SDS.

21. I was predominantly based in Vincent Square which was nominally open from 10am to 6pm. I worked varied hours depending on my work load. There was no clocking in or a register. The setup of the office desk configuration was as a large square. The DCI, DI and DSs sat on each side.

22. My primary role was to process the reports. Deployed officers handed in longhand reporting at the meetings in the safe houses. The reports were brought back to Vincent Square and placed on my desk for me to process.

23. I read through each report and made hand written corrections. For example, sometimes parts were rewritten for stylistic purposes. I endeavoured to make the corrections on the original but on occasion I used another piece of paper if the change was substantial or if there was not enough space to write my amendments. The reports, however, were normally double spaced which left me room for amendments. I kept a sharp eye for spelling and grammatical mistakes. It had to conform to the style of SB reporting. I only removed information if it was repetitive.



24. I continued with a technique learned from DS Scully where I would occasionally list the cover name of the UCO within the reports. The reason being that if the Security Service had an informant within a particular group and the report, they would be able to identify who the UCO was by process of elimination.

25. Within SB a high standard of reporting was maintained. It was said that when an officer started in SB all of their reports would be heavily modified by their DI almost to the point of pedantry.

26. I also put the SB and Security Service references into the reports. I would compile a list of all of the names that were mentioned within the report and call SB Records ("SBR") on the telephone who were based in Scotland Yard and ask for any references. Depending on the individual's name, SBR would reveal either: a record file ("RF"); mentions; or no trace of the individual. I am unsure about the exact process by which an individual's name would move from no trace to mentions, to having an RF opened. I suspect that once an individual had a number of mentions that would warrant the creation of an RF file. Over time, I learnt a lot of the references because the deployed officers were often reporting on the same people. These appear on the reports as RF numbers and PF references for the SB and Security Service respectively.

27. Once all of this was done, I would hand the report to the typist. I cannot recall her name. She was also based in Vincent Square. She was efficient and reliable. She remained with the SDS throughout my time with the unit.

- [REDACTED]
28. The typist would type up the report in duplicate using a carbon copy and return both copies to me. I would check that it matched my version and would pass it to the DCI. The original report would be sent to Scotland Yard and the copy was stored in the secure room at Vincent Square.
29. I cannot recall ever amalgamating reports, for example, if there were two UCOs in two branches of the same organisation. I suspect that I would have produced each report separately. If there was a large event where many UCOs attended, they might liaise with one another and submit a joint report.
30. I would sometimes receive the daily calls from the deployed officers. They were required to ring in by 11am. There were several phones on the desk with the same number which would be used to receive these calls. It was a welfare check as well as an opportunity to pick up any information that the UCOs wanted to impart. On occasion, I would get clarification on their reports.
31. On two occasions I travelled over a weekend to provide cover for UCOs. I attended with Trevor Butler to Liverpool in 1981 in an office car to assist officers who were deployed in the SWP and who had travelled up there. I cannot remember the names of the officers who went up. We kept in contact with the deployed officers by using a pager.

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32. I also recall visiting Scotland for the Torness protest.

HN155 attended

as part of his deployment

I attended with Trevor Butler in an office car. I cannot remember the year. I spent two days there.



33. Aside from the production of SDS intelligence reports, I was not involved in the compilation or drafting of other SDS documentation such as the annual reports or procedural documentation.
34. I was not involved in the procurement or administration of SDS safe houses and cover accommodation. The DCI was in charge of the safe houses and the individual officers were responsible for their respective cover accommodation.
35. I was not responsible for the procurement or administration of vehicles used by the SDS.
36. I was not responsible for cover documents for UCOs.
37. The UCOs were tasked by the DCI and DI. The UCOs were expected to report primarily on intelligence that was going to have some impact on public order. In addition, they reported what their target organisations and individuals were planning. The UCOs would also seek to obtain personal information, for example addresses and appearance, because it was an excellent and efficient way of maintaining the SB personal files about activities of an organisation or an individual.
38. The UCOs received feedback from the DCI and DI as regards their reporting usually at the meeting in the safe houses. I did not give any feedback aside from asking certain officers to improve their handwriting.

- [REDACTED]
39. I did not play any part in tasking, instructing or steering UCOs about what they should report on or how they should report. It was not within my remit. Despite being a DS, the role was purely administrative.
40. Most SDS intelligence was written down, either as a report or put into a report after a phone call. For example, if the Office received an urgent telephone message it would have been followed up either with a report or placed on a telephone note for onward dissemination. I cannot recall if we had a formal telephone message log which was standard practice in SB or if we put it into a telephone message short report. If we had an urgent phone call, we would relay the message to the relevant squad by telephone. I suspect that a large proportion of public order matters were passed on orally in this way.
41. The office at Vincent Square had a room with secure cabinets that were locked and entry to this room was restricted to SDS personnel.
42. I have been asked about retention policies for paperwork. I cannot recall the specifics. I imagine that there would be a directive within SB which would direct appropriate retention periods. When I worked at Scotland Yard, all the active files would be placed into a "bin room" which was a secure room that had strict security.
43. I have been asked what arrangements were in place for the dissemination of SDS intelligence. The DCI disseminated the intelligence to the relevant part of SB. In addition, if the report concerned public order, I believe that a copy would be sent to A8 via SB DI liaison.

[REDACTED]

44. I recall that it was the Superintendents on "S" squad who took receipt of the reports. I further recall that David Palmer-Hall and Ken Pryde were Superintendents at that time in "S" squad.

45. I have been referred to a report dated 24 June 1981 (UCPI0000015431). This report would have been prepared as described as above. I cannot recall specifically preparing this report. As described above the photographic unit shared offices with us at Vincent Square. The photographic unit covered demonstrations and took photographs of demonstrators. An album of the photographs would be taken to one of the meetings at "South" or "West" and UCOs would go through the photographs and identify the individuals. The relevant photo would then be appended to the report.

46. I had no role in the processing of overtime claims made by SDS UCOs. I recall that UCOs would complete a blue diary or a blue book which later became a loose-leaf that would detail overtime and expenses.

47. I do not recall if there were any formal written SDS policies and procedures during the time that I served with the unit.

Management Structure

48. When I was in the SDS the following officers served as DCI: Mike Ferguson; Barry Moss; and Trevor Butler.

49. When I was in the SDS the following officers served as DI: Angus McIntosh;

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and

HN68

[REDACTED]

50. When I was in the SDS the following officers served as DS: Dick Scully (my predecessor); Chris Skey; and ^{10:} [REDACTED] HN45 [REDACTED] (my successor).

51. Aside from the DSs the only other administrative position was the typist. I cannot remember her name. When we were based in Scotland Yard our reports were taken down to the typing pool but only one specific senior typist would type the reports. I cannot recall if she joined us at Vincent Square or whether the SDS hired a new typist when we moved.

Individual Managers and Administrators

52. I am not aware of any manager adopting a cover name.

53. Mike Ferguson ran the SDS in a relaxed but firm manner. He expected results. I would see him every day. There was an affable and professional interaction between us. I would undertake any task required of me.

54. Barry Moss had a very similar management style. It was professional but with quite a relaxed but assured demeanour. It worked because it was vitally important that there was no antagonism between the Office and the UCOs because "the Office" was the UCOs only point of contact. I had the same level of contact with him as I did Mike Ferguson.

55. I do not know what exact duties Angus McIntosh discharged in the SDS. He was second in command. His management style was professional and friendly. I had a similar level of personal interaction with him.

[REDACTED]

56. DCI Trevor Butler was head of the SDS. He had responsibility for the welfare and guidance of the field officers. We would interact in the Office.

57. Ray Wilson was the Chief Superintendent ("CSupt") and we would meet occasionally, perhaps monthly. He was based in Scotland Yard and would come to Vincent Square. I do not recall him attending a safe houses. In fact, I would only occasionally visit the safe houses. The purpose of my attendance would be to clear up any ambiguous text in a report or to conduct a welfare visit. I would otherwise only speak to the UCOs on the phone so it was pleasant to have a face to face meeting. Ray Wilson had a professional management style. He was a good manager.

[11]

58. [REDACTED] **HN68** [REDACTED] was second in command to the DCI. He had a supervisory role. His management style was warm but professional.

59. I did not overlap with Martin Gray in the SDS.

60. I did serve with Chris Skey. He was mainly responsible for transport arrangements and he also managed the financial side for example overtime claims.

[12] [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] He occasionally helped with reports for example if I was on annual leave or sick.

Undercover Officers

61. I fielded phone calls from the UCOs and met with them occasionally at the safe houses. I would also go and meet some UCOs to play [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

13

sport at a sports ground.

We would also have lunch there occasionally.

It was important for welfare that the UCOs could unwind. The DCI and DI would

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go there most weeks but I would only go occasionally. There was always someone in the office to receive calls. We were all contactable by a pager. I cannot remember who issued them.

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62. I recall the following officers as my SDS contemporaries:

HN126, HN96, HN106, HN20, HN356, HN155, HN80, HN19,
Roger Pearce, HN65, HN304, HN354 and others

63. I was not aware of any unhappy or discordant working relationships between members of the SDS.

64. To my knowledge none of my contemporaries in the SDS committed a criminal offence, or provoked encouraged or caused a third party to commit a criminal offence whilst undercover. The UCOs were told not to be an agent provocateur. It was part of their briefing by the DCI and DI before they were deployed. I remember that UCOs were told not to get into positions of power within their target organisations. I never gave this training.

65. To my knowledge none of my contemporaries whilst deployed engaged in sexual activity with others whilst in their cover identity.

66. To my knowledge none of my contemporaries were arrested, charged, tried or convicted in their undercover identity.



67. I cannot specifically recall if any of my contemporaries witnessed or were caught up in incidents of public disorder, violence or other criminal activity.

68. To my knowledge none of my contemporaries reported on any legally privileged information or reported on elected politicians.

69. My contemporaries achieved a great deal for policing. The UCOs were able to enhance the gathering of intelligence which was instrumental for the effective and proper policing of demonstrations. They also contributed intelligence on various extreme political groups, in particular the organisational structure and intended activities. For organisations like the SWP, the UCOs put in comprehensive reports on major events such as the annual conferences. They provided an in-depth understanding of what the various groups were planning to do which would have been of great significance and benefit to SB and police generally.

70. The SDS assisted the Security Service by providing up-to-date intelligence on individuals and organisations. I do not think that it would be possible for the Security Service to obtain the same depth and quality of intelligence by using any other method.

71. During my time with the SDS, UCOs would spend time in Vincent Square prior to their deployment. There was no fixed time but on average it would be about three to six months. The primary role would be to create their legend. They would meet with field officers and pick up information from them on how to act. They would also assist with administrative tasks in the Office.

72. During my time on the SDS, no UCOs spent time in the Office or at the safe houses after withdrawing from their deployment.

73. I had no contact or dealings with the Security Service during my time with the SDS.

74. I have been referred to a Security Service file note dated 17 September 1981 (UCPI0000029203). It details a meeting between Trevor Butler from the SDS and ^{15A} [REDACTED] from the Security Service on 17 September 1981. It mentions a meeting with a new DS, ¹⁶ [REDACTED] who is replacing Paul Croydon (sic).

75. I recall that I left the SDS in August 1981. I do not know who ¹⁷ [REDACTED] is, and am unable to say whether ^{15A} [REDACTED] is referring to Martin Gray.

76. With regard to senior managers, I can only recall CSupt Ray Wilson visiting Vincent Square as outlined above.

77. I have no recollection of anyone from any outside body with any form of regulatory or oversight responsibility for policing visiting the SDS during my tour of duty with the unit.

78. I left the SDS in August 1981 after my two year posting. DCI Trevor Butler asked me to stay longer but I did not want to be tied to a role that was predominantly an administrative job.

¹⁸

79. ¹⁸ [REDACTED] Discusses subsequent police postings [REDACTED] The SDS had no influence on my subsequent postings. [REDACTED]

80. I have no recollection that I, or those that I managed, ever sought, received, used or disseminated intelligence emanating from the SDS when outside the SDS. However, it is feasible that I could have used intelligence that emanated from the SDS when I was based on "C" or "B" Squad but I cannot recall.

81. I have no more evidence to give other than to say that during my time with the SDS, it was a highly professional unit that acted in a proficient, skilled and upstanding manner. Sadly, the unit has subsequently been besmirched by the poor behaviour of a few officers.

Request for documents

82. I do not have any documents that are potentially of relevance to the Inquiry's terms of reference and I have not referred to any document other than those included with the Rule 9 request.

Diversity information

83. I am a white British male.

I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true. I understand that proceedings for contempt of court may be brought against anyone who makes, or causes to be made, a false statement in a document verified by a statement of truth without an honest belief in its truth.

Signed
Dated
Paul Croyden
20.10.20