

# Cover Sheet

[REDACTED]

Witness: First Witness Statement of Derek Brice / HN3378

Exhibits Referred to: None

Date Statement Made: 15 September 2021

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**UNDERCOVER POLICING INQUIRY**

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**Witness:** Derek William Fred Brice / HN3378

**Occupation:** Retired

**Address:** c/o Metropolitan Police Service, Directorate of Legal Services, Empress State Building, London SW6 1TR

1. I have been asked to provide a witness statement regarding my time in the Special Demonstration Squad ("the SDS") for the purpose of assisting the Undercover Policing Inquiry ("the Inquiry"). In preparing this statement I have sought to answer all the questions asked of me in the Rule 9 request dated 17 September 2020 and first provided to me on 15 July 2021.
  
2. I have been shown the witness bundle provided by the Inquiry for the purpose of making this witness statement and my Central Record of Service (Doc F: MPS-0734953) which has now been added to the witness bundle. In making this witness statement I have relied on my own memory. Prior to making this witness statement I had read some of the evidence published on the Inquiry's website, much of which related to the period 1968-1970 which was before my time on the SDS. I cannot particularise everything I have read on the Inquiry's website. I have also read part of Witness Z's witness statement, which was sent to me by Operation Motion. I do not feel that any of the publicly available evidence that I

[REDACTED]

have read has refreshed my memory. I have not refreshed my memory by reference to any other document.

3. There is no restriction order in place in respect of my real name. I did not use a cover name.

#### **Personal details**

4. My full name is Derek William Fred Brice. I was born on [REDACTED] <sup>1</sup>1939.

#### **Police career before serving with the SDS**

5. I joined the MPS on the day after Boxing Day in 1957. I was not quite 19 years old so I was allowed to join as a Senior Cadet. I note my Central Record of Service (Doc F: MPS-0734953) records that I started as a Senior Cadet on 30 December 1957, but I remember travelling to Hendon for my training on Boxing Day. I trained at Hendon for 13 weeks and was then posted to Fulham. I became a Police Constable once I was 19. I expect that my date of joining is recorded on my Central Record of Service as in 1958, that is when I was 19, because your time as a Senior Cadet did not really count for anything.
6. I applied to Special Branch before I had 2 years' service, which was rather cheeky and contrary to the rules. I was interviewed before I had reached 2 years' service but then had to wait until I had 2 years' service before joining. I joined Special Branch <sup>2</sup>[REDACTED] after turning 21; I think I joined on 1 September 1960, although I note my Central Record of Service says 5 September 1960. I was the back end of an intake of 16 people. Initially I served on D Squad, dealing with naturalisation

[REDACTED]

enquiries, which is where everyone starts. I cannot be sure how long I spent there. I then worked on C Squad, dealing with the extreme left wing and enquiries for the Security Service. In 1963 and 1964 I was posted to Dover as a support officer for summer relief, for 6 months, probably interspersed with time on C Squad. When I came back from Dover at the end of 1964 I probably returned to C Squad. My recollection is that I was promoted to Sergeant in 1964, but I note that my Central Record states it was January 1965 and I cannot argue with that. I was then sent to Newhaven for the winter of 1965-1966. The old Sergeant at Newhaven had broken his leg in the snow and, whilst there was a permanent Detective Constable there, they needed a Sergeant at each port and that was me. After Newhaven, I probably then came back to C Squad. In the summer of 1966 I was posted to Ramsgate as the MPS opened a unit there for the hovercraft which started to cross the channel. I was there for the summer, probably from April to the end of September or October. In the summer of 1967 I went to Gatwick. I was second in command there as I was waiting for a vacancy for first class Sergeant. I came back at the end of 1967, probably to C Squad (I never served on B or E Squads). I was then sent to Luton because the MPS opened up new sea and air ports where there were foreign flights. I was promoted to first class Sergeant in April 1968 as stated in my Central Record of Service. My recollection is that I was in Luton from April 1968 to October 1970, but I note my Central Record of Service records it as June 1968 to September 1970. It was a long time ago so I cannot be sure. We had to be first class Sergeants – i.e. the same rank as inspectors in provincial forces – to be posted to these new sea and air ports.

[REDACTED]

7. After Luton I came back to CO. I was promoted to Detective Inspector. I do not have an independent recollection of the date of my promotion, but I cannot argue with the date of November 1971 given in my Central Record of Service given it records the promotion was in Police Orders. I was on C Squad until the C1 SB Bomb Squad was formed. I cannot remember the date when that happened, but it must be well documented. I was not on C Squad for long. In the C1 SB Bomb Squad there were two operational Detective Inspectors, one on the Special Branch side and one on the C1 side; I was the Inspector on the Special Branch side and [REDACTED] <sup>2(i)</sup> was the Inspector on the C1 side. Operationally we were letting the MPS divisions such as CID know that there was a specialist department dealing with the bombs that were turning up and we toured various divisions letting them know what we could do for them. When the bombs went off, we were called out sometimes in the middle of the night, either to a bomb that had gone off or was being diffused. Our role was then to determine from the technical guys what kind of device it was and begin the inquiry. Conrad Dixon was Chief Superintendent of the C1 SB Bomb Squad. [REDACTED] <sup>3</sup> **TN0047** was a Detective Inspector in the Bomb Squad and like the staff officer to Conrad Dixon. <sup>3</sup> **TN0047** was not in the SDS in my time.

8. Whilst in the Bomb Squad I also did one or two or three ad-hoc protection duties for visits, for example when a commonwealth leader came for a visit. I cannot remember the dates of these protection duties, but I remember one stint was for a visit by the Prime Minister of Sierra Leone. I did not do long stints on protection duties, for example for cabinet ministers.

- [REDACTED]
9. In 1972 I was involved in Aldershot. I remember being called off a course at Gosport to go and give evidence at the trial in October 1972. Jenkinson had been arrested and I happened to be the Special Branch duty officer when it was called in and so I interviewed him. I still have a copy of my witness statement from Aldershot and newspaper clippings relating to the trial and my evidence at trial. I was definitely on the Bomb Squad at this time.
- [REDACTED]

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10. During the same period, from 1972 perhaps, we also set up a surveillance squad which was not part of the SDS. I would have been a fairly senior officer on that.
11. Due to the passage of time I do not remember exactly how long I was on the Bomb Squad for. The Note for File dated 11 January 1974 (Doc 4: UCPI0000030050) refers to me having been on the Bomb Squad for 2 and a half years.
12. I went to Bramshill at the end of 1973 for the 4 month Inspector's course months. Paragraph 3 of the Note for File dated 11 January 1974 (Doc 4: UCPI0000030050) refers to this. My recollection was that it was from around September to December 1973, and my Central Record of Service records it as 2 September 1973 to 15 December 1973 which sounds right as we would not have stayed over Christmas.

- [REDACTED]
13. I wish to emphasise that this summary of my pre-SDS career is based on my recollection of events approximately 50 years ago, if not more. I have been assisted to a degree by documents in my witness bundle and my Central Record of Service which has been provided to me since first receiving the witness bundle.
  14. I had not had any contact with the SDS before becoming involved in it. In fact, I asked the federation rep what Special Branch was before going into it and he said nobody talks about it.
  15. I had not done any undercover policing or work using a cover identity prior to the SDS. In fact, I never did any undercover work in my police career.

#### **Selection for the SDS**

16. I am not aware of 'joining' the SDS. I do not remember formally joining the squad. I think there was a relationship between the Bomb Squad and the SDS. The two things were linked, for example because of terrorist activity, and so it would have made sense to join the supervision of the two since surveillance was done under us too. I think it was pretty swift thinking to have that kind of background experience for the SDS – it is embryonic. There was some quite good forward thinking by somebody, above me, in the SDS' infancy. Undercover work did not have the benefit of mobile phones and technology – you had to go out hard, in person.
17. On reflection, I think I only served in the SDS from say January 1974 until I left the job in October 1974. That said, I cannot be sure; I previously thought I had

[REDACTED]

been on the SDS for in the region of 20 months from 1973 to October 1974. I am piecing this together from my own memory and from the documents in my witness bundle. I think it was from January 1974 because I was on the Bomb Squad in 1972 and then at Bramshill for 4 months at the end of 1973. I do not now know what I was doing for the first 9 months of 1973, but if I had to put money on it I think I was posted to the SDS after I finished at Bramshill. It appears to me that the report dated 2 July 1973 (Doc 3: MPS-0739208) is signed by [REDACTED] 5 HN294 [REDACTED] as Acting Chief Inspector (because of the little 'A' next to the rank) and I only came on the SDS after he was promoted to Chief Inspector. I also remember visiting the German Bomb Squad in 1973 and I could not have done that if I was formally on the SDS. There may have been some linkage between Bomb Squad and SDS work, perhaps in mid 1973 or early 1974, but I cannot recall given the passage of time.

18. I am not aware there was a selection or recruitment process for the SDS. I was never interviewed for the SDS. I did not know what the SDS did: I first heard about it when I joined. I think I was called into the Superintendent's office and told to tidy up my inquiries before being transferred. There was no interview or selection panel like there was for promotion.
19. I cannot answer why I joined the SDS – I do not know what was in the mind of the senior officer. I am not aware I had any say in it, however you did not say no. I joined the SDS because I was told to do so.

[REDACTED]

## Your role

20. I took on the Detective Inspector's role, in the back office. I stayed in that post throughout my time in the SDS. Towards the end of my posting I was Acting Chief Inspector for a period whilst [REDACTED] <sup>6</sup> HN294 [REDACTED] who was the Chief Inspector, was sick. I was not promoted. I cannot remember how long this was for, but it was not just a week's flu.

21. I was Detective Inspector at the time of my 'recruitment'. I was not promoted whilst with the SDS.

## Dates of service

22. As I have stated above, I think I served in the SDS from the start of 1974 until I left the MPS in October 1974.

23. I am told in the rule 9 request that [REDACTED] <sup>7</sup> an officer describes a [REDACTED] meeting with officers in the SDS as taking place in an SDS flat in [REDACTED] <sup>7</sup> the early 1970s and the officer recalls [REDACTED] <sup>7</sup> me in attendance. [REDACTED] I do not recall the meeting described by [REDACTED] <sup>7</sup> the officer. [REDACTED]

### **Training and guidance in the SDS**

24. I cannot recall any formal training for the role. Of course we discussed how to do things, but I would not consider that to be training. I imagine I had a handover period with whoever I was replacing but I cannot be sure and I cannot remember who it was that I was replacing.
25. There was no refresher training, advice, guidance or instructions during the course of my involvement with the SDS that I can remember. From time to time you would think about how we might do things better, but I do not count that as training.
26. I did not receive any training from the MPS on race or sex equality before or during my involvement with the SDS.

### **Duties**

27. In my role I was supervising undercover officers, but it was not my total responsibility because there were people above me. I saw the undercover officers regularly. I was not their mentor because I could not do the job they were doing, but I was like the quartermaster in the army and supplied things they needed and made sure they were safe.
28. I visited the undercover officers formally, as a squad, twice a week either on Monday and Thursday or on Tuesday and Friday. It was a gutsy job so it was important the undercover officers saw their contemporaries as well. From time to time deployments were mentioned at the twice weekly meetings, but I cannot be

[REDACTED]

specific about this. Maybe if an officer was having a sticky time they might share it with someone in the same organisation or with a similar experience. The whole point of them meeting together was that they could share some camaraderie which hopefully meant they felt safer; it was an awful job to do, scary at times, and this was important. We did not keep minutes of the twice weekly meetings.

29. We would have 1:1 contact with officers in addition if we, or they, wanted it. This did happen from time to time, but I would not say it was regular. We did not keep minutes of these 1:1 meetings. I was also available anytime and by telephone if needed, but I cannot remember that happening a lot. It would have had to be pretty urgent to have a telephone call for welfare. Undercover officers had a line in to the desk Sergeant or Chief Inspector if they needed to speak to someone, and I think they did from time to time. There was a relationship between the desk Sergeant and Chief Inspector excluding the Detective Inspector, so if I was off doing Bomb Squad work that is why they would know about more than I am aware of.

30. I am certain I was not involved in recruiting undercover officers and I do not remember recruiting anyone. It was not in my remit to do that, but a matter for higher office. I was given the officer to look after. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

an officer states in their witness statement that I interviewed them prior to their deployment. I do not recall that I did.

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- [REDACTED]
31. I cannot say how undercover officers were recruited since this is outside my knowledge. I cannot say what attributes and/or personal circumstances were sought because I was not involved in recruitment. As I grew into the job, I thought that those involved in recruitment looked at the personal circumstances of those who were selected – i.e. if the officer was married they would have had a place of 'safety' to go back to, whereas if the officer was single it could be a continuum of what they did during the day because there was not a break from their cover identity by being around their family. I never had to apply that. I am not saying that one was better than the other, just that there was a practical effect day-to-day of whether an officer was married or single. I was not involved in recruiting other members of the SDS such as back office or admin staff.
  32. I was not involved in training undercover officers or other members of the SDS. There was, of course, a supervisory element to my role due to the rank I held over Sergeants but I was not responsible for them or their training.
  33. I was not involved in tasking undercover officers, including their choice of tasking. Presumably this was decided by senior officers.
  34. I was not involved in inventing, developing or assessing cover identities. I do not know who was involved in this. When undercover officers came to me, they had a cover identity. I had no involvement with cover documents.
  35. I was involved in procuring vehicles used by SDS personnel. There were two types of vehicles: vehicles used by staff which had to be non-descript, and

[REDACTED]

vehicles provided for undercover officers. There was an officer in B Department (traffic) and he had to make sure that the vehicle selected was roadworthy [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] I do not think I was involved in the administration

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of vehicles after this. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] presumably cover officers were responsible for making sure their vehicles were working day-to-day.

36. I was not involved in the deployment of undercover officers.
37. In terms of welfare, I was there for undercover officers if the need cropped up. I do not recall particular incidents where we had welfare issues.
38. I think if I felt, having seen the guys regularly, that they were getting in need of a change then we would have a discussion with senior officers about exfiltration but that did not happen much in my time. I do not recall anyone being discharged from the Squad. That would be a welfare issue, for example if the work was affecting their home life. I would not have decided where an undercover officer was going after the SDS or whether they were moving out: at most, I would make a recommendation as I did not have the power myself to transfer an officer.
39. I was not involved in writing up SDS intelligence reports. That was done by the back office staff, the Sergeant, but only insofar as they were putting the

[REDACTED]

intelligence obtained into paragraphs and sentences rather than note form. Meeting the undercover officers twice a week was a medium for collecting the information to be taken back to the desk Sergeant. I do not know where undercover officers recorded their intelligence. It must have happened somewhere because intelligence was provided to me on paper and I cannot recall much, if ever, recording the information myself. Part of the twice weekly meetings was for officers to write down intelligence. Whether they did it elsewhere as well, I do not know. Looking, for example, at [REDACTED] one report [REDACTED]

11(i)

[REDACTED] I see it is signed by a Constable I knew and a Chief Inspector and bypassed me. Intelligence reports did not come across my desk – I was the messenger. This was not unusual: it was the process. I was not office staff but a field officer.

40. The twice weekly meetings were also an opportunity to give officers training for promotion exams because they could not come into the place where the training would be run. This training would be given by me or anyone else involved. Tony Greenslade was a Sergeant, and if I was not around it was his job to do my job. Tony was particularly good at tuition for the promotion exam – I think he got one or two officers through. Tony also worked on the Bomb Squad with me. I do not know how or when he came to be involved in the SDS, but I have strong memories of him always being around.
41. I was not involved in assessing or approving intelligence reports or their onward dissemination. In a sense none of us were in a position to interrogate the value of the information. Undercover officers were reporting what they had witnessed

[REDACTED]

and heard: who were we to say that was wrong? I think the reason intelligence reports went to fairly high office was because it was only the people at the top who knew what was known or not known already.

42. I do not remember performance reviews being a formality in the SDS. We were not dictated by formality. If good intelligence was being produced, the officer might run for a bit longer. If I had a hint somebody needed to come out, I would have that conversation with the Chief Inspector and Chief Superintendent and we would agree the course of action and redeployment, for example a month later. We did not keep notes on this for obvious reasons. I do not recall this issue cropping up when I was on the SDS since I do not remember anyone leaving whilst I was there.
43. I was not involved in responding to specific requests for intelligence made by police or other bodies, including the Security Service. I do not remember this happening. I cannot answer whether I was asked to review photographs or footage of demonstrations or to respond to specific requests for intelligence about persons present and demonstrations.
44. I cannot remember if I was involved in producing other SDS documents. I think I would have been involved in passing up expenses claims, essentially acting as the messenger and passing on to seniors the forms obtained from the undercover officers when meeting with them twice a week for authorisation. I think we had to keep daily diaries in the office. I cannot remember if the undercover officers kept daily diaries too; if they did, I must have initialled them.

[REDACTED]

45. I was not involved in cover accommodation for undercover officers.

46.

Details involvement in the procurement of safehouses

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47.

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48. It is difficult to say whether I liaised or otherwise dealt with Special Branch and/or MPS personnel who were not members of the SDS. Our office was in the same building – the same corridor – as everyone else. I did not generally liaise or deal with others. I would have said good morning and people would have known what I was doing, I would have thought.

[REDACTED]

49. I was not involved in liaising or otherwise dealing with the Security Service. I am aware of a document – the statement of witness Z, which was previously sent to me by Operation Motion – which says at pages 39-40 that I appeared to be willing to recruit people for them. I have no recollection of doing this. It was not within my authority, as Inspector, to recruit for Box. I do not recall the meeting detailed in the Note for File dated 11 January 1974 (Doc 4: UCPI0000030050) either.

50. I was not involved in liaising or otherwise dealing with the Home Office or other government body. I was aware that finance came to F Department and then to the SDS, but it was all above me.

### Premises

51. Whilst I was in the SDS we had two different premises. The first was in [REDACTED] 14  
[REDACTED] 15 [REDACTED] south east London, and the second in [REDACTED] south London. These were safe houses and where we met the undercover officers. [REDACTED] 16

[REDACTED]

52. We also had an office in Scotland Yard. I either worked in the office in Scotland Yard or I went out to the safe houses. I personally supervised the guys two days a week. It is possible I had other things going on at the same time if you consider that occupied two days a week.

### SDS management structure

53. I was the only Detective Inspector on the SDS. The Chief Inspector some of the time was [redacted] <sup>17</sup> HN294; he was Chief Inspector when I came on, but not when I came off. There also would have been a Chief Superintendent: in the latter part of my time it probably would have been David Bicknell. I would consider the Chief Inspector and Chief Superintendent to have been my management.
54. Although I knew him, I did not serve on the SDS with [redacted] <sup>18</sup> HN332. I think Derek Kneale took over from [redacted] <sup>19</sup> HN294, but I do not recall whether he was in position when I left the SDS; there is a possibility he was in post when I left. Geoffrey Craft was after my time on the SDS; I think he did the job I was doing but later on.
55. The desk Sergeant who was there all the time was David Smith. He received the reports.

### Chain of command

56. The chain of command within the MPS but above the SDS was as follows: Superintendent; Chief Superintendent; Commander Special Branch; Deputy Assistant Commissioner; Assistant Commissioner; Deputy Commissioner; Commissioner. As far as I was concerned, my chain of command ended with the Chief Superintendent. However, I am not certain there was a Superintendent in position at the time as set out below.

- [REDACTED]
57. Sir Robert Mark was possibly the Commissioner in the chain of command when I was in the SDS, but I am sure this could be looked up. I never met him.
58. I do not remember John Hill or Sir James Starritt being Deputy Commissioners in the chain of command whilst I was in the SDS. I never had any dealings with them.
59. Colin Woods and Peter Brodie might have been Assistant Commissioners in the chain of command whilst I was in the SDS.
60. I do not know the name R H Anning. The Deputy Assistant Commissioner Special Branch whilst I was in the SDS was Fergie Smith and Vic Gilbert took over from him. This would be a matter of public record. There would have been a number of Deputy Assistant Commissioners with different responsibilities, but only one would have had oversight of Special Branch and thus of the SDS.
61. I remember Matthew Rodger as Commander Special Branch. Rollo Watts was certainly Chief Superintendent when I was on the Bomb Squad, but he might have been Commander after my time. I think he succeeded Matthew Rodger and Matthew was definitely in the job when I left the MPS in 1974.
62. David Bicknell was Chief Superintendent whilst I was on the SDS. [REDACTED] HN332 [REDACTED] 20 [REDACTED] was after my time.

[REDACTED]

63. I do not remember who the Superintendent was when I was on the SDS. There was a time when there were no Superintendents, and I think this was around the time I was on the SDS although I cannot be certain. I think Peter Imbert and David Bicknell went from Chief Inspector to Chief Superintendent because there was no rank of Superintendent at the time and so are examples of this. This might be why I do not remember any Superintendents with oversight of the SDS.

#### **Undercover officers**

64. I served in the SDS at the same time as the following undercover officers:

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HN338, HN343, HN298,  
HN301, HN342/299,  
HN303, HN200, HN300,  
HN68 and others

65. I did not serve on the SDS at the same time as [redacted] HN348 (there was no female on the Squad when I was there), [redacted] HN351 or Rick Clark.

66. [redacted] HN353 does not come to mind. I cannot definitively say I did not serve at the same time as him, but I remember everyone else very well.

67. I was not aware of undercover officers spending a length of time, like an attachment, in the back office before their deployment whilst I was on the SDS. I was aware of it happening before I was there. I do not know what they did in the back office. There was not really any movement of undercover officers when I was on the SDS because I was only there for a relatively short period of time. I think [redacted] HN300 was the only officer who joined whilst I was on the SDS – the rest, I think, I was given, and they were still going when I left.

#### **SDS – role and annual reports**

68. When I was on the SDS, its role and purpose was an intelligence gathering operation.
69. I have been referred to the annual reports for 1971-1975. I had no role in writing annual reports. I have no idea why they were written. Looking at these documents, presumably it was because we had money from the Home Office and it had to be justified to Mr Waddell for approval. I assume it was my senior officers that had to justify the money, which was perfectly reasonable.

- [REDACTED]
70. I cannot say whether the annual reports are accurate bearing in mind I had nothing to do with them.
71. It was not me who decided which field or group an officer should infiltrate; I do not know who did. I do not know how targeting decisions were made. As I have said above, I had no role in deployments or intelligence. I cannot comment on how successful infiltrations were, how groups came to be infiltrated, or whether and how the deployments contributed to policing or assisted the Security Service or other policing purpose. If, say, we infiltrated the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign and information was obtained and passed on to uniform (and I was not involved in that) so that uniform could be prepared, then I would consider we were successful. I cannot relate the information that might have been obtained by the SDS to whatever we ended up with at the end of the day: it is not an obvious connection because it was undercover. The overriding question must be why we were doing it in the first place. My role was not to judge the intelligence gained or otherwise assess how valuable it was or the use to which it would be put. My role was welfare. I was not doing the job myself.
72. I have been referred to the minutes of a meeting which took place on 13 January 1972 (Doc 6: UCPI0000030066) attended by members of the Security Service, Special Branch and the SDS. I was not on the SDS at the time of this meeting: [REDACTED] <sup>26</sup> HN294 was the Detective Inspector. I cannot comment on SDS coverage at the time or the knowledge of the Liberal Party as to any undercover deployment.

- [REDACTED]
73. I have been referred to paragraph 1 of the 1974 Annual Report (Doc 4: MPS-0730906) which states the SDS was now part of the newly created S Squad "and, as such, now has the added benefit of a Chief Superintendent and Superintendent, thus improving still further the degree of supervision which is so necessary in this delicate field of operations". I was not aware of any difficulties having arisen in the SDS due to a lack of supervision prior to the creation of S Squad. When I was on the SDS there was only one Inspector, not three Inspectors as stated in the 1974 Annual Report.

#### **Senior Managers in the Chain of Command**

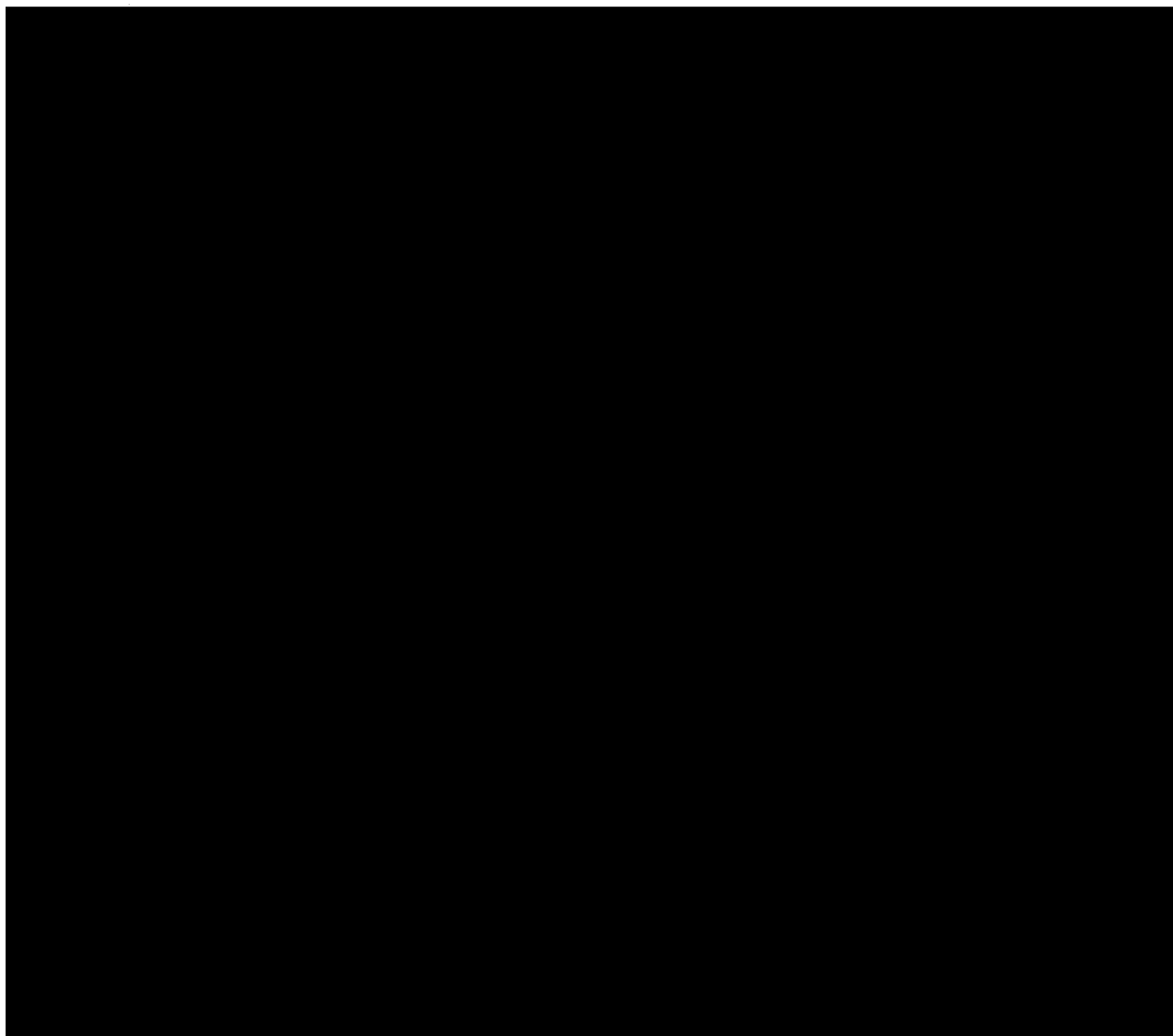
74. As I have said above, I do not remember there being a Superintendent when I was in the SDS so I cannot comment on how frequently they were involved with the SDS and on what business, or how they discharged their role.
75. The Chief Superintendent received information from the Chief Inspector. What he did with it thus was up to him. I cannot say how frequently they were involved with the SDS or on what business. The Chief Superintendent, David Bicknell, discharged his role satisfactorily. I had no issues based on my relationship with him. I did not have direct contact with him as Detective Inspector because direct contact came from the Chief Inspector. When I was Acting Chief Inspector towards the end of my posting I had direct contact with David Bicknell.
76. Commander Special Branch must have had ultimate responsibility for the SDS. I cannot say how frequently he was involved with the SDS or on what business. I do not know how they discharged their role.

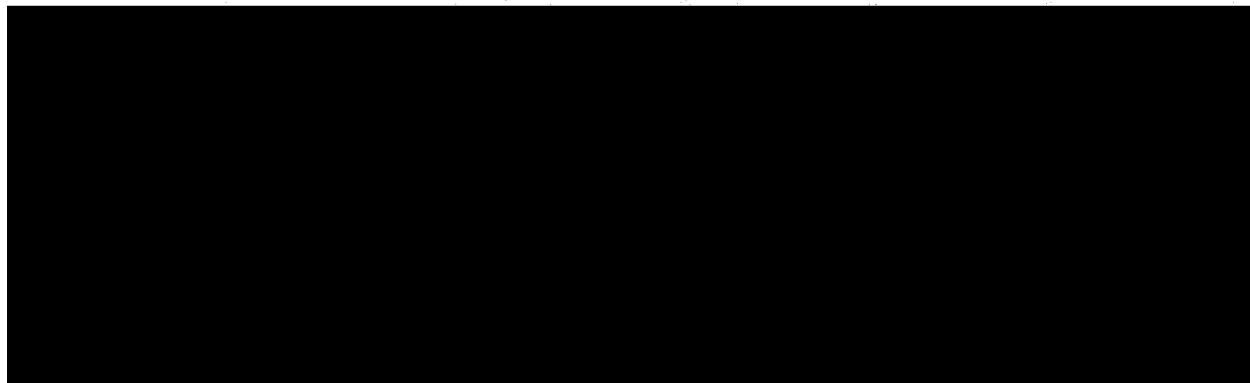
[REDACTED]

77. I cannot comment on what involvement the Deputy Assistant Commissioner, Assistant Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner or Commissioner had in the running or supervision of the SDS, how frequently they were involved and on what business, or how they discharged their roles. You can assume from the annual reports that the Assistant Commissioner had a role in the SDS, but it was not something I was aware of before seeing the witness bundle provided by the Inquiry.

#### **Questions about Specific Undercover Officers**

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HN298

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80. I am told in the rule 9 request that the Inquiry believes [HN298] served in the SDS between 1971 and 1976. I am referred to the various documents in Doc 5: MPS-0526782 which are said to relate to [HN298] s arrest on 12 May 1972. I know nothing about his arrest: it pre-dates my time in the SDS. Various of the pages refer to Detective Inspector [HN294] and it was when he was made Chief Inspector that I moved on to the SDS. Accordingly, I cannot answer any of the Inquiry's questions on this issue. I can see from the minute sheet that the Deputy Assistant Commissioner was involved with the arrest, so it would appear it was dealt with at a higher level.

### Questions about Specific Issues

#### Positions of responsibility in target groups

81. To my knowledge, no prior permission was required before an SDS undercover officer could assume a position of responsibility in their target group. Presumably the advantage of an undercover officer assuming a position of responsibility was because the officer would then be more in the know. I do not know what the risks and/or disadvantages were from the SDS' perspective of an undercover officer assuming a position of responsibility. I cannot answer the question of whether

[REDACTED]

any particular posts within particular groups were thought to be beneficial to the work of an undercover officer. SDS undercover officers were not, to my knowledge, given any guidance on the assumption of positions of responsibility within their target groups.

Use of deceased children's identities

82. I do not know when the tactic of undercover officers adopting the identities of deceased children as part of their legend began. I had not heard of it until the Inquiry. To my knowledge, it was not going on when I was on the SDS. I cannot say who devised this tactic. I would not know who authorised the use of the tactic or what consideration, if any, was given by management to the impact of the surviving family of a deceased child of the use of their relatives' identities for police purposes.

Sexual relationships in undercover identity

83. I did not give any undercover officers orders, instructions, advice or guidance about sexual contact whilst operating undercover, nor did I have any informal conversations with undercover officers about the same. I do not know if any other manager gave any undercover officers orders, instructions, advice or guidance about sexual contact whilst operating undercover.
84. When I was on the SDS, I did not think sexual activity between undercover officers on the SDS and civilians with whom they met in their undercover identities was happening. It was not an issue as far as I was concerned. I did not

[REDACTED]

know of any undercover officers engaging in sexual activity with others whilst in their cover identity whilst I was on the SDS.

#### Commission of criminal offences whilst undercover

85. I did not give any undercover officers orders, instructions, advice or guidance about the commission of criminal offences whilst undercover, nor did I have any informal conversations with undercover officers about the same. I do not know if any other manager gave any undercover officers orders, instructions, advice or guidance about the commission of criminal offences whilst undercover.

86. I did not have a view on the commission of criminal offences by SDS officers whilst undercover because it did not crop up. Marching down the road at a demonstration was not a criminal offence but breaking into someone's property was, and that is where the difference lies. The undercover officers on the SDS at the same time as me did not, to my knowledge, commit criminal offences whilst undercover.

#### Agent provocateur

87. I did not give any undercover officers orders, instructions, advice or guidance about whether or not they could provoke, encourage or cause a third party to commit a criminal offence whilst undercover. I was aware that from time to time there were force memoranda about the subject of agent provocateur, which would have been a police order to all officers not limited to those who were undercover. We would have been operating in the same framework: the fact we were SDS did not matter. Presumably the politics of the time determined whether

[REDACTED]

this was an issue. I recall twice in particular during my service a memorandum being circulated. Provoking, encouraging or causing a third party to commit a criminal offence just was not on. I did not have any informal conversations with undercover officers about whether or not they could provoke, encourage or cause a third party to commit a criminal offence whilst undercover.

88. I do not know if any other manager gave any undercover officers orders, instructions, advice or guidance about whether or not they could provoke, encourage or cause a third party to commit a criminal offence whilst undercover.

89. The undercover officers on the SDS at the same time as me did not, to my knowledge, provoke, encourage or cause a third party to commit a criminal offence whilst undercover.

Contact with the criminal justice system as a suspect or defendant

90. I did not give any undercover officers orders, instructions, advice or guidance about what to do if involved as either the suspect or defendant in criminal proceedings whilst undercover, nor did I have any informal conversations with undercover officers about the same. I do not know if any other manager gave any undercover officers orders, instructions, advice or guidance about what to do if involved as either the suspect or defendant in criminal proceedings whilst undercover.

- [REDACTED]
91. The undercover officers on the SDS at the same as me did not, to my knowledge, become involved as either the suspect or defendant in criminal proceedings whilst undercover.

Violence and public disorder

92. I cannot remember if I gave any undercover officers orders, instructions, advice or guidance about the risk of becoming involved in either violence or public disorder whilst undercover or if I had any informal conversations with undercover officers about the same. I do not know if any other manager gave any undercover officers orders, instructions, advice or guidance about the risk of becoming involved in either violence or public disorder whilst undercover.

93. I cannot remember whether any of the undercover officers on the SDS at the same time as me became involved in either violence or public disorder whilst undercover. I am assuming had they done I would have known because they would have told me.

Legally professionally privileged material

94. I did not know what legally privileged material was when serving in the SDS because the issue did not arise. The concept has been explained to me in the course of making this witness statement. I did not give any undercover officers orders, instructions, advice or guidance about how to identify and deal with legally privileged information whilst operating undercover, nor did I have any informal conversations with undercover officers about the same.

- [REDACTED]
95. Other managers did not to my knowledge give any undercover officers orders, instructions, advice or guidance about identifying and dealing with legally privileged information whilst undercover.

Activities of elected politicians

96. I did not give any undercover officers orders, instructions, advice or guidance in relation to interacting with or reporting on elected politicians whilst operating undercover, nor did I have any informal conversations with undercover officers about the same.
97. Other managers did not, to my knowledge, give any undercover officers orders, instructions, advice or guidance in relation to interacting with or reporting on elected politicians whilst undercover.

Reporting about individuals

98. Undercover officers were not given any guidance as to the level of personal detail which was considered helpful to the readers of the report.

Reporting on trade unions

99. I do not know specifically why information was reported on trade unions. They organised marches in London which would have been of interest from a policing purpose. I do not know that it would have been of particular interest to Special Branch. I do not know what use it was to the Security Service.

[REDACTED]

Reporting for public order purposes

100. In terms of how reporting for public order purposes was undertaken, information would come from the SDS officer and then be sent off wherever after. I happen to know that this sort of information was of interest to A8 and uniformed policing. The intelligence would have given A8 and uniformed policing an indication of the potential size and behaviour of the organisations to be involved in the demonstrations. Some organisations were pacifists and caused no problems, and others caused mayhem. I deduced the information was provided to A8 and uniformed policing, but you did not know it would go there – you just assume it did. I do not know what happened when urgent information came in. I was not involved in threat assessments.

Contribution to policing and counter subversion

101. In relation to mass demonstrations and terrorism, I think the SDS achieved, or gathered, intelligence to make things safer for the public. The fact we did covert work – be it surveillance or undercover work – is important. It was an essential part of solving atrocities [REDACTED] <sup>30</sup> At the time, there was a degree of desperation around Irish terrorism and for a while it appeared out of control and that is why I believe the Bomb Squad was set up also.

102. I am not sure what the SDS achieved to assist the Security Service. I think the relationship between the Security Service and the police has changed over the years and so it is hard to answer the question: I am not sure how much overlapping there is.

[REDACTED]

### Overtime payments

103. I cannot say how significant a component of overall pay was overtime to SDS undercover officers whilst I was there. I do not know that I ever got the impression, in relation to any undercover officer, that the amount of overtime on offer influenced them to stay in the unit longer than might otherwise have been the case.

104. I cannot answer the questions of whether I got the impression, in relation to any undercover officer, that the amount of overtime on offer influenced them to paint an overly optimistic picture of what they were achieving whilst deployed or influenced them to stay in the unit when doing so was not in their best interests from a welfare point of view. The latter did not crop up.

105. Overtime was paid through salaries, compared to expenses which were operational. Overtime had nothing to do with us so I cannot answer the questions posed by the Inquiry. I did not get any overtime.

### Formal policies and procedures

106. I cannot remember whether there were any formal written SDS policies and procedures during the time that I served on the SDS, but I am pretty certain there were not.

### The Security Service

107. I have been referred to a Note for File dated 11 January 1974 (Doc 4: UCPI0000030050). I do not recall having any connection with the Security

[REDACTED]

Service, but this document suggests otherwise. As stated above, I do not remember this meeting. For that reason, I cannot add anything to what is said in the document.

108. I have no idea what the relationship was like between the SDS and the Security Service because it was above my level.

109. In terms of what the SDS did for the Security Service, I assume the information about some of the organisations targeted was passed on to them because otherwise what was the point of doing it?

110. I cannot answer the question about what the Security Service did for the SDS.

#### **Oversight bodies**

111. To my knowledge, no one from any outside body with any form of regulatory or oversight responsibility for policing visited the SDS whilst I was on the unit.

112. I recall that from time to time a senior officer at Commander level visited the SDS. I am not sure if the Deputy Assistant Commissioner or Assistant Commissioner Crime came to visit. They would have come to give a pep talk, telling us to "keep up the good work"; it was a PR job. I am aware the visits took place but I cannot quantify them.

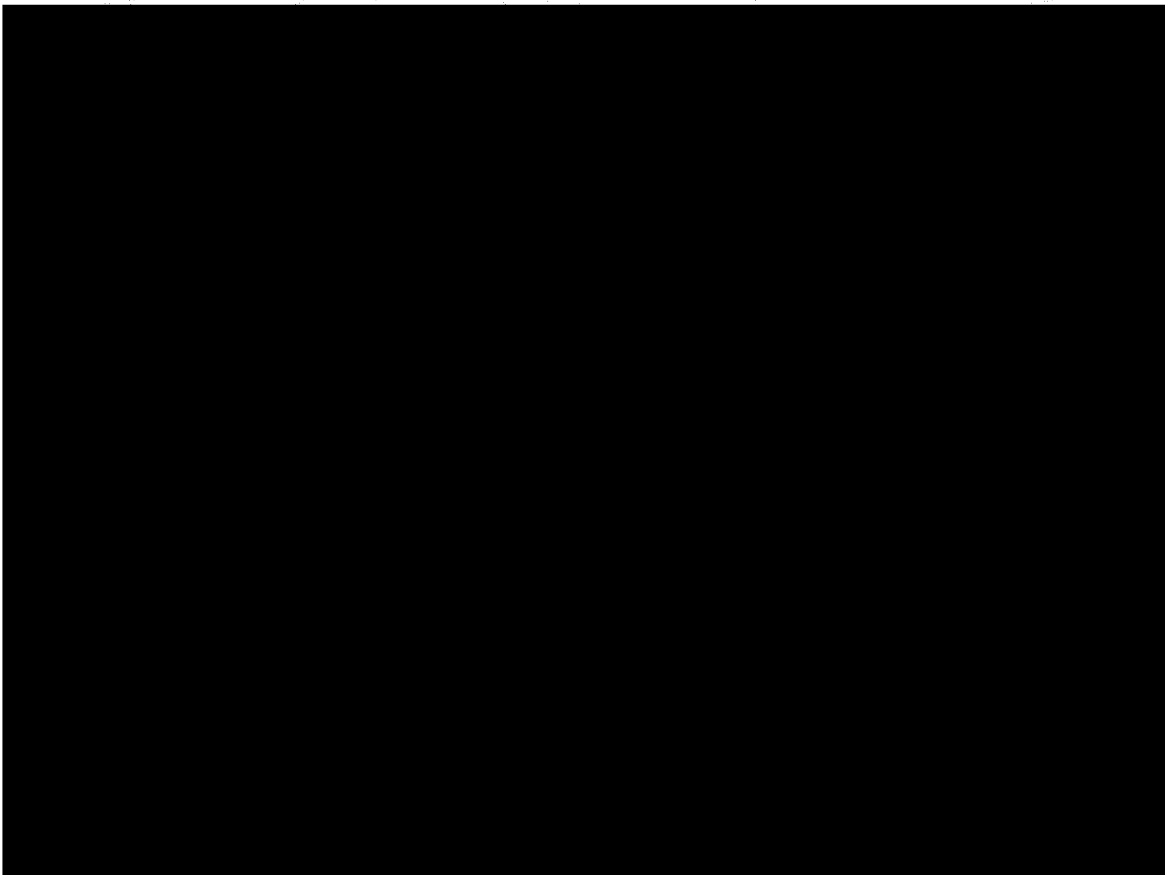
[REDACTED]

### Leaving the SDS

113. My last day on the SDS was my last day in the MPS. I left the MPS in October 1974 because I had a job offer outside of the police that I could not refuse.

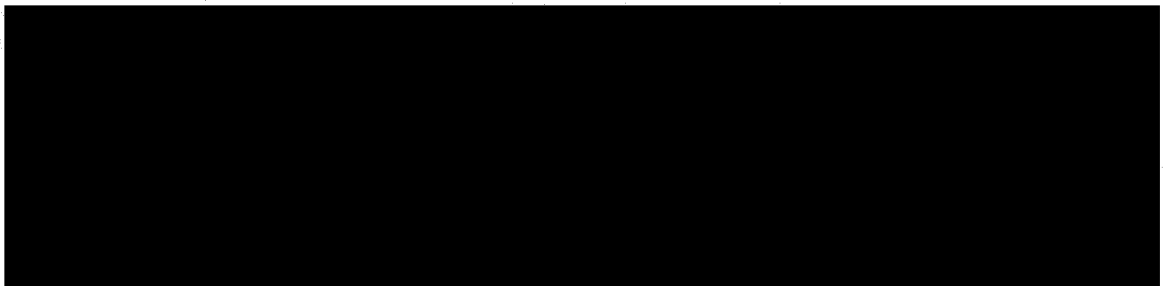
114. After leaving the SDS, and the MPS, I did not seek, receive, use or disseminate intelligence emanating from the SDS. I was not involved in mentoring after I left the SDS.

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#### **Any other matters**

117. Because we were at the infancy with the problems which started in 1968, which have already been considered by the Inquiry, what was cobbled together turned out to be quite a successful intelligence operation – including the Bomb Squad. If it has gone wrong since then, I cannot understand why. Life has changed and moral standards have changed; the moral guidelines in guys' heads in the 1970s may have been different than in the 2000s because we did not have the same free living and moral standards were stricter. I got the impression from the undercover officer that their job was their day job: it was not 24/7, they were not living together or with activists. Whilst they would not necessarily have told the Detective Inspector what they were doing, I am pretty confident they all went home eventually.

118. There is no other evidence which I consider I am able to give from my knowledge and experience which is relevant to the work of the Inquiry.

[REDACTED]

**Request for documents**

119. I do not have any documents or other information which are potentially relevant to the Inquiry's terms of reference.

**Diversity information**

120. My gender is male.

121. My racial origin is white British.

I believe the content of this statement to be true.

Signed: .....

[REDACTED] 33  
Derek Brice

Dated: .....

[REDACTED] 34  
15th September 2021