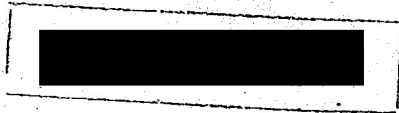


ASSOCIATION OF CHIEF POLICE OFFICERS OF ENGLAND AND WALES
Council of the
C.I.D. Committee

Telephone:
NEWCASTLE 23451
TELEX 53106



CHIEF CONSTABLE'S OFFICE
GPO BOX 1DG
NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE,
NE99 1DG

15th June, 1970.

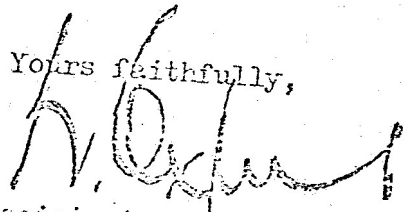
To All Chief Constables.

Dear Sir,

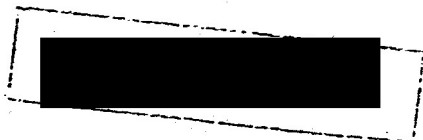
SPECIAL BRANCHES

During the course of re-organisation of training for Special Branch personnel, it was agreed there was a pressing need for a recognised 'Terms of Reference' for Special Branches and I enclose herewith for your information a copy of the 'Terms of Reference' which has been prepared in collaboration with the Security Service and other interested parties and which has now been agreed by the A.C.P.O. C.I.D. Committee.

Yours faithfully,


Assistant Secretary.

R.A. James Esq., M.C.,
F.4 Division,
Police Department,
Home Office,
Horseferry House,
Dean Pyle Street,
London, S.W. 1.



TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE SPECIAL BRANCH

1. RESPONSIBILITY

Special Branch officers are police officers and are responsible through the head of the Branch to their Chief Officer.

2. FUNCTION

Special Branch is responsible for acquiring security intelligence, both secret and overt (a) to assist the Chief Officer in the preservation of public order, (b) as directed by the Chief Officer to assist the Security Service in its task of defending the realm from attempts at espionage and sabotage and from actions of persons and organisations which may be judged to be subversive of the security of the State.

3. TASKS

- (a) To provide the Chief Officer with intelligence affecting public order; and, on behalf of the Chief Officer, the Security Service with intelligence affecting national security.
- (b) On behalf of the Chief Officer to provide the Metropolitan Special Branch with intelligence affecting the activities of the Irish Republican Army.
- (c) With the approval of the Chief Officer to provide support to the Security Service in operations and enquiries including assistance in the operation of the Travel Notification Scheme for diplomats and officials.
- (d) In consultation with the Security Service to collect, process and record information about subversive or potentially subversive organisations and individuals.
- (e) To investigate or to assist in investigating offences having as their purpose the achievement of a subversive or political objective especially those relating to sabotage and against the Official Secrets Acts, consulting the Security Service as necessary.

- (f) To investigate any subversive background, demonstrations and breaches of public order, and, in consultation with the Security Service, to certain industrial disputes.
- (g) To report on any security implications in cases of possession of or dealing in firearms and explosives.
- (h) To carry out all naturalisation enquiries, conduct any prosecution arising therefrom as necessary and co-operate with the Security Service on any specific security issue which may arise.
- (i) To co-ordinate all aliens enquiries and supervise the maintenance of aliens records.
- (j) To carry out enquiries relating to control of Commonwealth immigration.
- (k) At Airports and Seaports to make arrests of wanted criminals, to detect offences and to gather security and criminal intelligence in collaboration with the Ports Office of the Metropolitan Special Branch.
- (l) To carry out protection duties (usually in co-operation with Metropolitan Police) in respect of visits of Royalty, Foreign Heads of State and other important persons as the need arises.
- (m) To maintain such records as are required and ensure the security of their content.
- (n) To ensure that classified correspondence and papers are correctly handled in accordance with Government instructions for personnel and physical security.

* * * * *

(See attached annexe for expansion and interpretation of terms of reference).

1. RESPONSIBILITY

The duties of a Special Branch, whether in its work for the Security Service or on behalf of other Government departments or in its enquiries into issues affecting public order or other matters relating to the Force, are such as to require the strictest control by a senior officer of the Force. It will, of course, be for the Chief Officer on whom responsibility ultimately rests to delegate this responsibility to another senior officer preferably an Assistant Chief Constable. Ideally, the head of the Special Branch responsible for its day-to-day operation should be of not less than Detective Inspector rank, though this will naturally depend on the size of the Branch.

2. It is important to acknowledge that the responsibilities of a Force Special Branch can only be set out in broad terms. The practical style of working of Special Branches and the scope of their activities in any field would be indicated in more precise terms in any agreed training programme for Force Special Branches and would necessarily be affected by any particular instructions issued by the Chief Officer.

3. FUNCTION

It is important that Special Branches should have a clear idea of what constitutes "persons and organisations which may be judged to be subversive of the security of the State". Broadly speaking these are any organisation or individual whose purpose is the undermining or overthrow of the established democratic order.

4. TASKS

- (a) Nil.
- (b) The authority for this requirement rests in Home Office circular number 25/54 of 18 January 1954.
- (c) Nil.
- (d) Nil.
- (e) Considerations such as the size of the Branch, the experience of its members and the seriousness of the offence will doubtless influence Chief Officers to decide whether their Force Special Branch will "investigate" or "assist in investigating".

Such investigations should go no further than is necessary to assist the Chief Officer in the discharge of his responsibility for the maintenance of law and order and to meet any Security Service request for intelligence on the role played by subversive elements, whether individuals or organisations, in the dispute.

- (g) All cases involving firearms or explosives, except those having a clearly identifiable criminal object, need to be assessed by the Force Special Branch for possible security (including Irish Republican) content. The Special Branch involvement in the early stages is usually achieved most effectively by the insertion in Force Orders of an instruction that Special Branch be informed immediately of all such cases coming to the notice of police.
- (h) This recommendation is made on the basis that naturalisation cases provide an opportunity for overt interest in emigre communities.
- (i) In practice this responsibility would vary from Force to Force, depending upon the amount of routine work involving aliens in the Force area. In Forces having large alien populations and numerous enquiries regarding aliens - e.g. enquiries on behalf of HO regarding visa applications by persons wishing to visit this country - it is recommended that the Special Branch responsibility be limited to vetting each proposed enquiry regarding an alien in order that it may be assessed for security content, the enquiry being taken over by Special Branch in suitable cases. Similarly in regard to the maintenance of aliens records, it may be considered expedient in Forces having a small resident alien population for the records to be maintained by the Special Branch. Areas having larger alien populations may consider it more practical for the Special Branch to be closely involved with the aliens section but not having responsibility for day-to-day control of the records.
- (j) Such enquiries if conducted by Special Branch have benefit in that they serve the added purpose of providing opportunities for intelligence regarding

the immigrant community within the Force area. In Forces having larger immigrant communities within their jurisdiction, it is recommended that the role of the Special Branch be confined to vetting and being aware of all such enquiries, taking over responsibility for enquiry in those cases which have an apparent security content.

- (k) Nil.
- (l) This is an important area of responsibility and during enquiries into militant extremist individuals or groups, requires constant attention to be paid to emigre and immigrant individuals and groups and other persons likely to wish to cause harm or embarrassment to prominent persons anywhere in the United Kingdom. Periodic attention must also be paid to mentally disturbed individuals who come to notice of police as likely to approach such persons.
- (m) Nil.
- (n) Physical security is governed by Home Office circular POL/67 19/2/7 and POL/68 19/2/8, issued on 11 March 1969. Personnel security in regard to positive vetting is governed by Home Office circular POL/61 20/9/7 issued on 13 September 1963. It is recommended that the field enquiries into the positive vetting of all members of the Special Branch and the civilian staff attached thereto be conducted by the senior officer(s) of the Force Special Branch.

8 April 1970