

3151

Mr [REDACTED]
Scottish Home and Health Department
St Andrew House
EDINBURGH

14 August 1984

SPECIAL BRANCH AND SURVEILLANCE GUIDELINES

Thank you for your letter of 6 August to Roy Harrington, following the meeting held on 16 July.

As you know, we have now re-circulated the Special Branch guidelines, and I hope that the new text meets all the main points made at the meeting.

On the specific points that you raise, I agree that it is a little odd that the opening paragraphs read more as statements of fact than as guidelines. However, I have not felt it worth trying to change them round at this stage, and I think it will be clear enough to chief officers that the paragraphs concerned both define the functions of Special Branches and guide them on what their Special Branches should be doing. We have redrawn the definitions of "espionage" and "subversion" in accordance with the conclusions of the meeting. I do not, however, think that we can extend the definition of espionage to cover information overtly obtained, since this would bring within the scope of the definition perfectly normal and acceptable information research activities on behalf of a foreign country. In a document which is likely to be made available to Parliament, I think we would have trouble defending a definition which went so widely. Your point on paragraph 8 has been taken care of.

We have also revised the surveillance guidelines and covering letter in the light of the discussion at the meeting, and I attach copies of the new versions. As with the Special Branch guidelines, I hope to get these to Mr Imbert for discussion at the meeting of the ACPO Crime Committee in early September, and I should therefore be grateful if you could let me know as soon as possible of any difficulties you see in the revised

[REDACTED]

drafts. We shall have to get the drafts off to Mr Imbert next week for circulation to the Crime Committee, so ideally we would like to receive any comments before then. But we can always feed changes in at a later stage if necessary.

I am copying this letter and its enclosures to Mr [REDACTED] (ACPO, Scotland) and Mr [REDACTED] (Strathclyde Police).

[REDACTED]

Encs

[REDACTED]