

New file 18/12.

HOME OFFICE

H.M. INSPECTOR OF CONSTABULARY

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1923

Dear Sir,

Special Branch Work

A review is being carried out centrally of the organisation and work of Special Branch officers in provincial forces throughout England and Wales.

By its very nature, Special Branch work is difficult to define and to assess in terms of efficiency. Further, the role to be played by the police in work of this kind is far from clear.

It would be helpful to all of us, I am sure, if some general agreement could be reached on the extent and nature of Special Branch duty and, to enable a start to be made, I would be glad if the following information could be made available:

1. Special Branch

Establishment

Strength

Police
(By Rank)

Civilians
(By Grade)

Police
(By Rank)

Civilians
(By Grade)

Where some of these officers are employed at air or sea ports for Special Branch duty, the details should be shown.

2. To establish the work load in general terms in the purely security field i.e. disregarding such miscellaneous duties as enquiries respecting aliens, naturalisations etc.

- (a) During 1968 on how many occasions is it estimated your Branch initiated and passed apparently new information to the Security Service?
- (b) During 1968 on how many occasions did your Branch carry out enquiries on behalf of the Security Service?
- (c) How many persons are recorded in your Security index?
- (d) How many active organisations of Special Branch interest operate in your area?

3. Are specific terms of reference given to members of the Branch?

A. B.

To all Chief Constables in S.E. Region
The Commissioner City of London Police

4. How are Special Branch officers recruited and what training do they have?
5. Years of experience - please indicate the years of experience in full-time Special Branch work of each officer engaged in your Branch.
6. Have all members of the Branch, police and civilian, been positively vetted?
7. Are arrangements for protection of Special Branch records satisfactory?
8. Are arrangements for exchange of information with Special Branches of other forces satisfactory?

Yours faithfully,

John A. McKay
H.M. Inspector of Constabular