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Brief: XII

STRUCTURE OF THE NIO AND THE NI DEPARTMENTS

BACKGROUND

1. Since the demise of devolved government at Stormont in 1972 the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland has been:

- (a) the Cabinet Minister responsible for Northern Ireland;
- (b) directly responsible for the administration of law and order in Northern Ireland; and
- (c) responsible for making the Grant-in-Aid to the NI Consolidated Fund.

2. Apart from the brief period in office of the power-sharing Executive in early 1974, the Secretary of State has also had the following direct rule responsibilities:

- (a) the direction and control of the NI Departments (formerly NI Ministries) for which he is statutorily accountable to Parliament (in practice, junior Ministers have been given responsibility for one or more NI Departments or other areas, such as law and order); and
- (b) the passage of NI legislation at Westminster which, under the Government of Ireland Act 1920, and later the NI Constitution Act 1973, would have fallen within the responsibilities of the NI Parliament or NI Assembly as "transferred" matters.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE

3. The NIO was created in 1972 at the advent of direct rule; it is staffed by Home Civil Servants and Northern Ireland Civil Servants. Below Permanent Under Secretary level the NIO comprises a Second Permanent Under Secretary, who is Head of the Northern Ireland Civil Service, two Deputy Under

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Secretary commands and a central core of financial, personnel and other common services. Of the two Deputy Under Secretary commands one is located entirely in Belfast (DUS(B)) and is responsible for security policy, policing, prisons, compensation, treatment of offenders, home defence and certain other home affairs subjects. The other command (DUS(L)) is based in London but includes some staff located in Belfast and has responsibility for advising on a coherent approach to political, constitutional, economic and social affairs, including the maintenance of law and order, taking account both of general Government policy for the UK and of international implications.

4. Annex A gives details of the manpower groups in the NIO and wholly funded bodies. The majority of staff in the DUS(B) command, including the prison service, are members of the Northern Ireland Civil Service and are employees of the Department of Finance and Personnel (DFP) seconded to the NIO. The majority of staff in the DUS(L) command and in the Ministerial Private Offices are Home Civil Servants. The Establishment Divisions and the Resources Control Division, which discharges the customary functions of a Finance Division, are responsible for overall control of resources and form the central core.

5. The NIO's overall strategy provides three major objectives as the focus of its activities:

- (a) to restore and maintain law and order, extending the role of the police and allowing Army troop levels to be reduced;
- (b) to establish a clear role for the Northern Ireland Assembly and to foster its acceptance by both sides of the community with a view to a move towards proposals for devolution (and hence, certain legislative responsibilities) under the Northern Ireland Act 1982; and,
- (c) to take all practicable measures to reverse the economic decline of the Province and to continue the improvements achieved in the social environment.

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6. A chart showing the functional areas of policy which cover the range of the Secretary of State's responsibilities and the senior official currently responsible for each functional area is at Annex B.

## Command of the Deputy Under Secretary (Belfast)

7. The organisational units in the command of the Deputy Secretary (I) relate primarily to objective (a) above. The Divisions concerned are:-

- (a) Law and Order Division (Belfast) (LOB):  
Law and order policy, security co-ordination and liaison with the Army and RUC Operations;
- (b) Police Division (Belfast) (POB):  
RUC matters, particularly administration policy, through the NI Police Authority;
- (c) Prison Divisions (Belfast) (PRB 1 to 4):  
Prison regimes, staffing and finance, security and operations, industries, education and services;
- (d) Criminal Injuries and Juveniles Division:  
Compensation, probation, training schools, prison welfare, children and young persons legislation;
- (e) Criminal Justice Division:  
Criminal Law, Royal Prerogative of Mercy etc;
- (f) Forensic Science Division;
- (g) Also related to this command are the Police Authority for Northern Ireland, the Probation Board and the offices of the Crown Solicitor and the Director of Public Prosecutions.



Command of the Deputy Under Secretary (London)

8. The Divisions in the command of the Deputy Under Secretary, London, are concerned primarily with the objectives at paragraph 5 (b) and (c) above. Their role is to ensure that the various strands of Northern Ireland policy are treated as a coherent whole, taking into account the wider policy objectives of the UK Government. They are responsible for assisting development and implementation of policies for political and constitutional development, having regard to attitudes in Northern Ireland, the rest of the United Kingdom and the wider international community. The Divisions concerned are:-

- (a) Security and International Division (London) (SIL): Liaison with Whitehall and Westminster on security matters and NI Home Affairs functions. It also undertakes responsibility for the international aspects of HMG's NI policies;
- (b) Constitutional and Political Division (London) (CPL): Primary responsibility for HMG's policies for the constitutional development of the Province; and for elections. It also provides Whitehall and Westminster liaison including monitoring of Direct Rule legislation and support for Parliamentary business such as PQs and debates on its area of responsibility. It sponsors the Belfast-based Standing Advisory Commission on Human Rights (SACHR);
- (c) Political Affairs Division (Belfast) (PAB): Discreet and informal contact with NI political parties, politicians and the people of the Province in all aspects of political affairs;
- (d) Economic and Social Division (London) (ESL):
  - (i) briefing Ministers in London on economic and social matters, mainly for Cabinet and Parliament;



- (ii) monitoring the work of the NI Departments to ensure consistency with HMG's wider political and social priorities; and
- (iii) providing a general link with Whitehall for NI Departments and representing their interests.

In fulfilling these functions, ESL liaises with the appropriate Northern Ireland Department or, where central co-ordination is required, with the Head of the Northern Ireland Civil Service and the Central Secretariat.

- (e) Information Services (London):  
The role of the Information Services is to ensure that the public, through the media, are informed of Government activities and policies in Northern Ireland. The Heads of the Information Services in both London and Belfast report to the Assistant Under Secretary (Political Affairs) in Belfast.

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#### CENTRAL SECRETARIAT AND NORTHERN IRELAND DEPARTMENTS

10. The Head of the Northern Ireland Civil Service (HOCS), who is also Second Permanent Under Secretary of the NIO, and the staff of the Central Secretariat co-ordinate the policies of the NI Departments, where necessary through the Policy Co-ordinating Committee (PCC) comprising of NI Permanent Secretaries under the Chairmanship of HOCS, or through ad hoc interdepartmental meetings. Annex C outlines the role of PCC.

11. Annex D gives in detail the functions of the Northern Ireland Departments and lists the main non-departmental public bodies for which they have responsibility. The broad outline of these functions set out below illustrates that some of these Departments have a wide span of responsibilities which parallels the activities of several Whitehall Departments.



- (a) The Department of Agriculture is responsible for the development of agriculture, horticulture, forestry and the fishing industry. It also acts as agent within Northern Ireland for the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food and the UK Intervention Board for Agricultural Produce.
- (b) The Department of Finance and Personnel is responsible for resource planning for all the Secretary of State's functions in Northern Ireland, for the control of money and manpower in respect of the NI Departments and for general personnel and management matters concerning the Northern Ireland Civil Service. It also contains a Policy Planning and Research Unit.
- (c) The Department of Economic Development is responsible for co-ordinating industrial and manpower policy in Northern Ireland and through the Industrial Development Board is responsible for the implementation of the industrial development drive. Other major responsibilities are for training, industrial relations, energy, ports and harbours, tourism, consumer protection, aircraft and shipbuilding.
- (d) The Department of Education is responsible for the central policy, co-ordination and financial control of all aspects of the education, library and youth services and it oversees the 5 Area Education and Library Boards which locally administer many of these services. It also has general oversight of museums, arts, sport, culture, recreation and community services.
- (e) The Department of the Environment for Northern Ireland is responsible for the direct implementation of functions which in Great Britain are carried out by local authorities, including planning, roads and water and sewerage. Its other major responsibility is for Housing and Urban Affairs though the implementation of housing policy is carried out through the Northern



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Ireland Housing Executive. Transportation, environmental protection and conservation, and Government Works Services are other major aspects of its work.

- (f) The Department of Health and Social Services is responsible for the provision of health and personal social services, which are locally managed and delivered by four Health and Social Services Boards on behalf of the Department, and for the administration of the social security system including housing benefits. It also has responsibility for the General Register Office, the Census, and miscellaneous licensing functions including legislation on betting and gaming and on liquor licensing.

NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE



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ANNEX A

## MANPOWER GROUPS IN THE NIO

Manpower Groups	Staff- in-post 31-7-85	Targets			
		1.4.86	1.4.87	1.4.88	1.4.89
<u>Targetted Staff</u>					
Home Civil Servants	175½	184	180	176	176
NI Civil Servants (includes HQ, The Offices of the DPP and Crown Solicitor, Forensic Science, Civil Representatives, CSU, and Civilian Support Staff in Prisons - but excludes the DPP, Deputy DPP and Crown Solicitor)	1176	1264	1251	1244	1220
Prison Service Grades	2161	3184	3184	3184	3184
<u>Non-Targetted Staff</u>					
Police Authority:					
Civilians	2444	2620	2620		
Regular RUC	8190	8250	8250		
Full-Time Reserve	2697	2750	2750		
Part-Time Reserve	1803	2200	2500		
Cadets	27	30	Nil		
Probation Board:					
Professional Staff	203				
Admin Staff	90	316	321		
Training Schools Staff	414	416	416		
State Pathologist's Staff	14	15	15		
Chief Electoral Officer's Staff	24	24	24		
Police Complaints Board Staff	10½	9½			
TOTAL:	20429	21262½	21511	-	-

NOTE 1: no specific target has been set for the part-time RUC Reserve.  
The figure of 2500 is an assumed strength level.