

On 21/12/92

W348/92

I mentioned to you that I

NOTE FOR THE RECORD *attended this meeting in your absence.*

You have previous relevant papers.

JP 14/12

WORKING GROUP ON "POINTS TO LEARN" FOLLOWING TERRORIST INCIDENTS

1. The first meeting of the above group, under Mr Watkins' chairmanship, took place on Wednesday 9 December 1992 in Stormont Castle. The following people attended:-

Mr Watkins Cen Sec	Mr McCartney SPOB
Mr McConnell Cen Sec	Mr Cameron NIHE
Mr Aiken DOE	Dr Smyth PAB <i>ford</i>
Ms Hood DHSS	<u>Mr Shackleton CSJB</u>
Mr Lynch DHSS	Mr Dalzell SPOB
Mr Robinson CA	Mr Gamble (Secretary)
Mr McCaffrey IS	

Jonathan
Just so you can
check who is
going on 7 Jan.

This note sets out the main points of the discussion and the action agreed.

Introduction and Purpose

2. Mr Watkins explained that the Secretary of State was anxious that the group should get together to review the Government's response to security incidents, particularly those involving personal/domestic hardship, following the recent spate of bombings; and to look at measures which might be introduced to improve the co-ordinated response of government agencies to such incidents.
3. Mr Watkins offered his sincere thanks to everyone (individuals and agencies) who had responded so well to the recent incidents and said that the formation of the group in no way was a criticism of the response by organisation(s) but it was rather more an exercise to see what lessons for overall responses and co-ordination might be learned from the recent incidents.

Update on the Newtownbreda and Glengormley incidents

4. At Newtownbreda everything that needed to be done on housing in response to the NIFSL bomb damage had been done. There was however a problem in relation to the lengthy occupancy of the mobile homes. About 10/12 owner-occupiers were involved; and they had been advised by solicitors to undertake no repairs until full

Name:

B. L. T. M. N.

settlements had been agreed. The Compensation Agency had assigned someone to deal specifically with these cases to try and reach amicable settlements.

5. The NIHE needed to have some idea of how long it would take to reach these settlements: if the timescale was to be protracted then it was unreasonable for these people to remain in the units which were primarily designed for short-term decanting. In order to avoid unfair criticism in relation to these cases it was agreed that we should seek to explain that the agencies had responded to all reasonable needs.
6. The Board of NIHE felt that its officers had come in for unfair criticism from political quarters over the way it conducted itself over the Newtownbreda incident. The NIHE would be seeking to set the record straight through the media probably early in the week commencing 14 December.
7. The NIHE and the Compensation Agency gave a brief update on the situation at Glengormley. There are 17 houses where the occupants had taken advantage of the Secretary of State's offer to employ the NIHE to carry out repairs. To date no work had taken place because a work schedule had not been agreed between the occupants and the Compensation Agency. It was suggested that the Compensation Agency might write to the solicitors acting on behalf of the householders in an attempt to accelerate the settlement process.
8. It was agreed that a situation report on Newtonbreda and Glengormley should be prepared and issued to Ministers by the end of week commencing 14 December. Members were asked to provide updates by Wednesday 16 December. (Action: Mr Cameron, Mr Robinson, Mr Lynch, Ms Hood)

Mechanisms to deal with a Christmas Bombing campaign

9. The group considered whether it was necessary to set up a specific mechanism to deal with traffic and other disruptions in the event of a Christmas bombing campaign. After some discussion it was agreed that Mr McCartney would review the work of the Belfast Committee which was set up last year with a view to having it

re-activated if it proves necessary. (Action: Mr McCartney)

Consideration of Work Programme

10. It was agreed that the group should meet about 2 or 3 times and by February it should develop a written standard operating procedure which set out clearly who does what in response to incidents.

11. The following points were agreed:-

- (i) the existing arrangements which NIHE have with the RUC on the notification of incidents worked well and should not be disturbed;
- (ii) it was noted that the Social Services arrangements were under review;
- (iii) it was noted that DHSS were liaising with SPOB on what should be notified and who should be notified;
- (iv) the current duty officers manual should be amended to provide guidance on the level of notification in the event of an incident (terrorist or of natural cause) which caused serious damage to households or civil installations - the amendment should indicate that Mr Watkins, Mr McConnell and PS/Mr Fell should be notified of such serious incidents (Action: Mr McConnell and Mr McCartney);
- (v) the DOE would check out the role and responsibility of district council chief executives in such incidents and the guidance to councils on provision of payments for telephones etc (Action: Mr Aiken);
- (vi) SPOB should check out the role of the RUC in notifying chief executives of councils (Action: Mr McCartney);
- (vii) if the group needed to be called together following an incident this could be done by Central Secretariat or at the request of any agency;
- (viii) in the event of any future incident sit-reps should be faxed to Central Secretariat by 10/11am and a meeting would be arranged for 2/3pm that afternoon;
- (ix) copies of incident reports should be sent to Mr Watkins (Action: Mr McCartney).

Next Meeting

- From: J. Shackleton
12. The date of the next meeting was tentatively arranged for 9.30am Thursday 7 January. Please let me know if this date does not suit anyone.

WILLIAM GAMBLE

14 December 1992

cc to those present

Mrs McCusker

Ms Madden

As directed, I attended the first meeting of the above Group on 4 December.

2. A minute of the meeting will issue in due course. This note is merely to advise that the meeting was primarily for the functional Departments and Agencies who are required to respond to a terrorist incident and who are responsible for co-ordination of services. The aim of the Group is to achieve a position where Government is capable of dealing with and seen to be dealing with hardship, both commercial and domestic, which arises following the action of terrorists.

3. The only matter that I need to bring to your attention is that should a Council note an approach following an incident about how to respond, Central Secretariat require to be informed.

4. Please note your diary that the next meeting of the group (it is not envisaged that there will be many meetings) will be held 09.30 on Thursday, 7 January at Stormont Castle.



J. SHACKLETON

From: J Shackelford
CPU
// December 1992

cc: Mr Gilmore
Mrs McKnight

Mrs Madden

WORKING GROUP ON "POINTS TO LEARN" FOLLOWING TERRORIST INCIDENTS

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J SHACKLEFORD

JMC/ES/3542

30 NOV 1992
1463


FROM: J E McCONNELL
AS CENT SEC
DATE: 27 NOVEMBER 1992

cc: Mr Watkins
Mr B Gamble

MR R AIKEN, DOE
MS MAURA McCUSKER, DHSS
MR P LYNCH, DHSS
DR PETER SMYTH, PAB
MS MARY MADDEN, CSJD 30/11/92
MR E DALZELL, SPOB
MR J MCCARTNEY, SPOB
MR J ROBINSON, COMPENSATION AGENCY
MR M CASSIDY, COMPENSATION AGENCY
MR N CORNICK, RCB (for information)
MR M McCAFFREY, NI INFORMATION SERVICE

WORKING GROUP ON "POINTS TO LEARN" FOLLOWING TERRORIST INCIDENTS

1. The first meeting of the above Group will, as you know, take place on Wednesday, 9 December 1992, at 10.00 am in Mr Watkins' office.
2. I attach a list of Group Members and an Agenda for the meeting, together with a proposed work programme which should form the basis of our discussion at Item 3 on the Agenda.


J E McCONNELL
CENTRAL SECRETARIAT

JMcC/ES/8542

ANNEX A

GROUP MEMBERS

- SPOB (Security Policy Operations Branch) - Eric Dalzell/John Macartney
- DOE - Richard Aiken
- Compensation Agency - John Robinson/Michael Cassidy
- PAB (Political Affairs, Belfast) - Dr Peter Smith
- DHSS - Maura McCusker and Paddy Lynch
- CJSD (Criminal Justice Services Division) - Mary Madden
- RCB (Resources Control Division, Belfast) - Noel Cornick (to attend when necessary)
- NIIS (Northern Ireland Information Service) - Mark McCaffrey
- Central Secretariat - David Watkins (Chairman)
- John McConnell
- Billy Gamble (Secretary)

AIM OF GROUP

To achieve a position where HMG is capable of dealing with and seen to be dealing with hardship, both commercial and domestic, which arises following the actions of terrorists.

(Pending the outcome of discussions, the Group convened following the Newtownbreda bombing will remain in play.)

WORK PROGRAMME:

1. Discuss and identify who is responsible for notification of incidents to Departments and Agencies and who is then responsible for co-ordination of such services when they are activated.
2. Identify problems in this system, eg:
 - too ad hoc?
 - no central reporting?
 - no overall information strategy? etc.
3. How does co-ordination between Departments and Agencies work during and after incidents and is it necessary to have more formalised links?
4. Service to public - review of current procedures through which repairs, payments, health problems and information are made available to the public.

Consider particular problems such as betterment/planning difficulties etc.

5. a. Assess current position and recommend, if necessary, changes in procedures in affected Departments/Agencies to improve service without change to the law.
- b. Changes which would improve services but which would require changes to the law in affected Departments/Agencies.
6. Prepare a report for submission to Ministers.

AGENDA

- | | | |
|----------------|-------|---|
| 10.00-10.15 am | 1. | Chairman's remarks and introduction of members. |
| 10.15-10.30 am | 2. a. | Update on the most recent incidents, ie Newtownbreda and Glengormley. |
| | b. | Consider necessity for setting up mechanism to deal with a Christmas bombing campaign, eg notification of traffic delays etc through DOE. |
| 10.30-11.00 am | 3. | Consideration of the work programme. |
| 11.00-11.20 am | 4. | Discussion about agenda for next meeting. |
| 11.20-Close | 5. | Date of next meeting. |

and then 11.20 am

JMcC/ES/8542

ANNEX C

AGENDA FOR FIRST MEETING OF WORKING GROUP ON
RESPONSE TO TERRORIST INCIDENTS

A G E N D A

- 10.00-10.15 am 1. Chairman's remarks and introduction of members.
- 10.15-10.30 am 2. a. Update on the most recent incidents, ie Newtownbreda and Glengormley.
b. Consider necessity for setting up mechanism to deal with a Christmas bombing campaign, eg notification of traffic delays etc through DOE.
- 10.30-11.00 am 3. Consideration of the work programme.
- 11.00-11.20 am 4. Discussion about agenda for next meeting.
- 11.20-Close 5. Date of next meeting.

Wed TRW 7 09.30 Castle