

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

**MINUTES OF THE 4TH PUBLIC MEETING OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND
POLICING BOARD MEETING HELD ON 2 MAY 2002 AT 12 NOON IN
WATERSIDE TOWER, CLARENDON DOCK, BELFAST**

PRESENT:

MEMBERS:

Professor Desmond Rea
(Chairman)
Mr Denis Bradley (Vice-Chairman)
Mr Alex Attwood
Viscount Brookeborough
Mr Joe Byrne
Mr Fred Cobain
Mr Brian Dougherty
Mr Sam Foster
Mr Barry Gilligan
Mr William Hay
Lord Kilclooney
Mrs Pauline McCabe
Mr Alan McFarland
Mr Eddie McGrady
Mrs Rosaleen Moore
Mr Ian Paisley, Jnr
Mr Suneil Sharma
Mr Sammy Wilson

**POLICE SERVICE OF NORTHERN
IRELAND:**

Mr Colin Cramphorn (Acting Chief
Constable)
Chief Superintendent, Command
Secretariat

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr Ivan Wilson (Interim Chief
Executive)
Five Board Officials

IN ATTENDANCE:

Representatives of the Police Staff
Associations

Apologies:

Mr Kelly.

Chairman, Professor Desmond Rea:

****Welcome to this public session of the Board. I would invite you Acting Chief Constable to make your opening statement.***

Acting Chief Constable, Mr Colin Cramphorn:

**Chairman, the first item that I would wish to comment about is station closures. I previously advised the Board that after public consultation had been completed, that I would be bringing forward a paper for this meeting indicating the result. That paper has been circulated to Members.*

It indicates that the vast majority of the stations that we consulted with members of the public about have not, in the end, been recommended to you for closure. There are three stations that are indicated as ones that we would like to press ahead with closure on now, those three being Springfield Road, Castlehill and Corry Square. So that draws to an end that particular piece of business Chairman, and obviously Members will wish to consider that now before coming to a conclusion.

The second item I would just like to elude to in these opening comments, is the issue of road traffic and fatalities and casualties. It is a matter that has not been much in the headlines in the press of late, and yet I wanted to ensure that I alerted yourselves and, through you, the wider public in Northern Ireland, that the figures seem to be going in the wrong direction again.

The actual statistics for the year on year performance are slightly misleading in that sense because the statistics for the year ended 31st March this year, appear to show a reduction in deaths, and a fairly significant reduction in casualties, over the previous year. Well, good you might think at face value.

The problem is that the previous year was a particularly bad year and we have not even got back, if I can put it that way, to the last really baseline year.

Indeed, if we just look at recent weeks there have been a series of really quite dreadful accidents which have given rise to considerable loss of life. My concern is that we still do not seem to be getting the message across, that essentially there are three things that are killing more people in this part of the island of Ireland than anything else - excess speed, alcohol and drugs, and a failure to use seat belts. If we could only get that message out there to the general public, because it is only with the co-operation and the acceptance by the general public that this is an unacceptable toll of death and casualty on the roads, and by taking action to prevent it, it is only with that co-operation that we are going to be able to significantly impact upon the figures.

So Chairman, my plea through today is that we all look at ourselves and examine what we do in our lives, everybody, and make sure that we are not speeding, that we are wearing our seat belts and of course that we are not driving when we are impaired through either alcohol or drugs, and I include in that prescription drugs which sometimes have side effects which people perhaps are not sensitive to but may impact on their ability to drive correctly and properly.

Chairman, Professor Desmond Rea

Mr Bradley.

Mr Denis Bradley:

Well it is more a comment than a question, but I had the opportunity to have a meeting with some of the DCU's, your own police officers, and this issue arose. I thought that there were some very constructive inputs from some of your officers on this very issue that they were raising. It struck me in that conversation, and it was mentioned on a number of times that, as we set up DPP's (District Policing Partnerships) this type of issue, particularly road fatalities has, as you said, much to do with speed, much to do with drugs and

much to do with seat belts. But there is also the issue of roads and corners, and particular places where a number of deaths seem to continue to take place, and that the skills and the expertise and the local knowledge will feed into that, in ways that perhaps centralised policing cannot achieve. And that relationship between the local politicians, the local population and the police themselves in an integrated holistic fashion will actually impact upon this, as well as the educational issues that you have properly referred to, about speed and drugs, and seat belts. I think that you are absolutely proper, and I think it should be welcomed at this stage that the police are highlighting this as an issue because it is one of the most awful things that we as a society have to deal with in trying to get down our deaths on our roads.

Chairman, Professor Desmond Rea:

Mr Suneil Sharma has a question to you on this.

Mr Suneil Sharma:

The question I have for the Acting Chief Constable, it is showing a very huge increase in the attacks on young people under the age of 17. The question I want to ask, are these attacks by young people or by other young people on young people? That is the first question. It shows an increase of about 20% over the period, and the second part of question to that, what strategies are PSNI putting in place with other statutory agencies to tackle this issue? That is one question Chair.

The other question I would like to ask, which I feel it needs to be asked, and I am not asking for a comment from the Acting Chief Constable, but I understand there is a tribunal case currently being taken by a young women in respect of push and pull test which resulted in her failing that test, and as a result of that failure she failed the whole recruitment process. There are many of us feel that that test is discrimination in terms of gender. When is the Acting Chief Constable likely to hear the outcome of that tribunal hearing?

Acting Chief Constable, Mr Colin Cramphorn:

Chairman, the first point on the attacks on young people. All of the national research, and we have nothing to suggest we depart from the national pattern here, shows that the peak offender age group is between 14 and 24. There is a definite victim offender nexus within terms of these assaults, and that perhaps should not surprise us because many of them tend to be associated with socialising, with the consumption of alcohol and so on and so forth. So, a lot of this is sadly occurring between peer groups, if I can summarise it in that way.

You ask about strategy, well clearly the biggest single area that we feel we can impact on this is in-fact in relation to alcohol related violence, and there is a major initiative just been kicked off in South Belfast which seeks to, with a whole range of interagency partners including central government, local government and the transport company Translink, to actually address this issue of alcohol related violence with a view to driving down the figures which as you have indicated have been rising.

Chairman, Professor Desmond Rea:

Mr Dougherty you have a question about resources in Derry, Londonderry.

Mr Brian Dougherty:

Yes Chairman, Acting Chief Constable, it follows on slightly from an issue I brought up at last months meeting. It is around resources in Derry. Given the problems that were highlighted last month in terms of the city centre in Derry at night and it goes slightly towards what Suneil was saying in terms of attacks on young people, I would like first of all your comments on the alleged re-deployment of officers from Derry to North Belfast in recent weeks.

Secondly, a concern that I found whilst travelling around Strand Road Police Station a few weeks ago with Peter Sheridan, was around the physical resources they have there. What I have found is the actual physical infrastructure within that police station in particular, is very poor, and I would

like your comments basically on how you see the requirement in terms of resources for the physical buildings that the police officers are expected to work under.

Acting Chief Constable, Mr Colin Cramphorn:

I am not quite sure I understood the second point but I will make the assumption that you are asking me about the condition of the estate and the buildings and if that is wrong, then perhaps you will correct me.

In terms of the issue of re-deployment I suspect you have got half an account which has perhaps been confused in the telling. The operational commitments that we have been facing in North Belfast have, on occasions over past months, required us to deploy support units from all around the province into North Belfast when it has been at its worst, and that includes North region. To that degree, yes, units which would have otherwise been deployed in North region will have been deployed down into North Belfast. So that is a fact, but of course that is driven by operational demand. There are other points in the year when resources that would normally be in the Urban region or indeed South region are deployed up into North region. That has to be an ebb and flow depending on the demands that we face.

The second part of your question about infrastructure or the Police estate, assuming I have understood that correctly, you perhaps will know that we had a major audit done of the estate in terms of health and safety and we have a major programme of work in respect of addressing those needs within our estate. But as you also know it is a very large estate, it is very expensive, so totality of the work that needs to be done, and it therefore cannot all be done at once. So that programme is underway and on another occasion Chairman, or by way of correspondence, I can provide details of that programme, but I have not got them here with me today.

Chairman, Professor Desmond Rea:

Joe Byrne has a question on the Omagh bomb investigation.

Mr Joe Byrne:

Thank you Chairman. Welcome Acting Chief Constable. How might the Omagh bomb investigation be enhanced now that we have a formal procedural agreement between the PSNI and the Garda regarding lateral entry in joint working arrangements? And is it the intention of senior PSNI officers to formally involve members of the Garda in on-going active police investigations, particularly be it major terrorist or serious crime incidents which do have a clearly defined cross-border dimension, be it in planning or logistical terms. Thanks.

Chairman, Professor Desmond Rea:

Before you answer that maybe, Alan McFarland I know has a supplementary that deals with lateral entry.

Mr Alan McFarland:

Chairman, thank you, yes Acting Chief Constable, we have had a flurry in the press recently about lateral entry. It strikes me that there are two ways this might happen, one is a transfer in from the Garda to the PSNI, and another is an issue of secondment for a short period of time. As I understand it, if police officers are coming from the Metropolitan Police or indeed reserve officers from the PSNI coming into the full-time PSNI, they have got to go through the training school and take a new oath. And my question is, what discussions have taken place with the NIO about the question of whether people coming in on secondment or transferring across have to take the oath and their terms and conditions?

Acting Chief Constable, Mr Colin Cramphorn:

Two distinct elements Chairman, if I can break them down, the actual signing of the inter-governmental agreement, which I imagine is the nexus for both parts of the question, is not of course directly related to the Omagh enquiry at all. But just to pick up on that particular issue, I am in fact this evening sitting down with the NIO to have an update briefing on exactly where the process

has now arrived at. I understand, Chairman, that you will be meeting with members of Merseyside Police later in the month to finalise terms of reference.

If I could at this point pick up perhaps on a question that Mr Attwood asked me last month. I may have inadvertently misled you Mr Attwood because I was not aware of the contacts that were going on between officers and Members of the Board and Merseyside Police around resolving those terms of reference. I gave you last month the answer as I then believed it to be. I have since discovered in digging into it that in fact there were things going on between the Board and Merseyside Police that I was unaware of. But, in any event, that should all be resolved within the next week to ten days and that would hopefully drive the enquiry forward.

Now if I can turn to the specific lateral entry secondment issues. There has been sitting for some five months now a five-sided or pentangle if you prefer, Project Board to look at all these issues of collaboration and co-operation between the Police Service of Northern Ireland and the Garda Siochana. I have represented the Police Service on it, the Chief Executive has represented this Board on it.

The first step in this process was to get the inter-governmental agreement in place and of course the two governments quite rightly had to be in the lead on that. That has now happened and has been done. But there is a lot of subsidiary work that has to be done beneath that to work out detailed protocols between the two police services. And there are some complicated and difficult issues that we are still working through and this particularly relates to lateral entry. One of the most fundamental, just to illustrate the point, is the very different terms and conditions in relation to pensions and allowances and so on that pertain in the two police services. That is not something that is going to be rapidly and easily worked out overnight, and that will have a significant impact of course on whether individuals regard it as in their best interests to actually seek to move from one service to the other,

by way of lateral entry in whichever direction that may be. So there is more work to be done on that, a lot more work, and some of those issues are really quite labyrinthine and I am not sure where that is going to take us. The good news of course is the secondment issue can move ahead very quickly, and indeed some very early examples of that have taken place. I know Members are aware of that, in respect of the training element for instance between Templemore and Garnerville, and so that area is one that we will be moving ahead with very quickly.

If I may jump back to Mr Byrne's point about cross border investigations. There has been parallel discussions taking place between the two offices of the Directors of Public Prosecutions, north and south, about these cross-border enquiry issues which we have attached ourselves to, if I can describe it that way, the two police services, and those discussions go forward now about all the modalities in relation to these issues and taking them forward. Bearing in mind this is against the backdrop of the work within the EU for common arrest warrant and so on and so forth, all of which arises from the events of September 11th. So there is a lot of work going on in that area at this time but it has to stay in time and in step with the bigger picture that I have just alluded to.

Chairman, Professor Desmond Rea:

Some Members have questions about Castlereagh, I am going to call Mr Paisley, Mr Attwood, Mr Hay who has a related question to Mr Attwood, and then Mr Wilson. I would ask if you would keep your questions as brief as possible. Mr Paisley.

Mr Ian Paisley Jnr:

Thank you, Mr Chairman. First of all can I say at the outset that I welcome the Acting Chief Constable's report about the non-closure of stations. I think that should go on the record that it is very welcome and very positive. It will give certainty to a lot of local communities.

I would also like to pass on congratulations to the officers involved in the foiled robbery and kidnap in Greater Belfast recently. Those officers carried out something in a very spirited way, which brought about a great deal of public service and they should be commended. I would like him to pass on those remarks.

Chairman, Professor Desmond Rea:

Excuse me, just one second Ian, in line with those congratulations I know the SDLP were very keen that you and your officers should be congratulated, in particular the divers who were involved in the tragedy at Kilkeel, and I know we have written to you to record that, but it is only fair that it should be mentioned at this stage.

Mr Ian Paisley Jnr:

Thank you Chairman. With regard to the Acting Chief Constable's report that has been put in front of us today, there are two issues, and one of them I want to deal with is obviously Castlereagh.

The first one is the issue of munitions found. You have indicated that munitions finds are down, and down quite significantly since your last report. Have you any other additional intelligence which shows that there has been substantial de-commissioning by any organisation in Northern Ireland, because this seems to put a smile on some peoples face. But I am wondering if there is any actual hard intelligence on this issue which would coincide. Certainly if your munitions finds are down, it would seem to go against what has been reported to us by another organisation.

With regard specifically to Castlereagh as you know certainly as a Board Member we know that the IRA are liars and killers and that their word cannot be trusted, but I am wondering if you can tell us anymore of an update with regards to the IRA's involvement in Castlereagh? And if you are able to update us with regards to people who may be made amenable for that, and

indeed anyone who has fled this jurisdiction whether or not they can be made amenable if that is required?

Chairman, Professor Desmond Rea:

Mr Attwood would you like to put your question now?

Mr Alex Attwood:

It would help the flow if the Acting Chief Constable would answer that first.

Thank you.

Acting Chief Constable, Mr Colin Cramphorn:

Chairman to pick up the first point then in terms of the reported levels of munitions finds, if you go back historically you will find that there is fluctuation month on month on the recorded recoveries of munitions and that just reflects the ebb and flow of operational policing. There is no particular significance to it nor would I seek to ascribe one to you in the latest figures. You ask me the specific point, do I have any specific information in regard to de-commissioning. I know only what you know in terms of the statements that have been issued by the relevant bodies.

Moving to the second point in terms of Castlereagh, as I indicated last time Chairman, the enquiry is very much active. It is still only some seven, eight weeks old, but is making good progress I am happy to report that, and it is very much work in progress. Because of that, I really cannot say in a public forum details of that work in progress, (a) because I may jeopardise any subsequent prosecution that may arise by tainting matters in some way and (b) because of course I might in some way jeopardise the very success of the investigation as it progresses. So I regret for those two reasons I am really not in a position, at this meeting, to update specifically about the details of the investigation.

As I said last time, I recognise the enormous interest that members of the Board have in the matter and indeed the wider public have in the matter, and

when the time is right I will brief members accordingly. But I have to ask for your forbearance at this point in time. Thank you.

Chairman, Professor Desmond Rea:

Mr Attwood.

Mr Alex Attwood:

I would like to aim this question and one relative to Castlereagh and one independent. Yesterday the Oversight Commissioner reported that the internal conceptual policy paper in respect of Special Branch issued by the Chief Constable in January, in his view, did not appear to meet the intent of the Independent Commissions recommendations between the resources Special Branch together with Crime Branch. That is a view that the SDLP agrees with and the Policing Board has taken various steps in order to address the issue of the future of Special Branch. But would you comment on whether you, as Acting Chief Constable, accept the comments made by the Oversight Commissioner in respect of the former Chief Constable's internal conceptual policy paper on Special Branch.

Secondly, and arising from your answers to Ian Paisley, it has been accepted by the PSNI, there are people it appears within the PSNI who are leaking information to the media. What steps are being taken by you to identify those people and to ensure that no further leaking, whether it is informed or uninformed, is undertaken?

Without prejudice to your investigation can you indicate to the Policing Board, after six weeks of investigations since the Castlereagh break-in, do you have any more credible evidential basis on which to suggest anybody, whether it was the IRA or British military agencies, were involved in that break-in, as opposed to what we know so far? Do you have any further credible evidence to lead you to conclude who or what might have been involved?

Finally, given that there have been allegations made in respect of the treatment of minors in house raids in Derry and without prejudice to where that might go, what steps are the PSNI taking to review protocols and general orders to ensure that when there are search, seize and arrests operations ongoing that the rights of the child are protected and that those protocols comply with UN Convention on the rights of the child?

Acting Chief Constable, Mr Colin Cramphorn:

Four questions there Chairman. I will try and take them in the same order.

Of course I am aware of the Oversight Commissioner's view and I am very pleased that you have raised this issue Mr Attwood, because I appear to be in a position where I either accept that I am going to be admonished by the Oversight Commissioner, or in a position where I am going to be admonished by this Board, or I am to be admonished by HMIC. I appear only to have a choice between who does the admonishing. Because as you have rightly pointed out in your remarks there, this Board has taken a position on reviewing Special Branch and it was part of the agreed way forward that, as I understand it, the Board corporately signed up to. That was for work to be done by Her Majesty's Inspectorate Constabulary to report on his position and his view.

Well, the Oversight Commissioner apparently wants me to tell him what I am going to do in two weeks time, which does not fit the timescale of your agreed way forward, or indeed the timescale in which HMIC can undertake the work. Hence my initial comment that the only choice that now appears to be left open to me is to choose who I am to be admonished by, because I clearly cannot meet the conflicting demands of the various overlaying layers of accountability that we now have in operation. I do not know that I can say a lot more about that particular issue until one or more of those bodies have completed their work. I have asked for some further work to be done, and when that work is done it will be brought forward. But I reiterate what I said

earlier, we have conflicting timescales, and conflicting demands that have been set up by three different oversight bodies.

Second point, leaking of information. Yes I have accepted that information has been leaking from the organisation in a way that it should not have occurred. Steps have been taken to seek to address that. The obvious ones in terms of reminding everybody what their duties and responsibilities are in terms of code of conduct and so forth are the public ones I can talk about. There are other ones that I would not wish to talk about because that would defeat the very object of taking it. But I have taken it.

Third question, you made a point about the evidential value of credible evidence. Well Chairman I have to, as they would say in Parliament, refer to the question I gave earlier. I cannot talk about the evidence in this case without potentially prejudicing any outcome downstream by way of proceedings at this point in time, or indeed prejudicing the very success or otherwise of the investigation and so with regret I must ask for your indulgence on that one as well.

Lastly, the issue of the conduct of searches of premises. You particularly mentioned ones in Londonderry, Derry as I understand it. You will be aware that a number of these are with the Ombudsman for investigation and clearly it would not be appropriate for us to therefore discuss the details. However, you went on to ask me specifically about policy. Yes I have been happy to say that we should revisit policy to make sure that it is as good as it should be and that is work that is currently in hand.

Chairman, Mr Desmond Rea:

Mr Hay, I believe you have a supplementary about the raids in Derry.

Mr Willie Hay:

In relation to Castlereagh, I would want to know what co-operation there was with local police concerning those raids and how was that information relayed

to local police officers and especially local commanders concerning that raid as well?

Acting Chief Constable, Mr Colin Cramphorn:

I am not entirely sure I understand what is meant by local police, but I can certainly assure you that the Regional Commander was fully briefed and fully aware of the actions and it is his region and he then deals with the operation within his region.

Mr Willie Hay:

Before or after?

Acting Chief Constable, Mr Colin Cramphorn:

He cannot lead the operation if he is not in the loop before the activity.

Chairman, Professor Desmond Rea:

Mr Wilson you have a question too in this area?

Mr Sammy Wilson:

First of all, can I thank you for the answer you have given regarding the Oversight Commissioners report. Actually, I think you went for the fourth option, that was to admonish the SDLP for putting in place an investigation which got you wrapped over the knuckles by the Oversight Commissioner. Maybe he should have done his job to find out just exactly the position the police were put into, and it really brings me to one of the questions that I want to ask. That is, the Oversight Commissioner has also complained about civilianisation and how slow that has been. Could you perhaps indicate to us whether or not the 50/50 requirement for recruitment for civilian staff has been one of the factors which has led to it being difficult to follow the civilianisation requirement in the Patten Commission?

The second thing just on Castlereagh, in light of the information which is now in the hands of terrorists, how many people have either had to leave their homes or apply under the SPED scheme, because of being under threat, and how many of those would be police officers? And maybe just one last question.

Chairman, Professor Desmond Rea:

Sorry, if you would not mind, could you leave it there?

Mr Sammy Wilson:

It is a quick one. We have been trying to get this information from the Ombudsman for three months and she is refusing to give it, maybe you could let us know how many of your officers have been arrested by the Ombudsman's office over the period when it has been in operation, and that includes technical arrests?

Acting Chief Constable, Mr Colin Cramphorn:

The latter two points Chairman, about arrests by staff of the Police Ombudsman and applications for SPED arising from Castlereagh, clearly I do not have those sort of detailed statistics with me here today. I will happily go back and put those together and deal with that by way of correspondence Chairman, if that is acceptable to Mr Wilson and yourself.

The initial point being 50/50 in civilian recruitment, can I just make a further comment about the Oversight Commissioner's report, bearing in mind that it is a snap shot of where we were back in January and we are now in May and clearly things have moved on some way from January? At that stage we were in the process of going through the tendering to do out-sourcing of recruitment for civil staffing, in much the same way as we have done for police staff. Now that is a process that has to be followed, normal audit and accounting rules apply to it. It has got to be done in accordance with GPA

guidance etc. so it is not something that you can just click your fingers and award a contract. That I suspect has been much more of an issue about the lack of progress that Mr Constantine has referred to than the 50/50 rule. Because the truth of the matter is, we are not really going to know what the impact of the 50/50 rule is until we are out there in the market actually doing it. The contract has just been awarded, or is just about to be awarded, and clearly we will know very soon what the impact of the 50/50 rule is, but I cannot give you a proper assessment of that at this point in time.

Chairman, Professor Desmond Rea:

I will take three final questions. The first one is from Eddie McGrady.

Mr Eddie McGrady:

Can I ask the question on Castlereagh? Can I pursue Castlereagh just for a brief question, with your permission and forego my other question which I had written about? I must say, I am very dissatisfied with the answer, Acting Chief Constable, which you gave. At best it was slightly disingenuous in an almost fatuous way in respect of the conflicting timescales and conflicting demands of three bodies. The kernel of the problem is that a delivery was to be made within the known timescale of the various restructuring and the amalgamation of the command structure of the Special Branch. We would like to know, having read the Oversight Commissioner's report, what your reaction to that really is in factual terms rather than, I will be very blunt and perhaps offensive, I do not intend to be but we need to know what information we are getting here rather than, as it were, hiding behind these areas of conflict. I do not see it as conflict.

Secondly, Castlereagh is important. It has been the most significant police service incident, one of the most significant political incidents since this Board took office and irrespective of the question of prejudice, in view of the investigation you should be able to tell us in a broad sense and through us the general public, where you think the investigation is at, where you think your main suspects are in terms not of individuals, but in terms of causes or

organisations. Because the original spin in respect of these came from Police Headquarters as I understand it and there were two different spins entirely. Now I am not asking you to identify the spin doctors or who did the spinning but simply to put the record straight so that people have a clearer understanding of where we are at.

Acting Chief Constable, Mr Colin Cramphorn:

Chairman, I certainly was not being disingenuous. I was merely pointing to the fact that the Oversight Commissioner is asking for me to produce further documentation by May 13th or 14th and your own way ahead, agreed by the Board unanimously as far as I was aware, was that it would be on a different timescale. Now at the very least that must put me at risk as being perceived by Members of the Board as being precipitous and presumptuous, if I jump ahead to do things to meet the Oversight Commissioner demands ahead of your timescale and the work that you have commissioned and agreed with HMIC. That is simply the point I am making in that regard.

I of course accept the point you make that this was a Patten programme, a Patten commitment and work was in progress anyway, and of course that was right and work had been done to a certain point. And as you comment, the Oversight Commissioner has said the point that was achieved last January was not satisfactory from his point of view. Well of course that gives me cause for thought and gives me cause to go away and ask for further work to be done as I have indicated to Mr Attwood in answering his question earlier on. And that is going on now. I would not want to prejudge that work. Frankly there is little point in me asking other people to review these things with fresh minds if I have already come to a conclusion and I do not wait to hear the strengths of the arguments that are put forward, but I will share that, and happily share that with you as soon as it has been completed.

The second part of your question then Mr McGrady relating to the direction in which enquiries are taking or are proceeding. What I certainly can say, I do not know if this will be sufficient to reassure you, is that on a rough

apportionment of the effort of the investigative team at the moment, about three quarters of the effort is being directed towards the enquiry that has taken us into the republican community, and about one quarter relating to the other lines of enquiry which have been documented in the past. Two principal ones being some sort of security agency or at least perhaps some disgruntled Members thereof. And the other one being the fact that we had a large body of contractors working in the Castlereagh site at that time with legitimate access to the sight, and of course we must work our way through all of them as well. So I do not know if that gives you some indication, I am happy to state that much but I really do not feel I can go beyond that.

Chairman, Professor Desmond Rea:

Mr Cobain.

Mr Fred Cobain:

Just the Castlereagh issue again, the Acting Chief Constable has reiterated his position as far as the apportionment of blame is concerned. I listened to the Secretary of State: you had said previously your major line of enquiry was into the republican community. The Secretary of State, I think it was yesterday in Parliament, has really said that there were other major lines of enquiry and that the major line of enquiry was not into the republican family. Could I ask you, have you briefed the Secretary of State on this and did you give him that information that you believe is the investigating team that is seventy-five percent of your investigation has led you into the main republican family, and could you give us assurance that he is well aware of your suspicions in this field?

Acting Chief Constable, Mr Colin Cramphorn:

Chairman, of course I am responsible to the Secretary of State on national security issues and in that sense yes of course I have briefed him and he is aware of where our investigations are at this point in time.

Chairman, Professor Desmond Rea:

Mr Sam Foster and then Mr Barry Gilligan.

Mr Sam Foster:

Thank you very much Chairman. I just wanted to make the point, I have given notice of intent today that I seek an answer of what is happening in the investigation into the Enniskillen bomb which took place fifteen years ago. So I would like some news on that next month.

The other point, the main point for coming in today was, and is, about road safety which has been referred to at the very outset. It was a very big issue for me when I was in the Department of the Environment and it still is a big issue for lots of people. You did refer to speed, alcohol and drugs and seat belt wearing and I think that vitally important. And the point about it too is the big issue was in fact seventeen to twenty-four year olds young males seem to be the macho men who are getting themselves into lots of trouble, sadly. With regards to cameras here and there throughout the community at this particular time, my own opinion is that there should be more personnel on the roads because when one sees a police car around, or a squad car about, then they become suddenly very responsible. Do you believe you have enough manpower or personnel to put them on the roads because I think that is a very, very important issue?

Chairman, Professor Desmond Rea:

Barry is your question on traffic, then perhaps you could put it now.

Mr Barry Gilligan:

Absolutely. We have a horrendous road record as you have outlined Acting Chief Constable and you outlined the main causes of that. In your written report you also refer to inattention and I would not want this to be treated as a confession but I am most inattentive when using the mobile phone. Could I ask you, is this an increasing phenomena in terms of carelessness on the road and further to that would you welcome perhaps a strengthening of the law in this regard as is happening in other areas?

Acting Chief Constable, Mr Colin Cramphorn:

Chairman, then starting then with the notice in respect of the Enniskillen enquiry, in fact I can answer that for you now. There is a review underway at this point in time, of the Enniskillen enquiry as to where it is, where it might go, what more might be done at this stage. The Regional Head has instigated that in recent months and clearly once that is complete we will be able to give you some further information about what that has told us, but there is an active review actually being done at the present time.

Turning then to the road safety issues Chairman, the specific issues one from each of the Members, firstly on cameras. You will of course be aware that there is much more extensive use made of cameras in Great Britain than here in Northern Ireland, and indeed many more fixed sites which are highly visible or deliberately painted to be highly visible. They are at accident black spots and the purpose of course is to modify driver behaviour. It is not to catch people speeding, it is much more preferable to get them to stop speeding and have fewer accidents than it is to catch people speeding. But the resources to actually service such camera sites is the issue. Now you will be aware from your former ministerial portfolio that the way ahead that has been found for this scheme in Great Britain following national trials, is to allow hypothecation of some of the fine revenue generated by the cameras, and that fine revenue is then fed back into the police organisation to provide the funding for the staffing support for an increased number of camera sites. That is something

we are in discussion with your former department about in the hope that it can be extended to Northern Ireland.

It is something I would welcome but as you, I know recognise from your former portfolio it is not something that is uniquely a police issue. There are other elements, there are other interests whose point of view has to be considered before we can move ahead on it, but we are seeking to move ahead on it and clearly the ability to deploy such fixed site cameras and resource them would, I would hope, have an impact on driver behaviour and therefore on casualty rates and fatality rates.

Personnel on the ground for traffic policing is something we could always of course have more personnel on the ground, I think any Chief Constable would say that to you. We have to strike a balance as to what part of the Service's effort is put into traffic policing, which we do. It is probably like every other part of our resourcing at this point in time. It is stretched thinly but that is up to us to get the best value from the resource that is there.

The second element Chairman, was about mobile phones. I am not aware that we have any particular statistical trend in relation to the use of mobile phones and inattention, but of course you are quite right, there has been some very telling research from the Transport and Research laboratory, published in the last months or so, indicating just how significant it is as a cause of distraction or inattention and clearly that is a message we would want to get out to the general public. In terms of whether I think some sort of legislation, for instance our neighbours in the Isle of Man have just introduced legislation whereby I think it is a £4,000 fine for driving using a mobile phone and it is a sort of virtually straightforward automatic. Well you know as police officers, it is our job to investigate and enforce the law, not to break the law. That is something for the legislative to consider if they think it is appropriate.

Chairman, Professor Desmond Rea:

Thank you very much indeed, Acting Chief Constable, we appreciate you coming in today.

(* NB. Due to technical difficulties the opening remarks were not recorded and the wording in italics is not a verbatim minute.)