

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

MINUTES OF A MEETING IN PUBLIC OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD HELD ON THURSDAY 29 JUNE 2006 AT 2:10PM IN THE KILLYHEVLIN HOTEL, ENNISKILLEN

PRESENT:

MEMBERS:

Professor Sir Desmond Rea (Chairman)
Mr Barry Gilligan (Vice-Chairman)
Mr Joe Byrne
Mr Brendan Duddy
Ms Arlene Foster
Mr Willie Hay
Mrs Dolores Kelly
Mr Danny Kennedy
Ms Deirdre Mac Bride
Mrs Rosaleen Moore
Mr Ian Paisley, Jnr
Ms Dawn Purvis
Mr Brian Rea
Mr Trevor Ringland
Mr Suneil Sharma
Mr Peter Weir

POLICE SERVICE OF NORTHERN IRELAND IN ATTENDANCE:

Sir Hugh Orde (Chief Constable)
Mr Paul Leighton (Deputy Chief Constable)
Mrs Judith Gillespie (ACC Rural Region)
Mr Duncan McCausland (ACC Urban Region)
Mr Peter Sheridan, (ACC Crime Operations) Superintendent, Criminal Justice Department
C/Inspector, Command Secretariat
Sergeant, Command Secretariat
Two PSNI representatives

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr Trevor Reaney (Chief Executive)
Mr Sam Hagen (Director of Corporate Services)
Mr David Wilson (Director of Planning)
Mrs Sinead Simpson (Director of Policy)
Four Board Officials

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Good afternoon everyone, Chief Constable and senior officers, members of the public and press, welcome to this meeting of the Northern Ireland Policing Board. We are very pleased to be here in Enniskillen today. We are particularly pleased our colleague in the last Board, Sam Foster, is here today. I also welcome the Chairman of Fermanagh District Council, John O'Kane.

A particular welcome goes to members of Fermanagh District Policing Partnership. DPPs have become an integral and accepted part of local policing and have brought policing closer to the community and the community closer to policing in a way that has not happened before.

Just like the Board, the work of DPPs extends beyond meetings in public and must not be judged on this alone. Over lunch, Board Members welcomed the opportunity to find out about the range of ongoing local initiatives by members of Fermanagh DPP to reach out to the community and the challenges for policing in Fermanagh.

Despite some recent somewhat negative coverage, the work of the DPPs is critically important. The Board was encouraged by the latest Omnibus Survey findings on the work of DPPs, particularly the fact that 73% of respondents thought that DPPs help local policing issues. I thank all DPP Members for their positive work on behalf of the community and not least, those of you on Fermanagh DPP.

During this public session, the Chief Constable will present his latest policing report. Board Members have received information relating to PSNI Performance against the targets set in the Policing Plan for the year to date. Although it is still relatively early in the year, I think it is fair to say that there is work to be done in relation to improving performance. Chief Constable, perhaps you would like to comment on the performance figures in your opening remarks.

But before I invite you to speak Chief Constable, I would like to mention a number of issues.

Since the last meeting, there have been a number of deaths, including the brutal murder of Annie McCartan which have raised major concern in the community; particularly amongst older people, and we alluded to that in a question in the private session.

This week Doreen Lawrence addressed a NICEM conference on hate crime. Her visit was timely and the Board will be considering the recommendations of the report produced for the conference. I would say, on behalf of the Board, that sectarianism, racism or hate crime of any kind has no place in our society and must not be tolerated by the community.

In recent days there have been a number of reported racist attacks and a rise in race related crime. We acknowledge that the police are working to deal with these crimes, but we do not want to see a death as the result of these attacks. There must be respect for diversity in Northern Ireland, for we are a changing society, and today I urge community leaders, politicians and all those with an influence, to help and also support the police in any way they can.

Mention must also be made of the Knife Awareness Campaign. The Board is pleased that just under 900 knives were handed in during the 3 week amnesty. This is one of 3 amnesties over the next year. Today Chief Constable, we would seek a report on the lessons learnt and given the worrying array of knives, and indeed other weapons that can be openly purchased in shops across Northern Ireland, the Board would seek your views on whether the legislation needs to be expanded further.

The Board welcomes the peaceful parade at the Tour of the North and at Whiterock last weekend and all those involved in ensuring the parade passed peacefully and the work of your officers. The disturbances at Glengormley are a concern, but the Board hopes that the resolution of parading issues between communities will continue through the summer months, with tolerance and respect shown on all sides. Fundamentally, this is a community issue, it is not a policing issue. Police, unfortunately, have to police the consequences when it goes wrong.

Turning now to another area of work that has been closely scrutinised by the Board.

The Board's review of the dissemination of intelligence between Special Branch and other parts of the police service has formed the basis for major change in how the police shares intelligence and it has been a key piece of work for the Board over the last 4 years.

The Board's Crompton report recommendations, combined with the findings from 2 other important reports, the Blakey and Stevens 3 reports, formed the basis for the establishment and structuring of the PSNI's new Crime Operations Department.

The implementation of the recommendations in these reports have been closely monitored by the Board, with the assistance of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, with HMIC's team comprising representatives from the Blakey, Crompton and Stevens 3 teams, who have been best placed to independently and expertly review the PSNI intelligence arrangements and the changes effected address concerns raised in the past. This area of work is also subject to scrutiny by Her Majesty's Surveillance Commissioner.

At the last briefing in February 2006, which was delivered by PSNI and HMIC, the Board was assured that the procedures, processes and practices now adopted by PSNI in the area of Crime Operations meet ACPO standards in policing practice. The oversight of these reforms has seen significant changes with the dedicated structure and staffing now in place for Crime Operations. The briefing also reinforced the progress that has been made in this important area and the PSNI commitment to effecting change, particularly in relation to the management and dissemination of intelligence.

Public confidence in and support for the police service is essential and it is the Board's job to make sure that the delivery of the policing service is effective, efficient and accountable to the community in all that they do. The area of intelligence and the handling of sources is an area where legitimate questions have been raised.

Today's briefing is the latest in a series and the Board welcomes the openness and transparency injected into this area.

Questions are tabled today on the use of Covert Human Intelligence Sources and the guidelines governing this area of work and indeed the future issue of the transfer of national security. In recent weeks there has been a high level of public and media scrutiny of this area of police business, past and present.

So Chief Constable over to you.

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

Could I add my thanks to the members of the DPP here. They are a vital part of the accountability framework which you have described, or you have some of the accountability framework to which we are subjected.

Normally at the Policing Board I give an update of events over the last month – performance is not listed for detailed discussion this month. I will touch on it. But, I thought what I would do is slightly different this month – just one week's activity of our organisation and the week starting Monday, 19 June 2006. On 19 June itself, Members will be aware of a major operation against dissident Republicans; a substantial operation – well over 200 police officers involved. It covered not just Northern Ireland, it was a United Kingdom and indeed, Europe-wide operation. It led to the arrest of a number of people, 3 of which have now been charged with a conspiracy to procure a significant quantity of arms, ammunition and explosives. It was a very important job, I think, for the security of Northern Ireland, and I think it is also very important that we recognise that this sort of activity is still going on and it does require substantial police resources and, indeed, support from our colleagues in the intelligence services if we are going to keep this place as safe as it currently is.

Now, the following day on 20 June, Members will also be aware of a major – the largest seizure of cocaine as a result of excellent work - 13½ kgs of cocaine, which was 85% pure we believe. This would have a street value in the region of £3 – 4 million was recovered. Two men are now charged with a number of drug supply offences.

On the 21 June 2006, slightly different, but the Law Enforcement Torch Run and the Special Olympics which the PSNI was substantially involved with, led by ACC McCausland, was involved in a joint run with our colleagues from the Garda and special athletes who visited 49 towns and cities with the torch and, indeed, opened the Special Olympics at the Odyssey. The feedback from officers and members of the public around the work of the police on that has been I think it would be fair to say, quite exceptional.

The following day a man was arrested under the Terrorism Act in connection with dissident activity in the North West.

On the 22 June 2006, the Knife Amnesty you mentioned. We gave an update – 886 knives at that point had been handed in to the special bins put in place around Northern Ireland. Statistics interestingly show that knife related incidents dropped during that 3 week period, compared with the same period the year before.

On 24 June 2006 again you mentioned this, the Whiterock parade passed off peacefully. I also would like to put on record not only the huge effort by my officers and the negotiators, but also the work of the organising committees and the residents on either side of the divide. What it managed us to deliver was a peaceful Whiterock event, and hopefully that will transfer through to the rest of the marching season. The sooner communities can come to agreements on marches, the less officers I have to deploy sitting around just in case something happens. It is still hugely resource intensive, and these are the officers who Members would want put out preventing crime and reducing the current increase in crime which we are seeing across Northern Ireland. Until we get those assurances, we still have to police, sadly, in anticipation of disorder breaking out, and we cannot use those officers in two places, doing two different jobs.

On 24 June 2006, again two men were arrested and charged with armed robbery in Newry and on 26 June 2006 a man was charged with attempted rape and burglary in relation to South Belfast. The same day two men were arrested for causing damage to schools in Magherafelt. So that is just a sort of snapshot of one week's activity, which I think may be a slightly different way of looking at it.

You mentioned in your opening Chairman, performance generally. As I updated the Board last week, crime is up slightly on last year. On Tuesday of this week I held a seminar with all my Senior Management Team, or nearly all my Senior Management Team, and every District Commander and Senior Detective from across the Province. A substantial analysis was presented to them by my analysts. We had briefings from our Forensic Department and, indeed, we had a long discussion over what needed to be done.

What is interesting, is the main rise in crime is criminal damage. It is low level crime, very worrying for communities. It is obviously linked to drink, it is linked to anti-social behaviour. If we put more effort into criminal damage I am confident we can probably reduce the crime levels by the year end.

I intend to have another of these performance conferences in about 8 weeks time and any Member of the Board that wishes to attend will be most welcome to see that we take this extremely seriously. I am looking, as I discussed briefly with the Chairman in the margins, at looking at commissioning some independent research to see if we can explain if the anecdotal issues around rising crime in certain communities that historically would not have spoken to us, is a contributory factor, but it can be done from a proper analytical point of view rather than any other sort of second guessing.

You also mentioned, Chairman, briefly the disturbances at Glengormley. I think these need to be put into context. They were extremely short lived, a matter of seconds, it involved a very small number of people on both sides of the community. 4 arrests were made at the time and we will look to make more arrests if we can find the evidence to present to the PPS. This was not a major event, but it was portrayed as in some of the media reporting. It was an event which we take seriously, but one which needs to be put into context in the whole of the marching season to date.

Chairman that is all I will say in my opening remarks. There are many questions and indeed, a presentation. I will ask ACC Sheridan to touch on how we manage intelligence and, in particular, how we handle informants.

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Peter Sheridan:

Firstly Chairman, can I thank you and the Board for giving me the opportunity today to talk about what is an important subject of managing intelligence. It does seem that everybody has a view on the police's management of intelligence, how we do it and indeed whether we even should do it at all, and I'm not sure all of those are based on facts. What I'd like to do today is to set this key part of our business in its proper context. I want to look at firstly the necessity for us to handle and manage intelligence, the historical background, the independent reports which have helped establish our processes and the substantial range of independent checks and human rights safeguards which are now in place to ensure we do this to the highest standards.

Let me be absolutely clear on one point. Like any other police service in England, Scotland, Wales or the Republic of Ireland, the Police Service of Northern Ireland cannot operate effectively if it cannot fulfil its primary function to prevent and detect crime unless it uses intelligence. The use of properly managed human resources can offer significant access to the thinking and planning of criminals and criminal organisations. The targeting of individual offenders and criminal organisations requires an ability to deploy securely a range of intelligence and investigative resources. A source, properly managed, offers unrivalled access to criminals and criminal enterprises and enables investigators to focus their efforts on lines of enquiry. The Department which I command, Crime Operations, was set up just over 2 years ago to manage intelligence and investigate crime. And it might be helpful at this point to refresh our memories on the background to the establishment of Crime Operations Department.

The Report of the Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland in 1999, which everybody refers to as the Patten Report, made clear recommendations about the establishment of a Crime Operations Department which would bring together Special Branch and Crime Branch under the command of a single Assistant Chief Constable. And I think it is worth remembering that Patten did acknowledge the crucial role which Special Branch played in countering security threats over the years and intercepting terrorist attacks.

But Crime Operations Department and the way it does it business in relation to the handling and management of intelligence has had other external drivers, namely the reports of Crompton, Blakey and Stevens. The Crompton Report was commissioned by this Policing Board in 2002 after the Ombudsman's critical report into the Omagh Bomb Investigation. A restricted document which was prepared by Sir Dan Crompton, Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary, and looks specifically into the structures and procedures for the management and dissemination of intelligence between Special Branch and the other parts of the police service.

The Blakey report, published in May 2003, looks specifically at how the Police Service investigates murders. Written by Her Majesty's Inspector David Blakey, it made a number of comments in relation to intelligence.

The Steven's Inquiry Part 3 investigated allegations of collusion between the security forces and loyalist paramilitaries. A number of its recommendations related to the handling and management of intelligence. I have to say that it would be impossible for the Police Service to have implemented all of the recommendations in these reports because frankly a number of them are contradictory. But the majority have been brought forward.

In terms of the Crompton report I can say that all of the recommendations have been implemented. In terms of the Blakey report, 7 of the 10 recommendations have been implemented in full while the remaining 3 show some evidence of progress towards implementation but further developments is required. These are in the areas of exhibit handling and forensics rather than in intelligence. In terms of the Stevens Inquiry Part 3, only 2 of the 21 recommendations made require further development. Again, these are in the areas of exhibit handling and staffing and not intelligence. By any standards this is an impressive compliance or success rate and our implementation of all of these recommendations is rigorously monitored by Her Majesty's Inspector Ken Williams.

As I said at the start of this presentation police use of intelligence is not unique to Northern Ireland. Every professional police service in the world handles intelligence but I recognise that the handling of intelligence has had a difficult history in Northern Ireland. Even the language used to describe those involved in providing information has its difficulties. The terms informant, informer or source are ones that are widely

understood both within policing circles and the wider public circles. A more common term now in usage in many jurisdictions is Covert Human Intelligence Source or CHIS for short. Whatever they are called, the bottom line is, they are individuals who, despite the risks, covertly give information to the police. By their very nature they are people who are engaged in crime or on the fringes of crime. I will later describe what measures are in place to monitor their activities and to ensure that their continued use as sources remains justified in the public interest. But someone whose only brush with the law is to break the speed limit by 10 miles per hour is not going to make a good source. The very nature of the business, and remember that we are talking about preventing and detecting crime, means that we are going to be dealing with people who have criminal backgrounds or associations. I have no doubt that intelligence sources under the police service management have helped save lives and brought offenders to justice. We would not have been successful last year in preventing £7 million worth of drugs coming into the province without such assistance.

Can I say that these people will never commit unauthorised criminal activity? No, I cannot. But what I can say is, that individuals who operate outside their authorisation will be liable to arrest and prosecution in the same way as any other person who breaks the law. This is clearly reflected in police service policy and procedures in relation to the use of sources. Board Members should know that when individuals are authorised it is clarified and recorded in writing as to the parameters they must work in. People who supply information are not immune from the law.

You will appreciate that I cannot say anything more on this topic or anything about individual cases as to do so might place individuals in danger. It would also be inappropriate for me to comment on matters currently being examined by other bodies. What I can also say is that the Police Service in Northern Ireland has an absolute commitment that the gathering and use of intelligence must be for the protection and vindication of the human rights of all.

This commitment is underpinned by legislation and substantial regulation in the European Convention on Human Rights and the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000. Article 2 of the European Convention places an obligation on the police to protect life and other articles contain rights in relation to a fair trial and privacy. This obligation also means that the police service has a duty to protect the identity of

individuals who work for the police in this way. The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act sets out how Covert Human Intelligence Sources must be managed as well as defining roles, responsibilities and structures.

When Crime Operations Department was set up in 2004 bringing Special Branch and Crime Branch under the control of one ACC, a review was carried out by my predecessor into the intelligence management system. As well as leading to 24% of sources being deactivated that review had 4 key outcomes. It examined the risks associated with intelligence management; it drew up guidelines on how to manage cases in where a source is suspected of committing a serious crime; it established new procedures of managing sources; it created a new unit called the Central Authorisation Bureau to oversee all authorisations for covert policing.

There are stringent internal and external mechanisms in place to ensure intelligence is handled and managed properly. Internally all sources are reviewed every 6 months by our superintendent. All officers must pass a selection course and be trained to approved standards in handling sources. All sources are managed in the same way by Crime Operations Department and the policies and procedures governing the management of intelligence have been quality assured by the Board's Human Rights lawyer. As well as sources being subject to a 6 monthly Superintendent's review, any source who is deemed to be high risk must be personally endorsed by me and in those cases I will seek a 3 monthly review.

Externally, we are subject to scrutiny by the Office of Surveillance Commissioners. The Chief Commissioner has access to all materials and carries out an annual inspection. This is a standard process throughout the United Kingdom and all law enforcement agencies must comply.

If a complaint is made, this will be investigated by the Police Ombudsman who has power to see all of the intelligence. Furthermore, an individual may complain to the Investigatory Powers Tribunal. This Tribunal is made up of senior members of the judiciary and the legal profession and is independent of the Government.

The policies and procedures which we use to authorise and handle intelligence sources are subject to regular review and this is a dynamic area. The use of sources is one of the most challenging operational activities undertaken by the police service, but we are not complacent. We have a set of policies and procedures in place which will withstand any scrutiny. More importantly given the new context we are in, we have had a cultural change in the organisation through training and education, officers at all levels now have a much greater understanding of risk, risk associated with individual sources, corporate risk and community risk. All of these are new developments since 2003.

At the moment we have responsibility for handling intelligence both on crime and on national security. That will change in the latter part of next year when the national security remit will transfer to MI5 of the Security Services. There is a considerable amount of work being done to ensure the transfer takes place to best effect with no loss of intelligence to police and with all of the appropriate safeguards. I have every confidence that this is deliverable, but the Chief Constable is on record as saying he will not sign up to anything that he does not have confidence in.

I fully understand the concerns and even worries that are in some communities over this aspect of policing, but it is a vital part of policing. Yes it has to be properly managed, yes it has to be subject to accountability and scrutiny, and yes it must be carried out within the law. As someone who has recently taken over this role, am I satisfied that proper ethical and human rights standards are in place to protect communities? The short answer to that is yes. The legislation is in place, policies and procedures that observe our obligations under the European Convention on Human Rights are in place and the highest standards of accountability and scrutiny are in place. All of this reassures me that this important aspect of police work is being properly managed.

In conclusion Chairman, I hope this presentation has given Members an appreciation of this sensitive and difficult aspect of police work and gone some way to providing reassurance that it is being properly managed and will continue to be properly managed.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Thank you ACC Sheridan for that very helpful presentation. Could I also, say by way of background, that the last Board delegated to its Chairman and Vice-Chairman, the responsibility for monitoring the implementation of the recommendations of the 3 key reports and over a period 2/3 years we had a series of confidential briefings. Briefings which in fact led to greater openness and transparency, as is evident today. But in order to be confident and assured that the recommendations were being implemented, the Board appointed HMIC to assist and they had access, we are assured, to everything that they needed access to, to assure us that the recommendations were in fact being implemented. And in fact today the officer responsible from HMIC was present for the private session and also he is present at this meeting today.

There was an oversight on my part and I apologise, Superintendent Best, I apologise for not mentioning you when I mentioned the DPP. We are in your territory and we are very grateful to you for the very effective policing job that you and your officers do for us in Fermanagh and thank you very much.

Just in terms of taking the questions, I am going to take questions on just that presentation, I am then going to take some questions on incidents and investigations and then I will take questions on crime levels and performance after that.

Question 1, Joe Byrne and this relates to the area we have just been covering.

Mr Joe Byrne:

I welcome the report that was given by the Assistant Chief Constable, but can I ask the Chief Constable, can he give an assurance to the public that policing over recent years and at present, can operate professionally and unhindered without interference from any other security service that operates in Northern Ireland? Is the Chief Constable assured that policing in the future can operate effectively and professionally, given that MI5 will be operating in Northern Ireland under a new remit from 2007, where this Board would be concerned that there is a question then about the accountability?

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

Hopefully part of that has been dealt with by ACC Sheridan but I will make a few observations and ACC Sheridan may want to add something. The short answer is yes. As I have said, I am not signing up to any situation that makes me or my organisation vulnerable because we have not got a joined-up system around intelligence. If you look at the results I referred to in my opening, around the 19th of this month, that operation was a joint operation. It shows that by getting organised and by working with other people who have a remit in this area, we can be extremely effective in making this place safe. Had we not managed to carry out that operation, we may be having a very different discussion or would have been having different discussions over time, so the short answer is, yes I am. I won't sign up to anything that makes me or my organisation vulnerable and in fairness to the security services, we have been working with them very closely to make sure those protocols and procedures are in place. I do not know if ACC Sheridan wants to touch on anything else.

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Peter Sheridan:

Just to say there are joint project teams working through this currently to identify suitable intelligence working practices for when the Security Services take over the lead for national security. We are working to ensure first of all, there will be no loss of operational effectiveness in terms of the police service, and that the considerable progress that has been made on policing since the Patten report, those benefits that the PSNI have and the systems will remain in place. It should also be clear that the changes do not affect the powers and roles of either the Policing Board, the Ombudsman or the Oversight Commissioner, but we are still a long way off the final day in this, we are working with the Security Services in building the best practices around this.

Mr Joe Byrne:

Chairman, could I just come in with a supplementary. I will take the answers at face value. The only problem is, we are a society at large that has a credibility problem with how things were explained in the past. This Board has been in existence for 5 years and we, therefore, have to have some responsibility for what has happened in recent times. The public at large I think are still looking for a stronger reassurance that there was interference with policing. Policing was prevented from being delivered professionally sometimes when national security matters impinged allegedly on

particular activities. I would have to say that the law abiding public are still concerned about the Tohill case, the Stormontgate fiasco, some of the murders in recent times McCord, Devlin, Dorrian, McCartney and they want to be reassured that there is no interference in good professional policing. I would say, that given the Chief Constable was involved in the Stevens Inquiry Team, and he would be aware of all the brick walls faced and the difficulties that arose there, can we be confident that we are in a new era and a new disposition?

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

It depends on if we are looking forwards or are we looking backwards. I was involved in the Stevens inquiry and many of the recommendations that came out of Stevens were to make sure that the situations that happened then do not happen now. So what we have talked about and what ACC Sheridan has described is a complete restructuring of how intelligence is handled. It is fundamentally different now to the past.

There are a number of unanswered questions from the past, there are a number of public enquiries about to start which will perhaps deal with the history. But our job, and I think that is the Policing Board and the Police Service, is to provide the reassurance to the people now that we have a Police Service that is fit for purpose and procedures that are fit for purpose. What I hope ACC Sheridan has described today is a procedure and a process around the most difficult part of policing which is fit for purpose.

One of the major recommendations in Stevens, was a review for example of all informants. That has been done, a complete review to make sure we only have the people (a) we can control and (b) we are confident we can control and will operate within the guidelines that are so clearly set and recorded for them. ACC Sheridan also said and I agree with him, it is the same in the whole of the United Kingdom, we cannot guarantee that someone who happens to be an informant at some stage in the future commits a crime. What I can guarantee is that if anyone operates outside their terms of reference, they will be pursued, arrested and dealt with relentlessly. There is no amnesty just because you are an informant and I know there is a lot of concern and many of the enquiries are around those sorts of issues.

I can also reassure you, that in terms of cases under my command, I have not had any interference from any agency to not to do something in a case of a murder investigation, or be it for people arrested, for example in the Tohill case and indeed in that case of course, people were charged literally the next day and we currently are actively searching because they breached their bail and did not turn up to receive what we were hoping would be substantial prison sentences.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Mr Ian Paisley Jnr.

Mr Ian Paisley Jnr:

Thank you Chairman. I believe that the public reassurance message in this has to be strong, it has to be powerful, it has to be reassuring and indeed in that regard I welcome the very open and transparent presentation that has been made by the Head of Crime Operations today. That is refreshing, that is different and, indeed, it is something which the public can look to as a standard that they expect. With that in mind, are you able to give us an assurance that all of these changes, because they are quite significant changes, that it will lead to a better service, that it will prevent more crime, that it will ensure that there are more convictions, it will ultimately put criminals, gangsters and godfathers of crime and terror in our community into jail and that the public will see a noticeable difference to the better so that they can feel that the reassurance is just not in word only but also in practice?

With that in mind, would you also give us an assurance that in the future you will put into the public domain, as much information as possible so as the public do not believe that they are in the dark?

Finally with that in mind, you mentioned the human intelligence operatives that you have. Are you able to indicate numerically how many, ballpark figure, there are in Northern Ireland? Are you able to indicate numerically how many fall into the high risk category? Are you able to give that sort of indication of figures?

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

With all of that in mind, I will try and deal with most of it and I will ask ACC Sheridan to touch on things perhaps that I do not touch on. Over the last 3½ years there has been a massive restructuring of how we handle intelligence as I have said. In terms of does it lead to a better service, I can certainly assure the Board Members and people here that there has been no gap in intelligence created by the review. In other words, our intelligence base is still extremely good and that is illustrated by the number of people who are behind bars and you refer to some of the so called godfathers, they are either in custody or awaiting trial for substantial major criminal offences due to the Crime Operations Group and indeed colleagues at all levels of our organisation. So, the vision has to be, we want a better service and if you look at performance, what I am really interested in developing over time is a better intelligence picture around low level crime so called, because the more intelligence we get on that the more effective we are likely to be on dealing with it.

In terms of putting into the public domain, yes we will put what we can in the public domain. We are constrained by a number of things, in particular, legislation and indeed case law. It is a very complicated area as ACC Sheridan tried to illustrate, certainly around Article 2 issues, certainly in the context of Northern Ireland where it seems to be a bit of a national sport in the media, irresponsible in my view, where people are happy to name people as police sources, whether or not they are is actually irrelevant, the fact that people are named puts them at risk. So, we are limited in what we can say but I can assure the Board and indeed we do brief the Chairman and Deputy Chairman, privately on some of these matters, we will do what we can to reassure the public on that.

In terms of numbers, we cannot give numbers out for those very reasons, I am constrained by what I can say and I can say nothing, absolutely nothing that will put anyone at risk or start yet another hunt around different parts of this community.

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Peter Sheridan:

All I want to say is, that in terms of numbers why would I tell criminals how many people are working for us. What benefit would that be, to the ordinary public to give a number might be helpful for a reason but the people who would make the most out of that are

criminals who would want to know how many criminals there are working in their midst, so I would not tell numbers.

Mr Ian Paisley Jnr:

It is worthwhile that the public hear that message as to why, that is why I am asking the question.

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Peter Sheridan:

I know that and the answer to the first part of your question is, if you ask a CID officer today in terms of the level of support they get from the intelligence end of the business, they would tell you now they have access to all of the intelligence. The allegations in the past were, that some intelligence was held back from detectives. So, does that make the service fit for purpose or a better service - I think so and detectives would say so.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Suneil Sharma, question 4 takes forward the same issue but refers to policing at Forestgate in London.

Mr Suneil Sharma:

Chief Constable, would you comment and assure us that when MI5 become the prime agency around intelligence matters, which can be described as national security; that the protocols, mechanisms and processes which he agrees, would ensure that a debacle which has taken place in Forestgate, will not repeat itself here? Can he also assure us that the changes that are happening and that will be implemented will not have an adverse impact on his ability to prevent, detect, and apprehend those who are involved in serious and organised crime?

A supplement to that, I and many others believe that the above is important to clarify as policing with the community and intelligence led policing are intrinsically inter-woven, loosing the confidence of a community will, without doubt, have an adverse impact on your officers to deliver and protect the community as a whole.

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

I would agree entirely with the latter statement. The more we have community support the more information you get, so the last thing you want to do is cause a problem within the community.

In terms of the major question, we remain the operational arm in terms of making arrests, for example, so any operation that is intelligence led by any agency we would still lead on the operational response to that in exactly the same way as colleagues in the rest of the United Kingdom. You refer to Forestgate, it would be wrong for me to make particular observations as I was not involved in the planning of that operation, but I think one point that is worth making is, that intelligence is not perfect. We seem to have got into a situation where the press in particular seem to think we have the complete picture. Now if we did we would not have crime, so that is my definition of false assumption. What is important is, when you get information that is potentially so important or potentially so risky or threatening to a community, it is what you do with it and sadly there will be occasions when things do not go according to plan. The important thing is, when that does happen what you do post-event to make sure you rebuild that relationship as quickly as you can and you make sure that people who are clearly not responsible for something are released as quickly as they can be. We indeed, over my experience, have had examples of cases where we have got things wrong, the important thing is how you recover from that. I do not know if ACC Sheridan wants to touch on anything.

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Peter Sheridan:

You mention protocols and so on. One of the concerns in the past was that intelligence was not passed from Special Branch to CID officers and I guess that is what part of your question is around. The security services have already said to me they will sign up to the Police Service of Northern Ireland's policy on dissemination of intelligence to CID officers, so that gap should not happen. They have already signed up to that on that basis.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Dolores Kelly.

Ms Dolores Kelly:

Much of the good work we are hearing about in terms of PSNI standards for informants could be undone if we do not get a handle and the same standards in relation to MI5 agents. So, therefore, what external and independent assessment of agents and agent handling exists, and to ask the Chief Constable if he is aware of mechanisms for the review of agent handling and agents working for MI5?

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

I do not know if ACC Sheridan wants to deal with that. Two things, the decision to transfer national security to MI5 was a Governmental decision. What we have been focusing on is to make sure it is done in a way that does not make our organisation vulnerable in any way, shape or form to a lack of intelligence and at the risk of repeating myself, I will not sign up to something that gives me that fear or concern. Currently I have to say I am not concerned or worried because the work going on makes sure that is not the case.

In terms of informants, I think also we need to make a point. The notion that on whatever day it is we hand over all our informants is a flawed one. Informants which are under our control, really are informants to deal with organised crime. It is not a sudden transfer of all the assets.

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Peter Sheridan:

I think the Chief Constable is quite right. Our role in this is to make sure that police and people who work for the police service, that all of the procedures and management of them is right. I cannot answer for other agencies but there are mechanisms there to question that through the Ombudsman in the UK for the Security Services so you can get the answers to those questions there, but my role is our concern here in Northern Ireland.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Moving now to questions on incidents and investigations, question 9 and 19, Dawn Purvis.

Ms Dawn Purvis:

Chief Constable, these questions relate to the heightened public profile of hate crime attacks, as the result of the murder of Michael McIlveen, the recent attack on the Indian Youth Cricket Team in the Markets area in Belfast and other more recent racist attacks on migrant workers. Could you advise how PSNI are dealing with such racist and sectarian attacks and further, given the Policing Plan target for the clearance rate for sectarian crimes is set at 16% and for race crimes is 22%, can you explain what measures you have put in place to increase these disappointingly low clearance rates given that sectarian crimes are at 5.9% and race at 4.1% respectively for this year to date.

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

Thank you. I was going to join that with question 19 but I will deal with this first.

The first point is that we take this very seriously. In fact we are on record that our Policing Plan, our Policing Report which was launched only last week, one of the things I said and have been saying for the last 2 or 3 years is, that one of the biggest challenges facing Northern Ireland is the rise in hate crime, race crime in particular and I do not think all of that can be attributed to the fact that we have an increasingly diverse community, I think there is something else going on which I think we need to be ahead of.

In terms of what have we done, the policies are I have to say in place. I am satisfied we have the policy side of the business right but what is important is how we are dealing with it at the front end and a number of initiatives are in place and have been introduced. There is now a minimum standard around investigations, routine attendance of a supervisor at any racial crime or any crime that is deemed to be racist in way, shape or form or any crime motivated by hate. Proper reviews, the District Commander is made aware of every one of these crimes and in terms of context we are looking at an average of 2 or 3 crimes per day covering the whole of Northern Ireland. So, I think there is some issues perhaps around whether or not this place is the race hate capital of the world, certainly compared to my previous experience in another police service area. That of course is reported crime and what we are deeply

concerned about is the number of crimes that are not reported and I think the recent report by NICEM highlights some of those issues which we are very aware of. In terms of the clear up rate, as I have said it is very much at the front of the District Commanders minds that they are personally responsible for delivering. In the last full reporting year, sectarian crime has the lowest clearance rate at 14.4% of all the hate crime categories. I think there may be something around the fact that many sectarian crimes tend to be criminal damage, whereas many homophobic crimes tend to be assaults, because our clear up rate for homophobic crime is indeed higher. There is a 4.6% in the detection rate for racial incidents over the same period so I think we are getting better but accept fully there is a long way to go.

In terms of the latest figures for crime from 1 April 2006 to the 22 June 2006 we have had 271 offences we would record as sectarian and cleared 22 which is 8% clearance rate at the current rate but it is early in the year. Some of these things take some time to work through the system and racist crime 143 with a 9.1% clearance rate of 13 actual crimes, so that is where we are currently.

In terms of examples, in South Belfast we have a strategy in place which ensures a robust investigation of all hate crimes and incidents in accordance with our service wide hate incident policy. All hate crime incidents are recorded on the central database so we do have an overall picture now which is important and that is certainly important for intelligence as well. We talked about intelligence already, one area we are not getting good intelligence on is racist crime and something we need to perhaps put more effort into.

In terms of South Belfast any call to a hate crime is prioritised as an immediate response so we make sure we get there quickly and calls must be attended within one hour. A sergeant has to attend as well so this is important to make sure we get whatever forensic recovery we can to make sure the scene is managed and if there is a potential to arrest there is a pro-arrest policy. I think it is very important, certainly reading the NICEM report, to reinforce that with our District Commanders so if there is any chance of an arrest and a charge, I will instruct my officers to arrest at the time and put that case in front of the PPS as a charge rather than as a slightly slower process and we need to make sure we work with the PPS to achieve that. Every District does have a Minority Liaison Officer. I think where we are going to have to go more quickly

than perhaps we had hoped in terms of restructuring is to make sure to look at the key areas, South Belfast, Dungannon, Derry and look at do we actually need to create Hate Crime Units just to deal with those particular crimes sooner rather than later.

But one of the challenges and it is a point made in the NICEM report is, that we cannot be criticised for not investigating crimes we do not know about. I think we have got to put as much effort into getting the communities confident to report, be it through third parties as indeed NICEM is a third party reporting agency, so we get the information promptly upon which we can act. So I think there is a lot of hope for the future. It is certainly at the front I can assure of my Assistant Chief Constables. I had a conference with every District Commander on Tuesday of this week to discuss performance and race crime was raised specifically as something that we must do more on but it is something we need to share with and work with communities. We can deal with the consequences, the causes are far deeper and underlying and that needs a far more sophisticated approach from the people around this table who represent their communities and indeed the communities themselves.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Suneil Sharma, a supplementary.

Mr Suneil Sharma:

Chief Constable, migrant workers have recently been singled out by racist thugs, this group, as I just want to make this a general comment, make a significant contribution to the economy and enhances the quality of life in Northern Ireland, so it is essential that PSNI in partnership with other bodies, urgently implement practices in which to give the confidence and respect of this group's personal safety. I certainly believe it is vital if we are not to be continually branded as the "race capital of Europe". Finally can I add it is also important that local communities need to do much more to show their abhorrence for this type and other hate crime.

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

I think you are absolutely right. Our migrant workers are a vital part of this economy and there is an awful lot of good work going on locally around some of these issues and I may ask my colleagues to touch briefly, just perhaps to give one example if there is something that springs into his mind. By way of an example, in Dungannon where we

have a large migrant work community, the Police Service are doing a lot but also the community is doing a lot. There are some reports in the Daily Ireland on Tuesday of this week, of groups working to actually drive racism out from within their communities and that is a vital part of it and we have to be very much part of that. Indeed in their editorial what they actually said is, and it just echos what you say Mr Sharma, it is only when local people take ownership of their own communities and confront the racists, that we can isolate those people who cannot face up to the challenges of a new Ireland and if we do not grip this problem as a collective partnership, I think we are going to find ourselves arresting people and putting them in front of the courts but that will deal with the outcome, it will not deal with the symptoms, it is how we make racism unacceptable by working together. I do not know if ACC McCausland or ACC Gillespie have anything they want to touch on.

Assistant Chief Constable, Mrs Judith Gillespie:

One example from Foyle and there are many others, Foyle district have drawn up a protocol with a range of organisations in relation to the Polish migrant worker community there. They have had discussions with CONNECT which is a multi-service agency, specifically focusing on Polish migrant workers who have been the victim of some very serious assaults in the Foyle area of recent weeks and they are developing a magazine in Polish for them and they intend to use this publication to provide vital crime prevention reassurance and interesting advice to the Polish community.

They have also created an ethnic minority forum to act as an independent advisory group there to local police, a 24 hour victim support helpline and lay panels to facilitate communication. I do know that a local hotel in Derry which employs a large number of Polish migrant workers, adopted Poland as their football team for the world cup, sadly they have been knocked out of the world cup but it is nice that the local community were doing that.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Ian Paisley Jnr, a supplementary.

Mr Ian Paisley Jnr:

I was interested in the Chief Constable's comments regarding the performance. Obviously we have discussed this in the past, we are concerned that performance has

to be stepped up, it has to be better but you made an interesting offer to us which I think we should take up and that is, that we should attend your next case conference whenever you are actually with your managers. I was just wondering if you think that the changes which the Government is proposing to legislation such as, 24 hour pub openings and the extension of liquor licenses, that that will have a detrimental effect on the sort of crimes which you are now picking up and causing you considerable problems?

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

Certainly, as I was discussing with some colleagues over lunch, the major increase in our crime categories is criminal damage. Now criminal damage is normally around late at night, it is anti-social behaviour, it is linked to drinking, it is linked to crowd behaviour and it is linked sadly to sectarianism and that, to some extent, explains why. It is not premeditated in the routine, it is something that people do when they have had too much to drink or when they are in a group of people and they spot someone they decide they do not like.

It is interesting that ACC Gillespie mentioned the Polish football team, I was in Londonderry yesterday speaking to the District Commander and one of the more recent assaults there on 2 Polish workers was because they were wearing a Poland football top which apparently looks similar to a Celtic football top. They were simply singled out for that particular reason, so again whilst we have to advise these people how they can keep safe, a point again made in the NICEM report, we are working very closely with the communities. So there is potential, in broad terms I think the strategies that we have, certainly in places like South Belfast, "Get Home Safe" those sorts of issues, are equally important to make sure we stamp out racism as they are in dealing with simple anti-social behaviour.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Continuing with questions on incidents and investigations, question 16 Ms Foster.

Ms Arlene Foster:

Thank you Chairman and as a local Member can I welcome you and the rest of the Board and indeed the PSNI team to Fermanagh. You know I strongly support the

Board coming out into the community and I know Fermanagh is only too delighted to host you here today.

My question is one that comes from a victims group and I have been asked to ask it. Further to a question asked at the Policing Board meeting on 1 June 2006, can the Chief Constable confirm if there are any outstanding warrants for the arrest of Dessie O'Hare, otherwise known as "the border fox"?

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

The short answer is no, there are no warrants outstanding, but I think as we said before, Members are aware of the work of the Historic Enquiry Team, it is a long programme of work and if any investigation for any offence uncovers further evidence which we can pursue, it will be pursued relentlessly but there are no outstanding warrants at the moment.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Danny Kennedy, a supplementary.

Mr Danny Kennedy:

Yes, a supplementary Chairman in relation to that and in having raised the issue on the 1 June 2006, can I ask why that is the case Chief Constable, why there are no outstanding warrants?

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

There are no outstanding warrants because there are no reasons to go and apply for a warrant. To apply for a warrant obviously you have to have evidence that you can satisfy a magistrate is sufficient to prefer a charge.

Mr Danny Kennedy:

It is not any indication that there is a lack of will?

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

There is no lack of will. I think the HET itself and the fact that the HET exists, shows just how determined this Service is to deal with the past and to deal with history. It was our idea to create it, if that is a lack of will then I would disagree with that. That shows

our determination to take responsibility for the unsolved crimes that go back 30 years and Members will be aware it is not been tried anywhere else in the world to our knowledge, I think it is a world leader in that respect and it will do I think an awful lot of good for a lot of families and bring a lot more closure than they have had before.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

With reference to an incident at Newtownards court on 15 June 2006, question 18 Mr Peter Weir.

Mr Peter Weir:

I wonder if you could update the Board on what action has been taken as a result of public disturbances at Newtownards court on the 15 June 2006 arising from the charging of 3 suspects for the murder of Edward Kelly and what steps are being considered to improve security at Newtownards courthouse to hopefully reduce the opportunity for the reoccurrence of such an incident?

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

I will ask ACC McCausland to deal with that but in reality these sorts of incidents do happen from time to time, they are very rare in Northern Ireland and indeed they are very rare in the rest of the United Kingdom but ACC McCausland knows the detail on this particular one.

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Duncan McCausland:

As the Board will be aware on the 20 June 2006 there was an incident at Newtownards courthouse. It was a minor confrontation which the police immediately intervened in. During the course of this action, one man who received repeated warnings, ignored those warnings and was arrested for assaulting police, disorderly behaviour and obstruction, he in fact is appearing in court today.

In terms of not just Newtownards court but any courthouse, where a District Commander believes he has a difficult or sensitive case coming up, he can ask the regional ACC for additional assistance in terms of our Tactical Support Groups and where these cases are identified we do send additional resources to the courthouse to ensure there are no events such as this. Obviously this is kept under constant review and that is the situation as it currently is.

Mr Peter Weir:

I would like to ask a supplementary in relation to that. Obviously in light of the fact then that there was this incident involving this particular case, then whenever the suspects are brought back again on the next occasion there will be additional police resources on that occasion to ensure that we do not have a reoccurrence?

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Duncan McCausland:

That would be down to the District Commander whose devolved responsibility is to make that decision but the 3 persons were remanded in custody and they will be answering their call back potentially by video links, so it may not reappear.

Chairman, Professor Desmond Rea:

Moving to questions on crime levels and police performance, question 5 Arlene Foster.

Ms Arlene Foster:

Chairman, this is a question on behalf of Fermanagh DPP that has been submitted and I am delighted to do so.

At the 6 month and 12 month monitoring meetings, the DPP Code of Practice requires DPPs to monitor police performance in the achievement of targets relative to crime prevention in the district. Obviously any crime prevention targets will be very subjective but there does not seem to be province wide or local crime prevention strategy. Are there any plans to develop in Northern Ireland, crime prevention strategy or what indicators can the public reasonably expect regarding crime prevention targets?

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

First of all can I congratulate the DPP that is what I would call a really interesting question, you must come more often. Robert Drennan is going to answer that on behalf of Criminal Justice Department.

Superintendent Robert Drennan, Criminal Justice Department:

There are 3 parts to the answer. Firstly, there is a close relationship between crime prevention and targets for crime reduction. In considering what the police should be achieving in relation to crime prevention, the targets which have been set within the policing plans at both local and Northern Ireland wide level are very relevant if you are

aiming to reduce say vehicle crime then you are going to have to prevent it occurring and under the National Intelligence Model each District Commander has a control strategy setting out those actions which he or she plans to take to deal with local issues and that has 3 sections to it. The first is intelligence, the second is enforcement and the third is prevention so they will be planning actions to deal with reducing specific areas of crime.

Secondly, the Commanders across the province are supported by the work of our Community Safety Branch which has responsibility for looking at certain crime prevention campaigns aimed at reducing areas such as vehicle crime and domestic burglaries. They also have targets set in relation to new and innovative ways of reducing crime and for monitoring the activation of alarm systems in commercial premises.

Thirdly, crime prevention is an area that must involve more agencies and parts of the community than the police alone and the Northern Ireland Office Community Safety Unit is currently consulting on a new 5 year Community Safety Strategy, which should be finalised early next year, and that Community Safety Strategy should include a section on crime prevention since it is a key element of community safety.

Assistant Chief Constable, Mrs Judith Gillespie:

(tape unclear)...which refers specifically to this District. Firstly, there is the trailer marking and registration scheme and to date the police have offered this scheme to over 500 owners of trailers. It is freely available to anyone who owns a trailer, that is a building trailer, car trailer, horsebox, livestock, whatever type of trailer, and it involves a code which is clearly visible on the side of the trailer which means, that if the trailer is stolen it is very readily recoverable and it also has acted as a deterrent to theft, because since we introduced the scheme only one trailer has been stolen and it was recovered within 24 hours.

The second is a domestic burglary prevention scheme. This is a pack which is provided again free of charge to anyone upon application and police officers when they are out on patrol in Fermanagh district, when they spot a property which they deem to be vulnerable in any way, be that because there is a window open or property clearly obvious to an opportunist thief, they will either call with the owner and do a crime

prevention survey very quickly and offer this pack. If the owner is not in they will leave a message offering the pack to the owner and to date we have had 50 of those packs handed out already, so it was just of some local interest that I thought you might like to know about those.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Very interesting, thank you very much. Question relating to the 4% increase in overall crime last year, question 6, Brian Rea.

Mr Brian Rea:

Thank you Chairman. Chief Constable, given the 4% increase in overall crime last year, can you explain why crime is continuing to increase and what measures the Police Service of Northern Ireland are putting in place to reduce this crime?

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

As I have already mentioned Chairman, I had a conference with my District Commanders on Tuesday to look at it because it causes us substantial concern, because we are now 2 months into the new year and we have seen an increase in crime, which I think is reversible. I genuinely think that part of it, particularly in relation to crime such as domestic violence is explained and racist crime and hate crime in general can be explained to some extent by an increase in reporting, but we do need to look at that as I have mentioned already in a more independent way to get a better feel for it. The whole focus of my meeting was to make sure we have not taken our eye off the ball and District Commanders have been left in no doubt, that I hold them to account for local delivery of the performance targets which have been set to us by the Board. That having been said, and the points made around partnerships stand and it is more than responsibility of just policing to deliver and to report crime so that we know what the picture is so we can then deal with it.

That having been said, within the figures there are some encouraging downward trends. Vehicle crime is continuing to decrease, it is down 10% this year it is now, a point we made to our District Commanders, it is the safest place in the United Kingdom in relation to theft from motor vehicles and indeed theft of motor vehicles. One of the points that perhaps relates to the Crime Prevention Strategy is now over 100 PSNI vehicles are fitted with a tracker device so stolen cars with a tracker can be picked up

very quickly and not only stolen cars but stolen plant and machinery which has tracker fitted, so have that particular issue in place.

Domestic burglary is up 1.8%, I think with a lot of effort and a lot of proper intelligence net policing we can turn that round, I am confident we will do that. Some of the examples have been mentioned but it is still the fact, that somewhere in excess of 20% of burglaries are through open doorways and open windows, it is a crime prevention message, we have got to get across that if people would simply lock their doors and hide their car keys we could reduce this far more quickly, that having been said it is not to off lay our responsibilities just to make the point of partnership.

Interestingly within the domestic burglary trends, Urban Region is continuing to be successful, the problem is more within the rural areas so our colleagues here will be more interested in that. But the significant increase is in criminal damage, 900 additional offences have been recorded over this year and that is where we have got to put more effort. It is activity that comes from anti-social behaviour, what is reassuring of the 29 districts about 20 have anti-social behaviour and drinking as a part of their District Policing Plan so we understand the problem, it is just that we need to do more to tackle it. There has been a lot of action as I have said. A number of initiatives which I will not go into detail now but be rest assured we will continue to do our bit to certainly hopefully turn it round by the next reporting quarter.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Question relating to the processing of bail cases, question 7 Mr Joe Byrne.

Mr Joe Byrne:

Chairman, last year the Policing Board welcomed improvement in the processing and custody of bail cases largely due to the rolling out of the Causeway Project. Can the Chief Constable explain why only 74% of bail cases have been processed on time so far this year against a target of 85%? Can I further say Chairman, that very often criminal lawyers are very happy to have cases and clients returned on remand for quite a while because they get an extra pay day but the victims of crime are still waiting to see when justice will be delivered?

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

I think it is 2 different issues. In terms of remands, once a person is in the criminal justice system then the delays within the criminal justice system are sort of outwith our responsibility and your points around remands and continual remands I know are extremely frustrating, not only to the victims but also to my officers to have to quite often attend court unnecessarily. I know there is a lot of work going on by the Lord Chief Justice to try and reduce delay in that part of the process.

I will ask Superintendent Drennan to touch on the details of our performance, that having been said, I remember 2 or 3 years ago our performance in this area was singly appalling, it is now just not quite good enough. We are getting there but there is more work to do and I will ask Superintendent Drennan to touch on that.

Superintendent Robert Drennan, Criminal Justice Department:

We have been looking at what sort of areas may have influenced the reduction in the figure from the 85% that we ended last year with in relation to bail cases and our thinking has looked at 2 areas which may have had an influence in this. The first relates to the mechanism by which these figures are reported and gathered and the second in relation to some of the processes with our partners in the Public Prosecution Service (PPS).

Firstly, in relation to how we gather the figures. We previously measured only cases that were submitted to the DPP which tend to be more serious files and we measured those. Now with the introduction of the Public Prosecution Service we are seeking to measure all of the bail cases for cases which would not previously have been referred to the DPP, so the figures are based on a much larger body of files which are being measured.

Furthermore, the electronic system that we are drawing the figures from is not being fully used across all districts. The PPS has not been fully rolled out and it means, that in some districts there are 2 systems running, in that the file may be being prepared manually but they have the possibility of logging on to measure when the file has started and it is possible, that in some of these cases they are concluding the file but they are not marking it off electronically and that is something we need to look at, this running of the 2 systems.

In relation to what happens at the court, the intention is that when a person appears they should put in their plea and if they plead guilty then we can mark the matter concluded. If they are going to contest it, then a full file is going to be needed and we have to start putting that together. It does appear that in some cases, the person is not being putting in their plea at an early stage, perhaps as you have alluded to, adjournments are granted we still do not know what way they are going to plea and we are receiving a late notification which does not allow us to make our targets.

There is also evidence, that in some cases where the defendant is charged and then fails to appear, that the full case is not being requested until the person is detained which is in the majority of cases is beyond the target submission time and these are matters which we are addressing with the PPS.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Question relating to clearance rates, question 8 Danny Kennedy.

Mr Danny Kennedy:

Thank you Chairman. Could I ask the Chief Constable (*tape unclear*).. the clearance rate year to date figures which have been produced indicating 16% achieved as opposed to a target of 29% which is very underwhelming. Can the Chief Constable explain why this is the case and reassure Members that every effort will be made to achieve the target of 29%? Can I also ask if it is a case that the initial targets have been wrongly set or indeed, is there a lack of resources, or indeed is there any other problems which we would need to be made aware of?

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

The 29% is higher than the national average but we do not mind challenging targets. It is not much point in setting a target that is easy to achieve, so I think the target is a fair one and if you look at what we achieved last year, there is potential to achieve it.

Part of it is around that it is early in the year and these things take time to manage through, so there is some catch up in a sense, of cases that are progressing that we cannot properly claim yet because there has not been an outcome, so that should increase as the year goes on.

Some other changes which I mentioned in the private session briefly. In terms of the counting rules, I am interested in what we would call a primary sanction, that is to say, we have put someone in front of the court or in front a proper judicial process, because that is what the public expect us to do. I am less interested in what we would call a sanction at a lower level, where we know who has committed the crime but for a number of reasons we are unable to put that person into court, which can still be sanctioned under strict guidelines. We have now issued clear guidance to every single district to make sure that only crimes that can properly be cleared up under the very strict codes are cleared up, so I think there is a far more rigorous oversight structure which may again impact slightly on the number at the end of the year, but I think my focus is on judicial clearances rather than sanctioned detections at a lower level. I think if you give us a bit more time, I will have more information around it but at the moment I, and rest assured it is at the front of every District Commander's mind, know 16% is not good enough, you are right.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Question relating to business crime, question 15 Mr Peter Weir.

Mr Peter Weir:

Could I ask the Chief Constable what action is being taken to meet the concerns of the business community on the issue of business crime, particularly in light of the recently published survey of the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) on the subject and indicate whether he has met or intends to meet the FSB to discuss their 9 point plan to combat these issues?

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

I am happy to meet anyone who wants to discuss crime, it is not in my diary but it is in the Deputy Chief Constable's diary, so that is excellent. I might ask ACC McCausland to touch on some of the detailed work that I know he has been undergoing in Belfast after Superintendent Drennan has answered your question in the main. That having been said, I know the Northern Ireland Select Committee has heard evidence from the business community and in particular in relation to extortion. Now my challenge that I issued then to that community was, if every small business that was a member of that community signed up to a "we will not submit to extortion – we will tell the police", what we actually do is, the small businesses become a big business and big business here is

quite powerful against resisting extortion. I think we can do a huge amount of work by simply getting that agreement between the business community and ourselves. My commitment would be, if someone comes and tells us about an extortion they will get guaranteed a full police response and when we get a complaint about extortion, we convict people for extortion, it is an offence that we can deal with. That is a personal observation, small business is extremely important to us. Superintendent Drennan do you want to touch on some of it and then ACC McCausland perhaps you could very briefly touch on what you are doing.

Superintendent Robert Drennan, Criminal Justice Department:

We will be writing to the FSB to arrange a meeting to discuss those parts of their 9 point plan which relate to the police. The police have also recently piloted a programme with multi-national businesses in Northern Ireland. It had a very positive response and we will be looking at adapting some of this programme to the needs of the small businesses represented by the FSB. We have a Senior Crime Prevention Officer who will be involved in those meetings. He also represents the Chief Constable on the Business and Retail Crime Group which the FSB is represented on. That group was formed in February 2006 to address the concerns of the business community, 2 meetings have taken place, they have discussed matters such as CCTV, evaluation of radio links schemes and the reporting of crimes by businesses which I know is raised in the report. The third meeting of that group is scheduled for September 2006 so we will continue to look at these problems.

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Duncan McCausland:

Chairman, if I could comment briefly on Belfast city centre and as you have known before, the Board Members know we spoke about this last month. We have had the end of year report in relation to the city centre Beat Initiative which is a sponsorship initiative by the Chamber of Trade, sponsoring 2 of our officers to patrol specifically in the city centre to tackle issues that the business community have. In terms of value for money and actual savings to the total economy, this is the estimations done by the assessment from the Belfast City Centre Management Group. Over £1½ million has been saved as a result of having the 2 police officers dedicated and patrolling in this specific area. But it is not just those 2 officers, we have also linked in for example, city centre radio links and radio links outside of Belfast in other retail areas that are attempting to identify if and when there are potential criminals operating in those

shopping centre areas. We have tried actively to design 'out crime' and specifically tackle the prevention of crime before it actually happens in terms of encouraging people when they are building new centres, to design out and prevent making them easy targets for criminals.

We have also looked to promote good cash handling, in particular, the movement of cash in transit and I have commented before about the joint control room that we have established in the Belfast area in relation to preventing cash in transit robberies. Combined with all this, there has been an overlay of a high visibility of patrolling in terms of reassuring the whole community. As the Board are aware and the Vice-Chair is getting involved with the Community Involvement Committee, we are looking to develop a safer city agenda which will, if it is successful in Belfast, we will then look to rollout across the province. The key element in that, is working with the business community, both at national outlets as well as small businesses in terms of getting them in to ensure that they can contribute and play their part in making a safer area for us all.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Deirdre Mac Bride, supplementary.

Ms Deirdre Mac Bride:

(tape unclear).... which are particularly known as a 7/11 shops and I know that a couple of years ago some of those were interested in some of the Scottish models of actually detecting and reducing the level of what they call "meat and cheese thefts" and also the amount of attacks on staff and the amount of aggravation outside the shops that were starting to force some of the convenience stores in Belfast to close. I would like to find out what action maybe has been taken in relation to that type of retail crime and business crime?

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Duncan McCausland:

I think that the key issue in relation to addressing aspects like that would be, as was already commented, to identify the particular hotspots and to deploy patrolling to, in the first instance, police out but also then, as I come back to the previous comment, about designing out of actually briefing and training staff in those outlets in terms to how to actually deal with events and to prevent in effect becoming a target. A lot of it can fall down to how cash is handled and how people actually deal with customers when they

come in and retailers have got involved in this and we are very active in terms of helping people in effect, prevent in the first instance themselves any such issues that you have mentioned.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Just to say that communications are ongoing with the Federation of Small Businesses to arrange a meeting between the Board to discuss their survey.

Assistant Chief Constable, Mr Duncan McCausland:

Chairman, I would just add if I may, the benefit of CCTV which can have a major impact in terms of making the community safer.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Question relating to dedicated induction training and respected diversity, Mrs Rosaleen Moore, question 21.

Mrs Rosaleen Moore:

Chief Constable, just to ask you if you are aware of concerns that the issue of sectarianism is not now being fully addressed in the dedicated Induction Training for new recruits and to ask to outline how these issues of sectarianism and diversity, which are so important, are going to be properly and rigorously addressed.

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

I will ask my Deputy Chief Constable to address that but as a broad overview, in terms of our determination to deal with, for example, the issues that have been raised in the NICEM report around racist crime and hate crime, what we have done is redesigned our training, I do not accept the fact that we have stopped doing sectarian training at all.

Deputy Chief Constable, Mr Paul Leighton:

Neither do I accept that we are not fully addressing anti-sectarian issues. The issue arises with one of our contractors who previously did deliver a pre-induction course to our new recruits. We have had 2 reports into this, one by Centrex by Central Training for Policing and one by our own Occupational Psychologists who look at the longitudinal study of the impact of training on our new recruits to make sure that training is fit for purpose. Both of those reports said that the messages were not getting

through, we therefore looked at our initial training and we identified, some time ago, that racism and homophobia were not being addressed and we needed to include those in that early hate training because there are links to other hate crimes and we tried to get that included in the 3 day induction course. That was not possible and we are now working to design a new course which will be delivered to new recruits to replace the old course, so there is no question of no training being given or sectarianism or other hate crimes not being addressed.

I have had a long discussion with the Board's sub-committee on this matter and I have written to the head of that sub-committee, inviting 2 Members of the Board to the initial pilot of the new course which will take place in August 2006. I will attend that training as well, although obviously it is important that we attend it in the right spirit, i.e. we do not disrupt the training and we do not take away from what is actually going to happen with the new recruits, because a lot of it is very challenging and very much about who are they, where are they from and what do they bring to the job and what baggage does everyone have with them in the province. So, the sectarian element has not been ignored and will be addressed, but obviously we have to look at the new course to make sure it is fit for purpose just as we identified that the old course was not.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Question relating to the policing of Fermanagh from Fermanagh DPP, Ms Arlene Forster, question 20.

Ms Arlene Foster:

In August last year the Northern Ireland Policing Board accepted the PSNI's proposal to close 6 of their rural police stations in Fermanagh which was almost half of the police estate in the country. Recently, there was an announcement of their recruitment of additional part-time police officers for a number of areas including Moyle. When can Fermanagh DCU reasonably expect to get some of those part-time police officers? We do not want to detract from Moyle's entitlement to its police service, but the deployment of additional part-time police officers to Fermanagh would have gone some way in allaying the community's concerns about losing the police stations.

If you compare Moyle to Fermanagh, Fermanagh has 3 times more crime than Moyle, there was an overall increase in crime of 22% in the county and 13 road traffic fatalities, the highest in Northern Ireland. What criteria are used to determine which DCUs get additional part-time police officers?

Deputy Chief Constable, Mr Paul Leighton:

If we compare Fermanagh to Moyle, it has 10 times more part-time police officers at the minute, so Fermanagh has 20 POPTs and Moyle only has 2. After the recruitment, Moyle will actually have 8 so it is not a massive recruitment so I do accept that everyone wants additional resources. What we did to identify the 5 areas who will benefit which are Moyle, Foyle, Ballymoney, Newry and Mourne and Belfast South, what we did to identify those was, we entered into discussion with the Board and it was only after long deliberation with the Board that we decided on the 5 areas that would receive members of the 150 being recruited at present.

But the long term issue for Fermanagh is, how do we get more resources into Fermanagh and other places and as the Board are aware, we want to push on with PCSOs and we are moving as quickly as we possibly can. We are hoping new legislation will be in place by February next year and that the new PCSOs will appear first on the streets in early 2008. Now obviously the areas that get part-time police officers may not be the first areas to get PCSOs so I hope that we will be able to bring Fermanagh good news in the future.

Ms Arlene Foster:

Deputy Chief Constable, you also mentioned resources and I am very glad you did, because as you know with the sale of those former police stations, there will be quite a considerable capital receipt in respect of that, I think what Fermanagh would like to know is, how much of that money will actually be reinvested back into Fermanagh policing.

Deputy Chief Constable, Mr Paul Leighton:

As the Board are aware we have an overall Estates Strategy and the capital receipts are accounted for in the overall Estates Strategy. We have quite a few stations, 50% of our stations are over 50 years old and quite a few of them are over 100 years old. We have a heavy backlog of maintenance that that money is already earmarked to try and

deal with just to maintain some of the stations that we do have, but the capital receipts are actually earmarked for our overall Estates Strategy which the Board has approved.

Ms Arlene Foster:

Does that include the mobile police station?

Deputy Chief Constable, Mr Paul Leighton:

No, the Capital Receipts actually go towards building maintenance, the mobile police station are funded from another part of capital funding.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Question relating to the CASE Programme in schools, question 23, Mr Barry Gilligan will now tells us what the CASE Programme is.

Vice Chairman, Mr Barry Gilligan:

Thank you Chairman. At the last meeting of the Community and Human Rights Committee we were updated on the work undertaken as part of the PSNI CASE programme. CASE stands for Citizenship and Safety Education programme, now I know Chief Constable this will be of interest to our DPP colleagues in the context of greater police engagement with the younger members of our community. Members did note that, of the 505 schools that requested PSNI to work with them, PSNI were able to meet just 350 of those requests. Are you satisfied with that response rate and what steps are you going to take to make sure that we do not have an ongoing shortfall and what measures can you tell us are in place to ensure that this very important area of work I believe is supported and developed across all of the 29 DCUs?

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

I will ask Superintendent Drennan to deal with the detail, but I agree, I think getting into schools is absolutely vital. We would say we are now in over 40% of schools in Northern Ireland and demand is increasing which is really important. It is actually 505 requests, it is not 505 schools, you can get more than one request from one school so maybe we are getting 3 or 4 requests from some schools. In addition to CASE, what we are starting to monitor is all the other activity around schools. I am very concerned if to deliver a programme like this, it is important that only trained officers do it, officers who understand how to deliver training. The old way of sending the local cop into

terrifying young people into submission is not the way forward so we work very closely with Stranmillis to qualify our officers who then graduate with a proper qualification, so there is a bit of a time lag in terms of catching up.

It is also fair to say, that whilst it is absolutely vital it was not set as one of our priorities in our Policing Plan by the Board, or indeed I think by any local Policing Plan that I have seen so it is again District Commanders being pulled in a number of directions, that is not to say it is not important and perhaps Superintendent Drennan you would touch on some of the detail about what we are doing.

Superintendent Robert Drennan, Criminal Justice Department:

Ideally we would want to attend on every occasion when a CASE lesson is requested. We are pleased that within the last 12 months, there has been a 13% increase in the demand for the CASE programme that the letters stand for Citizenship and Safety Education and this increase is probably partly a result of our Community in Schools Involvement Officers proactively contacting schools to outline the benefits of the programme.

Before officers can go in to deliver these lessons as the Chief Constable has mentioned, they have to be trained. About 200 officers have received this training and to help meet this demand there is going to be training for additional officers, it is planned for October of this year and March 2007 to help District Commanders to meet this increased demand.

We do have an educational advisor within Community Safety Branch delivering teaching resources and guidance to the officers who are charged with delivering this and, as a sign of the importance we place on this that post is now moving from being a temporary secondment to a permanent post. We are conscious of the importance of working with the next generation, but as requests come in, Commanders must balance these with other priorities which have been set in their Policing Plan.

Assistant Chief Constable, Mrs Judith Gillespie:

(Tape unclear).. that recently in my last round of accountability meetings, I have been discussing with Commanders how they can make the draft PSNI Policing with Children and Young People Strategy come to life and each district has been asked to develop 3

specific actions in that regard. I also have been discussing with the Deputy Chief Constable, my own personal or professional development objectives, one of which will be to make sure that the percentage of CASE requests that we meet in Rural Region is increased this year on last year, so it is a specific objective in my performance related pay.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Question related to Personal Protection Weapons, Ms Arlene Foster, question 24.

Ms Arlene Foster:

Chief Constable, have you any plans to review your policy on renewing permits for personal protection weapons and in particular for those who will, in the future, be applying for renewals.

Deputy Chief Constable, Mr Paul Leighton:

There are no plans to review the current policy which was implemented on 1 December 2005. The main thrust of the policy is to move away from a general threat group which was the approach that was taken in the 1970s, to consider individual cases on an individual threat basis. The idea being and we are applying this across all areas of protection, that we will look at individual cases rather than say everybody in a particular group and we are talking about ex prison officers, prison officers, ex police officers, ex judiciary all those types of groups, that we would look at individual cases and individual situations rather than a group. So what will happen and what went out in letters that have been sent to holders of personal protection weapons is that this principle will be outlined and they will be allowed one further 3 year period of a firearm certificate issued under the Firearms (Northern Ireland) Order 2005. After that period, we will assess each application on its merits, so the first reviews will not take place until February 2008.

Mr Willie Hay:

Chairman on the back of that, I mean it really is a change of policy. I think the Deputy Chief Constable stated in his initial remarks that it really was not a change of policy, but many people out there who are holding such firearms will clearly see it as a change of policy.

Deputy Chief Constable, Mr Paul Leighton:

It was in December 2005 that the policy was changed and the letters have been sent out since then. I thought the question was about to review the policy that currently exists. The policy that currently exists is this policy that we will consider threats on an individual basis and we will monitor them individually, because circumstances have moved on and changed.

Mr Willie Hay:

That is not how the public sees it.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Another supplementary, Danny Kennedy.

Mr Danny Kennedy:

Chairman, could I share the concern of other Members in relation to that and could I ask what the current backlog is in respect of applications and if you do not have the information to hand, perhaps you could provide it.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Question relating to the drawing of weapons, question 25 Mrs Dolores Kelly.

Mrs Dolores Kelly:

Chairman, further to the comments of the Deputy Chief Constable at the May Board meeting that, yes we (the police) do have concern about the number of times that weapons are drawn, to ask the Chief Constable to elaborate on the nature of these concerns, to confirm what action the PSNI has implemented or are considering in order to fully address this issue?

Deputy Chief Constable, Mr Paul Leighton:

If I could elaborate Mrs Kelly. The concern that we have about is, every time a weapon is drawn is, that a weapon is a lethal weapon and someone could get shot, killed or seriously injured, so the concern about any weapon being drawn is a constant one. What we have done about it is, we have looked very very carefully at our training to make sure that it is threat based, to make sure that it is human rights compliant and every officer goes through a human rights input and a judgement input in their training.

We have clarified exactly that officers are never never instructed as part of their training to draw their weapon just in case. They are instructed to draw their weapon as a matter of absolute necessity at last resort, so it is very very clear in their training.

What we are doing as well is, we are introducing more FATS system. This is an American system which is a simulated learning system. It consists of a screen which plays scenarios which the officer shoots at with a laser gun. We can put different scenarios on that and we are designing scenarios that are specifically about not to draw your gun, so we will be testing officers as to when they do and do not draw their weapons, so it is a concern.

Combined with that, we have the HMIC Review on Firearms which we are implementing which will move us towards a system of armed response vehicles, so we will more professionalise if you like our response to armed incidents. We are also enhancing the training for Gold Commanders. All our senior officers have now undergone Gold Commander training for firearms incidents. Now if Members of the Board wished we could bring them along and let them see FATS and have a go for themselves.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Question 26 which relates to policing in rural areas. I should say that this question has been submitted by a member of the public, we do encourage members of the public to submit questions to us and this question will be put by Willie Hay, question 26 and it is the final question.

Mr Willie Hay:

Thank you Chairman and I would like to say that it is good to be in Fermanagh today. I think Chairman there has been a lot of discussion today on the closure of rural police stations, on resources to rural areas of Northern Ireland when it comes to policing and certainly, as it has emerged over the last few days that mobile police stations may not be available to serve rural areas. Now whether that is true or not I do not know and I think we need an answer to that but if that is the case, I think rural people generally in Northern Ireland needs to be assured that within the rural area there will be an adequate level of a policing service. I think as well, if you speak to many rural people across Northern Ireland, they will tell you that on occasions they do not get the service

that they deserve or need and I think that is an issue for people living within the rural areas of Northern Ireland.

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

Let me just reassure you that you will get mobile police stations.

Assistant Chief Constable, Mrs Judith Gillespie:

Can I just say that if the service falls below the standard that members of the public would expect then please I would encourage them to complain, but in relation to our commitment to increase the public confidence and reassurance, what I can say is that we do not take any decisions to close rural police stations lightly. They are driven from the ground up by a consultation process led by the District Policing Partnership which takes into account the will to provide efficient and effective policing within communities. So with this in mind, whilst we take none of these decisions lightly, we have reviewed the police estate across the service in consultation with DPPs and with the Policing Board and we have decided to close a number of stations. Some of these closures will actually result in resources being freed up, not to guard the bricks and mortar of the station, but to actually patrol visibly and in a way which increases reassurance.

Local Commanders, where stations have been closed, have been asked to provide a commitment document in consultation with their DPPs in relation to community policing and this commitment document includes provision of a 24 hour police response. Board Members will be aware that response times are monitored now in this year's Policing Plan. The provision of a community policing service, the provision of a dedicated neighbourhood policing team which includes monitoring the number of hours per day or per week that that team actually provides on patrol in specific areas, that would include mobile, beat, cycle patrols as per the risk assessment in the area, other community policing activity in schools and other crime prevention activity, high visibility patrols, motor cycle patrols, prevention patrols, intelligence led operations, road safety operations, operations with TSG (Tactical Support Group) which is a Rural Region resource and joint operations with other agencies.

Where applicable, it was also agreed that confidence of an accessibility to local police could be enhanced by the use of these mobile police stations. Now Mr Hay, you are quite right in saying there have been a number of issues raised in relation to the mobile

police stations. These are of a health and safety matter and we are putting some considerable energy into resolving these as quickly as possible. In fact I was speaking to David Best (PSNI Director of Finance and Support Services) only this morning to make sure that those issues were resolved as soon as possible and I am determined that we will meet that commitment that we have made to communities. I would have to say that I know this is central to the heart of delivering community policing and the trust that which members of the community based in us to deliver that and I am absolutely committed to delivering that and the mobile police station is part of that plan.

Mr Willie Hay:

Could I Chairman just quickly come back, not on all of it, but just to say that some of us on this Board would feel that the closure of rural police stations is not the best way forward for policing in the rural area and I think we need to put that on the record.

Chief Constable, Sir Hugh Orde:

I understand the concerns but we have been discussing performance a lot today and for me it is a stark choice. We either have officers out on patrol dealing with crime, we have officers sitting in police stations and I understand the physical presence of it, but they do not visit.

I understand Coalisland there has been a deferred decision today and I would encourage Members on their way home perhaps to drive past Coalisland and ask yourself the question "is that what you want in Coalisland as your standard police response". My personal view is it is not. It has a very low visitor rate, I could deploy that officer and that member of staff far more effectively protecting the communities of Coalisland outwith that police station rather than within that police station.

Chairman, Professor Sir Desmond Rea:

Could I bring this session to a close and could I place on record something that should be placed into the minutes and it is our appreciation to the PSNI and the Garda Siochanna for all the work that they did leading up to the Special Olympics and that included the Torch Run and so we would place on record our appreciation of that.

Could I say thank you Chief Constable and through you, in particular to ACC Sheridan for his presentations today, they were most helpful and also to you and your colleagues for answering our questions in this meeting.

For us as Members of this Policing Board, it has been simply good to come to Fermanagh. We have been very pleased to come and we hope that you found this meeting useful. Thank you.