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From: _____
 Date: 04 November 2003

cc: PS/PUS
 PS/Baroness Symons
 PS/Mr Rammell
 John Sawers
 William Ehrman
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 Edward Oakden

, ISSU

Ed Owen
 Michael Williams
 James Paver, Press Office

PS ✓

IRAQ POLICING

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1. You asked for a progress report on the 25 civpol trainers for Basra. I have also seen a copy of Mr Rammell's note of today's date reporting his meeting with DCC Stephen White of 3 November; and I am aware that the Secretary of State also wanted to pursue how we might draw on the resources of the Police Service of Northern Ireland to increase our police presence in Iraq. This note addresses all these issues.

Current position in Basra

2. The deployment of the 24 UK police officers for the training academy in Basra is on track for mid-December, when Basra facility should be ready to accommodate them and the officers completed their pre-deployment firearms training. This plan is subject to one proviso: a decision by the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) that the risk assessment for deployment to Basra is acceptable. ACPO require very strict assurances about security and in the current environment we cannot be certain that, even in Basra,

Page 1

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71

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approval will be straightforward. We are exploring other options on a contingency basis: these include hiring retired police officers (therefore not subject to ACPO ruling) or use of US military reservist policemen. In the meantime MND (SE) is actioning with CJTF7 a short term training programme for police officers using military personnel (this is an Iraq wide initiative). We will also be examining what scope there might be for drawing on the resources of the Police Service of Northern Ireland and its reservists (see below).

Stephen White's views

3. The plan for Basra as described above has been understood and agreed by CPA South, including both Sir Hilary Synnott and DCC Stephen White, since September. There had been delays in late summer, but these have been resolved and an Iraq Police Training Project Team has been up and running now for several weeks taking forward delivery of the UK police effort Iraq. DCC White's views, as relayed to Mr Rammell and other Ministers yesterday, appear to be related to the early expectations both here and in the CPA that the Iraq post-conflict environment would have allowed the deployment of an international civilian police force of around 6,500 to undertake operational policing in Iraq (as was so successful in Bosnia and Kosovo). As it became clear that the security situation would make this impossible, the focus shifted to the development of Iraqi police capability and thus to training. DCC White was kept fully abreast of these changes and accepted the realities of the situation, though it is clear he feels frustrated that he is unable to use his extensive operational police experience derived from Northern Ireland. The figure of 200 officers quoted in Mr Rammell's note is a misunderstanding: this is the number of UK officers in the pool set up by the Home Office to be drawn on to sustain a deployment of 100 officers in total. DCC White's point about his budget is a matter for CPA South and Baghdad. We have encouraged DCC White to submit any additional bids for support to us direct.

US police training strategy

4. Mr Rammell also reports DCC White concerns about the US strategy for policing. The US recently took the decision, as part of the accelerated Iraqisation strategy which was approved in last week's consultations in Washington, to increase rates of recruitment, training and deployment of Iraqi policemen. Plans have been drawn up to train 25,000 new recruits from now until the end of next year, and re-train 50,000 existing police. This training effort will be split between the new Jordan police training centre (to which we are deploying a further 75 police officers by the end of the year, with the first 25 arriving on 25 November) and three Iraqi police academies in Baghdad, Basra and the North, and will involve using a large number of US military reservist policemen as trainers. The training will be very intensive: 3 weeks for police already in service, and 8 for new recruits. The objective is to get as many newly trained police on the streets as soon as possible, and there appears to be no current plan for on-the-job mentoring by international police monitors. This is far from ideal, and DCC White's concerns may be justified: the

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risks that flow from putting large numbers of insufficiently trained police on the streets are clear. But the accelerated programme flows from a strategic decision at the highest level in Washington and we judge that we are only likely to be able to influence it at the margins ie in Basra, where we are responsible for its implementation. Hilary Synnott and DCC White are already exploring this.

Police Service of Northern Ireland

5. We understand that at his meeting with Mr Rammell, Adam Ingram and Jane Kennedy on 3 November DCC White drew attention to the availability of PSNI officers for deployment to Iraq and questioned why this resource had not been tapped. In 2002 Jane Kennedy wrote to Dr MacShane to say that for domestic reasons PSNI would no longer be in a position to contribute to overseas police missions, in particular Kosovo. It is for this reason that FCO did not approach PSNI when the trawl notice for Iraq was issued. It appears now that PSNI's interest in overseas missions, specifically Iraq, may now have been rekindled by DCC White. We are following this up. First, if it is judged in theatre in Basra that the UK should attempt in the South to adapt the new US policing strategy to involve on the job monitors, PSNI may be a source for officers to take on this role. Whether they would be ready to take a different view from ACPO of the acceptability of the risk involved, and whether we ourselves would want to deploy officers in such conditions, are questions that will need to be addressed. Similarly, we will discuss both with PSNI and the Government agency involved in placement of retired PSNI officers the potential for their taking up the trainer places which might be needed urgently if ACPO rule out the deployment of the 24 currently lined up for Basra.

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