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SECRETARY OF STATE

MO 6/17/15H

18 February 2003

PJHQ-Dep Hd Pol/Ops(ME)

Copy to:

PS/Minister(AF)

PSO/CDS

PS/PUS

MA/DCDS(C)

Policy Director

ACDS(Ops)

DG Op Pol

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PJHQ-DCJO(Ops)

Hd Sec(Iraq)

D News

DOMA

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PJHQ-Civ Sec

ENCL No. 144

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Final Disposal 40/1/0

Handwritten initials: J. 2/2

IRAQ: UK CONTRIBUTION TO SENSITIVE SITE EXPLOITATION

1. Thank you for your minute (D/PJHQ/10/5335) of 17 January 2003 on planned UK contributions to future Sensitive Site Exploitation (SSE) operations in Iraq.
2. The Secretary of State has noted the details of the planned UK contribution to SSE operations and has approved the deployment of 74 personnel to participate in coalition mission rehearsal training in Kuwait. Further Ministerial approval should be sought for the participation of any additional personnel.
3. Mr Hoon is aware that planning of SSE operations is still at an early stage. He would therefore welcome a further advice following the mission rehearsal on the proposed conduct of SSE operations. This should include: the operational management of the specialists within the teams, including those from other agencies; "impartiality mechanisms", including early UNMOVIC and IAEA involvement; and evidence handling procedures. In informing the US of our participation in the rehearsal, please reiterate to the US our concerns on impartiality and UNMOVIC/IAEA (which the Secretary of State and CDS raised with the DoD when in Washington last week).
4. A couple of points on handling. First, significant deployments of UK personnel should be put to Ministers for approval (not simply to note) and should contain all relevant detail (eg the identity of the units and facilities from which they are drawn). Secondly, while we recognise the need for maximum flexibility and minimum bureaucracy in fast-moving situations, submissions

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should be forwarded in good time for Ministers to give them proper consideration.

[original signed]

M J WILLIAMS

Cdr RN

APS/Secretary of State

OWOB205

CHOTS: SOFS-Private Office
SOFS-Private Office-S

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