

To: Home Office

From: Paul Kernaghan, ACPO International Affairs Portfolio

Copy: Head of IPU, FCO

Subject: Potential UK Civil Police Involvement in Iraq

Our telecon on 14/4/03 and your email [14/4/03] refer.

I am grateful for your background briefing and felt it would be appropriate, now that I am back in force, to formally set out my thoughts in response to that input.

ACPO and I are very keen to play a full and appropriate part in supporting the UK's contribution to liberating the people of Iraq.

The form of assistance we can provide depends on the mission envisaged and crucially clear political direction. I feel the following strategic questions require answering before we move to more detailed staff planning.

1. What use, if any, do the coalition powers envisage making of the existing Iraqi security forces?

* What is the existing structure of internal security forces in Iraq? - I assume the FCO will have a clear picture of the police system etc.

* If the existing force[s] are to be utilised, will they undergo a 'de-nazification' type process or will a more 'pragmatic' approach be adopted?

2. What legal system, if any, is currently being applied by the coalition forces? - this is a crucial issue for all police officers, we need to know the legal basis for any executive action.

I appreciate that things are at a very early stage in Iraq but I trust the following progressive menu sets out stages and allied potential UK police missions.

1. Currently military forces are seeking to establish order on the streets - would a UK police presence on the ground contribute anything? Officers deployed on the streets would have to be armed and in the absence of comprehensive interpretation/translation facilities [language assistants] would not be able to enhance interaction with the local population. In practice would UK officers add value to the coalition military forces deployed? However, if such support was provided we might well be able to play a positive role particularly as models for local personnel.

There might, even now, be a role for a police advisor with the UK's Joint Force Commander in theatre. However, would they provide a significantly enhanced service from one provided by a senior RMP officer? As the transition from combat operations to civil administration gathers pace, I suggest the balance also favours a move from RMP to civil police advice and expertise.

2 Once plans are agreed for an interim administration and the creation of a justice structure there might be a role for a UK input. We could staff an element of that transitional administration in terms of training and consultancy.

3. If a new Iraqi regime wanted to create a policing system which reflected best practice in terms of professionalism and respect for human rights, the UK could act as a major source of training and advice.

I reiterate the desire of ACPO to be helpful but we need strategic direction as opposed to creating a mission in search of strategic direction. As a token of our commitment I would personally be willing to undertake a short visit to Iraq to consult with appropriate coalition commanders/administrators and assess the input the UK could make. However, having made that offer I will leave it with you to decide whether or not you wish to take it up. In terms of nominating a full time liaison officer, I feel further information is required in order to properly nominate a qualified serving or retired officer.

Finally, turning to some relevant administrative and domestic issues. Any deployment which was **not** by way of a secondment to an international organisation would require separate authorisation from our established systems for FRY etc. A key priority of ACPO would be to ensure that any officers deployed were properly protected in terms of conditions of service. If Iraq is a priority, is it envisaged that any assistance element would potentially be drawn from every part of the UK?

I stand ready to provide a rapid response to any queries you or the Home Secretary might have.

Regards,

Paul Kernaghan
Chief Constable
ACPO International Affairs Portfolio