

Witness statement to the Iraq Inquiry
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Deputy Commander of the ISG from early Jan 2004 to 29 Mar 2004

My role and function at the ISG

I had the following functions:

- Deputy to Maj Gen Keith Dayton. I had no specific duties other than to deputise for Gen Dayton in his absence. While this was not a frequent occurrence, he was away from the ISG on a number of occasions and regularly if not frequently was unable to attend the many routine conference calls with CENTCOM and Washington. I was within his circle of close advisers which comprised his Chief of Staff and senior CIA members. In the gap between Kay and Duelfer, these advisers tended to include the heads of all the cells. Once Duelfer had arrived, Dayton's inner team was Duelfer, the Chief of Staff and me. It is necessary to draw a distinction between the military chain and the [REDACTED] – whereas I was a key player in the military chain, [REDACTED].
- Senior UK representative in the ISG. In this capacity I was responsible for planning and managing the UK resources in the ISG. This involved liaison with PJHQ for the deployment of military staff, and DIS for civilian staff. Once deployed within the ISG, many UK staff were employed within the predominantly US lead management chains within the ISG. I retained access to all UK staff such that I could monitor their performance and advise them when issues of national sensitivity (which mostly involved access to classified information) arose. I was also the link back to DIS and [REDACTED] HQs in UK and Iraq.

ISG Structure, Resources and Priorities

The ISG Structure and Resources are set out in the DIS Summary. While the totals and the skills mix changed a little, the UK presence was around 50 for my tour.

The Military component included:

- the command element (my Staff Officer, and the leadership of the Basra outpost)
- interpreters
- debriefers (sometimes referred to as interrogators) who were employed debriefing the High Value Detainees
- Mobile Collection Team (MCT) commanders who led teams of between 20 and 40 US soldiers escorting analysts on site visits
- communicators, maintaining my links to UK
- admin and escort staff

The civilian component consisted of intelligence analysts [REDACTED] augmented by some staff with experience of earlier UN monitoring missions in Iraq and others with particular technical expertise.

The top priority for the ISG was the comprehensive assessment of Iraqi WMD programmes. The Counter Terrorism (CT) and Capt Speicher missions were of lower priority. The Captain Speicher programme absorbed no UK assets. The CT programme inevitably became part of mainstream business as the security situation worsened leading to a reduction in the freedom of the ISG to conduct site visits and interviews, and as it became a clear possibility that insurgents might hold the key to the WMD question. As a result UK assets were involved in the CT mission.

Priorities for the WMD search were the responsibility of the Special Advisor. During my tour, the major issue was the resignation of Kay and the appointment of Duelfer as Special Advisor. In the period between, Dayton provided the necessary direction, consulting with cell leaders and with Washington. I provided UK input to Dayton and, once he was in theatre, Duelfer on London's priorities.

ISG Decision Making

Context for decision making

Accountability for the ISG was split:

- for the security of the ISG and its staff and the Captain Speicher and CT missions – ISG Commander (Maj Gen Dayton) and through to Comd CENTCOM
- for the conduct of the WMD Mission – Special Adviser and through to Washington

The UK and AUS input was provided by me as Deputy Commander and an AUS Lieutenant Colonel respectively. My lines of accountability were split along similar lines to the top level ISG accountability:

- for the security of UK ISG members – to PJHQ
- for input to WMD and CT Mission – to DIS

Within the Iraq theatre, Maj Gen Dayton had close liaison with the US military command, and I had similar relations with the Senior British Military Representative (Iraq) (SBMR(I)).

The three missions were run on a conventional intelligence operations method:

- 'analysts' would define an information need
- 'collectors' would seek to meet the need
- the product of the collection operation is reviewed by the analysts
- analysts identify further information needs
- ... the cycle continues

Mechanics of decision making

At the highest level, Comd ISG reported into Comd CENTCOM in routine conference calls and raised specific issues of a purely military nature directly with his staff. I attended these, and represented Comd ISG in his absence. Similarly the Special Adviser held a weekly conference call with Washington, attended by Comd ISG and me. There were, clearly, one to one discussions between Comd ISG and CENTCOM and Special Adviser and Washington in which I did not participate. I held weekly

calls with DIS to report progress and discuss future priorities and submitted routine reports to PJHQ and DIS, which were shared with SBMR(I).

Managing the missions. Within the ISG, the analyst cells maintained a prioritised list of information needs under the direction of the Special Adviser, who allocated overall priorities. These were matched to the available collection assets, some of which were under the control of Comd ISG and others under separate control arrangements. This resulted in a rolling operational plan, produced by the operations cell. This plan was reviewed up to twice weekly within the ISG in a meeting chaired jointly by Comd ISG (or me in his absence) and the Special Adviser. I attended all these meetings to represent the UK interest, and was consulted in the preparation of the plan prior to its presentation. For major or high risk operations, separate review meetings would be held attended to ensure the risk/benefit balance was appropriate.

Managing the ISG. The high level reporting mechanisms and the routine ISG mission planning processes, which were primarily focussed on the ISG missions, were also used as the fora for discussions and decisions on ISG internal policy and resourcing.

Formulating ISG opinion. The role of the ISG was to formulate opinions on its various missions. The processes for each mission were different:

- On WMD. This process was the responsibility of the Special Adviser. After the departure of Kay and prior to the arrival of Duelfer, this responsibility fell to Dayton who, by virtue of the accountabilities set out above, [REDACTED]. He worked in close consultation with the cell leaders to forge a consensus. During this period there was no formal requirement to report, so this difficulty was not a major issue externally, but the lack of the Special Adviser and the political and media discussion [REDACTED] [REDACTED] unsettled the operation of the ISG. Once Duelfer arrived, he took control of the process. In formulating his Status Report, he consulted with cell leaders and shared his drafts under strict control, but reasonably widely, within the ISG including with Dayton and me. It was also shared and discussed in conference calls with Washington, London and Canberra. Duelfer reserved his right to have the last word on any WMD conclusion. I spent a good deal of time with Duelfer on how the process of opinion formulation might work – and assisted him in the mechanics of consultation, in particular on the issue of the alleged mobile BW production facility.
- On Speicher. The responsibility was with Dayton. There was a dedicated cell which operated outside other ISG activity. There was no UK involvement.
- On CT. The CT mission was in support of overall coalition operations and no definitive ISG view was required.

The UK contribution to the ISG

The UK contribution is described in outline in the DIS summary and I have expanded how the UK played its part in the paragraphs above. The US was the predominant partner – it was difficult to quantify the scale of the whole operation because the boundary between security troops and dedicated ISG assets was blurred but I recollect figures of in excess of 1200 people for the whole operation with the UK providing

about 50 and AUS [REDACTED]. As far as I am aware the full costs of infrastructure, equipment and logistic support for all ISG operations except for COB Basrah fell to the US. The UK committed resources were the infrastructure logistics and equipment for COB Basrah, communications, admin and personal security for UK personnel in Baghdad, and the staff set out below. Our approach to staff was to meet specific skills which were not readily available from US resources:

- Interpreters. There was a huge need for interpreters at the time for all coalition operation. On occasions, ISG operations were constrained by the lack of them. The UK had a commitment which I recall we struggled sometimes to meet.
- Debriefers. There was a [REDACTED] shortage of debriefers. The UK gave a high priority to meeting our commitment which I recall was proportionately higher than the overall average for the UK commitment to the ISG. Most of these were mobilised TA soldiers. They acquitted themselves very well, but the UK 6 month tour policy limited their effectiveness to a degree.
- Analysts. DIS provided civilian analysts to work within most of the cells. The UK had a commitment to provide a number and generally this was met. There was a routine turn over of US and UK staff within the cells and so the specific skill sets required changed over time. The UK sought to match the specific skill required to balance the cells, normally satisfactorily. The UK analysts were a combination of DIS and other [REDACTED] staff, and external appointees employed for particular skills and experience including a former UNSCOM inspector and a scientist with particular knowledge of commercial fermentation methods.
- Junior military officers as MCT commanders. A significant number of collection operations were undertaken in areas where obvious military activity would have attracted unwelcome attention and would require overt security operations beyond the resources of the ISG and might have compromised the collection operation. In these cases the ISG considered and frequently employed 'low-profile' operations [REDACTED]. With recent experience of urban CT operations, the UK was well placed to provide junior officers to lead these teams.