

The handover with Major Royce and role of BGIRO

15. After arriving in Iraq in the early hours of 23rd August 2003 I met Major Royce at BG Main, this was at about 0900hrs. I had known Major Royce for a number of years, we had served together in Bosnia and Northern Ireland where we were the officers on duty in Omagh on the day of the large scale bombing on the 15th August 1998.

16. Shortly after our initial meeting we were outside the HQ when we heard shots fired and an explosion of an ambush just outside our camp. Our handover was disrupted by this as it was quickly apparent that there had been UK fatalities in the incident and Major Royce was involved in the follow up activity in the Ops Room. This was the first incident of its kind in Basra namely a close quarter attack using small arms and grenades against UK forces, which resulted in the death of 3 members of the RMP.

17. After an initial meeting with Major Royce we travelled up to Brigade later that evening to receive instruction on a lift operation that would be conducted in the early hours of the morning (24th August) I believe arrangements were made for a Tactical Questioner to be on stand by. When the lift operation was triggered I accompanied Major Royce to the TDF at about 2am on the morning of 24th August 2003 so he could show me his routine with regards to the role of BGIRO.

18. There were 2 detainees in the TDF they had first field dressings (cotton and gauze based dressings used to wrap around wounds) over their eyes, they were put into basic stress positions, one was standing with his arms straight out, bound and blindfolded and the other was crouched on the floor with no support for his back, crouched in a squatting position. There were also orders being given by the Company Sergeant Major, WOII Darren Leigh MC (now deceased) that the 'stress' positions should be held for 15 minutes on and then 15 minutes off. My understanding from Major Royce was that this practice described above was known as 'conditioning' and had been previously approved by the chain of command. Major Royce also showed me