

users are able to exploit the power of the infrastructure in delivering their outputs, both in the fixed and in the deployed environment.

Those civilians employed in support roles for the current infrastructure will be transferred to the Delivery Partner (DP) under TUPE arrangements once the DP takes control of the management of the system that they support. It is expected that there will be some exceptions to this in order to provide support for systems that have operational or specialist constraints and require the retention of in house support staff. There will also be those who need to be retained to form the core of the Intelligent Customer Function (ICF). The MOD will be retaining Military Service Providers (MSPs) to support the infrastructure when it is deployed for military operations.

Fire Study 2000

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans he has to begin the implementation of Fire Study 2000; and if he will make a statement. [179533]

Mr. Ingram: The future organisation of the Defence Fire Services is dependent upon the result of the Airfield Support Services Project (ASSP) which is examining the most cost effective way of delivering airfield support and wider fire services without compromising operational capability or safety. In the meantime, but without prejudice to the final outcome of ASSP, we are considering whether there is benefit in proceeding with the implementation of Fire Study 2000 separately. However, at present no decision on this matter has been made.

Fisheries

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many fisheries protection vessels are in operation; and where they operate. [180411]

Mr. Ingram: The RN Fishery Protection Squadron currently has three River Class patrol vessels and three Hunt Class MCMVs allocated to Fishery Protection duty, although the number of ships actually on patrol at any given time will depend on the level of fishing activity. Other RN ships can also be called upon to carry out Fishery Protection duties if so required.

The RN Fishery Protection Squadron patrols the areas within the British Fishery Limits around the English, Welsh, Northern Ireland, Isle of Man and Channel Island coasts. The RN also inspects British fishing vessels in international waters. The Scottish Fishery Protection Agency is responsible for patrolling the waters off the Scottish coast.

Gaul

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what investigation has been made into the claim by former Chief Petty Officer Derek Barron regarding the sinking of the fishing vessel The Gaul in the Barents Sea in 1974. [179334]

Mr. Ingram: Investigation of Mr. Barron's claim is a matter for the Formal Inquiry into the sinking of the Gaul, which is being conducted by the Wreck

Commissioner. The Ministry of Defence is committed to giving every assistance to the Inquiry on this and on all other matters.

Gibraltar Regiment

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the future of the Gibraltar Regiment. [173373]

Mr. Ingram: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave on 5 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1528W, to the hon. Member for Romford (Mr. Rosindell).

Government Expenditure Plans

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when the Government's expenditure plans 2004-05 to 2005-06 will be published. [180561]

Mr. Ingram: We expect to publish the Government's Expenditure Plans for the Ministry of Defence 2004-05 to 2005-06 before the summer recess.

Gulf War Syndrome

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make it his policy to assist the Royal British Legion with the independent inquiry into Gulf War Syndrome. [179759]

Mr. Caplin: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 22 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 1297W, to the hon. Member for North Cornwall (Mr. Tyler).

Interrogation Techniques

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he was first informed that UK forces in Iraq were practising the banned interrogation technique of hooding prisoners; if he will list the regiments in which the practice was identified; and on what date and on whose authority an order was issued to cease the practice. [174552]

Mr. Ingram: We are not aware of any incidents in which United Kingdom interrogators are alleged to have used hooding as an interrogation technique.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what account he took of (a) the judgment of the European Court of Human Rights in *Ireland v. United Kingdom* to outlaw the use of the five techniques of interrogation found to be in breach of Article 3 of the European Convention and (b) the response of the then Government to that judgment in setting the parameters for conduct by British forces in Iraq in respect of individuals held. [179056]

Mr. Ingram [holding answer 15 June 2004]: I refer the hon. Member to my answer of 26 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1693W, to my hon. Friend the Member for Hull, North (Mr. McNamara). This remains the Government position. It is made clear to all armed forces personnel undergoing training in interrogation that the five techniques, hooding, wall standing, sleep deprivation, food deprivation, and white noise, are in all circumstances unacceptable as methods of interrogation.

BACKGROUND NOTE

Norman Baker is the Liberal Democrat spokesman for the environment. He lists an interest in civil liberties and oppressed minority races which may be the reason for his question.

This question has clearly been asked in the context of previous interest in the 1972 "Heath ruling" and hooding. It would appear to perpetuate the misunderstanding between hooding as an interrogation technique, which we do not ever countenance, and as a necessary measure during initial detention and transit of detainees which the UK believes is acceptable within the terms of the Geneva Conventions if there is a strong military reason for doing so.

Minister (AF) answered a question from Kevin McNamara MP PQ 2530P on 26 May as follows: [Hansard Column 1693W]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps were taken following the judgement of the European Court of Human Rights in Ireland v United Kingdom (1978) to outlaw the use of the five techniques of interrogation found to be in breach of Article 3 of the European Convention.

In 1978 the Government's presentation to the European Court of Human Rights set out that the Prime Minister had declared in March 1972 that "the techniques ... will not be used in future as an aid to interrogation" [Official Record 2 March 1972 Col 743-744]; and that directives expressly prohibiting the use of the techniques for interrogation, whether singly or in combination, had been issued in April 1972. The Government also gave the Court an unqualified undertaking that the techniques of hooding, wall standing, sleep deprivation, food deprivation, and white noise would not in any circumstances be reintroduced as an aid to interrogation.

Given that the necessary directives had been issued in April 1972, no further steps were deemed necessary following the Court's judgement.

This remains the case. Armed Forces personnel involved in interrogation attend the five day Interrogators course run by the Joint Service Intelligence Organisation (JSIO) at DISC Chicksands. This makes clear that a number of techniques, including the five referred to in the question, are wholly unacceptable as an interrogation method. They are both counter productive and illegal.

As this doctrine is fundamental to all interrogator training there was no requirement to issue a specific directive to set parameters for troops in Iraq.

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I am unable to provide resource provision below Top Level Budget. The setting of budgets below this level is for internal management control purposes only as lower-level budgets may be redistributed over the financial year to take account of in-year cost pressures or programme changes.

Interrogation

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what steps were taken following the judgment of the European Court of Human Rights in *Ireland v. United Kingdom* (1978) to outlaw the use of the five techniques of interrogation found to be in breach of Article 3 of the European Convention. [174550]

Mr. Ingram: In 1978 the Government's presentation to the European Court of Human Rights set out that the then Prime Minister had declared on 2 March 1972, *Official Report*, columns 743–44, that "the techniques . . . will not be used in future as an aid to interrogation" and that directives expressly prohibiting the use of the techniques for interrogation, whether singly or in combination, had been issued in April 1972. The Government also gave the Court an unqualified undertaking that the techniques of hooding, wall standing, sleep deprivation, food deprivation, and white noise would not in any circumstances be reintroduced as an aid to interrogation.

Given that the necessary directives had been issued in April 1972, no further steps were deemed necessary following the Court's judgment.

Iraq

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what role was played by the (a) SAS and (b) SBS in restoring stability to Fallujah. [175048]

Mr. Ingram: I am withholding details under Exemption 1 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his answer of 17 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 663W, on Iraq, if he will give the cause of death entered on the death certificates of the 16 individuals whose deaths involved alleged ill treatment by members of UK armed forces. [175750]

Mr. Ingram [holding answer 25 May 2004]: Of the 16 cases involving alleged ill treatment of Iraqi civilians by United Kingdom armed forces, 10 resulted in the death of a civilian. As the cases are still under investigation, it would not be appropriate for me to comment further.

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the discovery of a shell filled with sarin nerve agent in Iraq by United States forces. [175200]

Mr. Ingram: On 15 May 2004, an improvised explosive device, discovered by United States forces, was found to be an artillery shell probably containing the nerve agent sarin. Two members of US forces suffered symptoms consistent with nerve agent poisoning and initial tests revealed the presence of sarin. Additional testing will now be performed outside Iraq.

It is not clear whether the maker of the device knew that it contained nerve agent or whether the shell was being used for its explosive properties.

Marchwood Military Port

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the impact on Marchwood Military Port of the decision to reject the proposed new container terminal at Dibden Bay. [175060]

Mr. Ingram: The Sea Mounting Centre, Marchwood Military Port (MMP) is unaffected by the decision to reject the proposed new container terminal at Dibden Bay. It will continue to undertake its essential role in the operational deployment of the Joint Rapid Reaction Force (JRRF) as well as the regular and more routine movements of ammunition.

The Ministry of Defence will continue to consult with Associated British Ports (ABP) and evaluate any future proposals for the development of the Dibden Bay site.

Merlin Helicopters

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many Royal Navy Merlin helicopters have been involved in accidents which were (a) insufficient and (b) sufficient to put them out of service. [174865]

Mr. Ingram: Merlin helicopters have been involved in two accidents, both of which were sufficient to put the aircraft out of service. Merlin flights have been halted pending further investigations.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the lessons learned from the accident investigations and other inquiries into (a) operational failures, (b) accidents and (c) equipment malfunctions of the Royal Navy Merlin helicopter. [174866]

Mr. Ingram: Following the Merlin accident at RNAS Culdrose on 30 March 2004, a Service Board of Inquiry and a technical investigation by the Royal Navy Flight Safety and Air Accident Investigation Centre have been commissioned. Neither has yet reported. The Military Air Accident Summary for the Merlin crash near the Kyle of Lochalsh on 29 October 2000 was placed in the Library of the House in June 2002.

Non-human Primates

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his answer of 13 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 539W, on experiments on non-human primates, if he will list the primate type and number of primates used in each experiment; when each experiment was conducted; and what was done with the primates on the completion of each experiment. [175145]

Mr. Ingram: In 2001, Dstl Porton Down used eight Rhesus Macques to help assess the effects and significance of human exposure to nerve agents.