

Statement made on behalf of: The Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis
Witness: Neil Hutchison
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THE PITCHFORD INQUIRY INTO UNDERCOVER POLICING

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I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are true

Signed.....

Dated.....

1. I am a Detective Superintendent leading the MPS Public Inquiry team. I make this statement to explain the operational and organisational arrangements for "Operation Motion", a team working within the wider Assistant Commissioner's Public Inquiry Team (AC-PIT). This statement contains sensitive information and is not in its

current form for disclosure beyond the UCPI. I make it in support of the applications for anonymity by two Operation Motion Officers, known as Karachi and Jaipur.

2. This statement is arranged as follows:
 - a. Operation Motion (outline of the Operation, its start, arrangement within PIT, and mission statement).
 - b. Operation Motion officers (the roles of the officers and the profile).
 - c. Challenges and benefits in respect of making and maintaining a relationship with SDS officers.
 - d. Other risk management matters
 - e. Whether other organisational arrangements would be effective

Operation Motion in Outline

3. Operation Motion comprises two officers who are responsible for risk management for former Special Demonstration Squad (SDS) officers and MPS officers who were deployed in roles linked to undercover operations by the National Public Order Intelligence Unit. Following public disclosure of information relating to operations by these units, for example media articles, risk assessments and risk management plans were completed for a number of officers to consider the potential risks should they be publicly identified/exposed. Operation Motion was introduced in late 2013, prior to the announcement of the Undercover Policing Public Inquiry (UCPI) in March 2014 for the purposes of monitoring risks, reviewing risk plans and providing ongoing welfare support. In 2013 and 2014 the role of providing support to officers through Op Motion was not a full time responsibility and was managed by a small number of officers from the National Domestic Extremism and Disorder Intelligence Unit (NDEDIU). In late 2014 a decision was made that responsibility for Op Motion should transfer to AC-PIT and that full time staff should be appointed to the role. The then head of AC-PIT was Detective Chief Superintendent (DCS) Jeremy Burton. DCS Burton arranged formal handover of Op Motion responsibilities from NDEDIU and arranged secondment of two officers from SO15 Counter Terrorist Command to form a full time Op Motion team. These officers commenced this duty in January 2015 and have been fully employed on Op Motion since under my direct line management. I do

not use these officers for other AC-PIT duties such as reviewing and processing evidential material for disclosure to the UCPI. The reasons behind the decision to create this dedicated Op Motion team under AC-PIT include:

- Duty of care on MPS in relation to serving and former officers
- Increasing efforts by a range of groups and individuals to gather, analyse and publicise information in order to identify officers who had served undercover on SDS or NPOIU
- Anticipation of further information being published on internet or in media which could increase risk of exposure of officers
- The welfare impact on officers of the decision to hold a Public Inquiry into undercover policing
- The obligation on the MPS to develop and maintain up to date risk assessments to ensure full disclosure to the UCPI of information relevant to applications for restriction orders
- The potential for serving and retired officers to be required to give evidence to the UCPI in due course
- The obligation on the MPS to develop and maintain regular contact with serving and retired officers in order to enable effective responses to the above issues

Operation Motion officers' role and profile

4. Operation Motion exists primarily for the benefit of all officers who have served in undercover roles on SDS or NPOIU and officers who have served in directly linked roles, such as Cover officers, where appropriate. In 2013 and 2014 this support was largely provided to officers who were still serving. These officers had been informed of the existence of Op Motion and were aware of the available support network. Although the majority were engaged with Op Motion to some extent the level of engagement and support provided varied.
5. In 2013/14 the level of contact with retired officers was minimal. In January 2015 there was no comprehensive list in existence of all officers who had served undercover on these two units and information that was available did not always include up to date contact details. Retired officers in receipt of a pension are obliged to provide the MPS with an address for pension purposes but are not obliged to

reside there at all times or provide other contact details such as telephone or e mail. There is no obligation on any officer, serving or retired, to engage with Op Motion.

6. Since January 2015 the capacity and role of Op Motion has expanded hugely. A primary task has been to make contact with retired officers to inform them of Op Motion and enable future communications. Op Motion has now achieved this with the large majority of MPS officers known to have worked undercover in these units and with a number who held other operational roles. The difficulties of achieving this should not be underestimated, particularly in relation to officers who served in the late 1960s and 1970s. Officers who worked on these units operated in a culture of intense secrecy and often remain highly conscious of their personal security and professional obligation not to discuss the work they did either undercover or within wider Special Branch. There remain a small number of identified officers with whom contact has still to be made.
7. A further primary task has been to ensure the completion of comprehensive risk assessments for officers. Following a review of existing risk assessments completed from 2011 onwards I tasked Op Motion to develop a new risk assessment process designed for the unique circumstances in relation to these serving and retired officers and for subsequent use in any application the MPS may seek to make to the UCPI for restriction orders in relation to material that could expose the officers' identities. Risk assessments are reviewed if new material is published in the media or by groups seeking to identify undercover officers which may lead to exposure of an officer's identity.
8. On the basis of risk assessments decisions are made as to whether officers require personal security reviews and additional security measures. A further role of Op Motion is to conduct such reviews and arrange additional measures. The completion of comprehensive risk assessments involved detailed debriefing of the officers' deployments. Given that the average deployment length is five years this is a very lengthy process.
9. In addition, Op Motion seek to identify welfare needs such as mental health, physical health, knowledge of their previous role among family and friends and the impact

their deployment undercover had, and in some cases continues to have, on them and their family. These debriefs are therefore often highly intrusive and personal and require Op Motion to establish and maintain a relationship of trust and empathy. This is an additional factor in maintaining the separation between Op Motion and the rest of the AC-PIT team and Operation Herne. Op Motion is housed separately from the AC-PIT unit, has limited contact with AC-PIT officers other than myself and retains material in its own secure information system only accessible by the two Op Motion officers.

Required profile for officers to be seconded to Op Motion from SO15

10. The Operation Motion officers have a unique skill set that only applies to a handful of officers throughout the MPS. This is a unique profile as there are virtually no officers remaining in the MPS who served in Special Branch as long ago as the mid 1990s, so their skills and experience are not replaceable. Neither will it be an easy job to find any additional appropriately skilled officers to join Operation Motion to either increase capacity or replace those in the role. The two Operation Motion officers were specially selected to undertake the role and were abstracted from their roles in SO15 Counter terrorism command in January 2015 on the basis of the following requirements:

- Supervisory officer i.e. Detective Inspector or Detective Sergeant
- Background in covert, intelligence led policing
- Access to and knowledge of the Counter Terrorism Command (SO15)
- Access to SO15 systems and databases
- To hold Developed Vetting (DV) status
- Previous experience in Special Branch (SO12) and knowledge of Special Branch and its structure
- Not to have previously served on the SDS in any capacity
- [REDACTED]
- Broad knowledge of the Domestic Extremist threat picture over the previous two decades
- Some knowledge of the SDS
- Some knowledge of undercover policing

- Good communication skills and credibility to liaise with former SDS officers
- Due to their service and experience in Special Branch, a knowledge of a wide range of officers who had previously served on the SDS
- Due to their service and experience in Special Branch, to be known by a wide range of officers who had previously served on SDS.

11. A significant part of the Operation Motion role is gaining a rapport and trust with the former SDS officers and it must be emphasised how important a factor previous Special Branch experience is in gaining traction with this group. This is particularly the case with those officers who have long retired and have no personal knowledge of the officers. It should also be noted that former officers when contacted by Operation Motion officers often make 'due diligence' checks with colleagues so their credibility amongst the group is of paramount importance.

12. A number of the officers engaged by Op Motion assert that they have suffered psychiatric damage as a consequence of their deployments. This is apparent from a number of cases of ill health retirement and civil claims against the MPS alleging breach of the employer's duty of care. The majority of these officers have expressed considerable hostility to the MPS and by extension any other public body that was involved with the SDS. The rapport and enhanced welfare provided by Op Motion since January 2015 has assisted several former SDS officers suffering from bad psychological states, who had not previously engaged with available support processes. I believe that the enhanced support they have received has assisted some officers to reconcile their previous negative experiences and views to some extent. The improved engagement and more regular communication has enabled the MPS to advise serving and retired officers in relation to the progress of the UCPI and to explain the legislation and process governing Public Inquiries in general. The work undertaken by Op Motion to date will benefit the UCPI in the following ways:

- By improving the MPS' and by extension the UCPI's ability to make contact with serving and retired officers
- By providing detailed risk assessments to enable the UCPI to make fully informed decision on applications for restriction orders
- By facilitating the MPS Police and Legal team to make contact with witness and prepare witness statements for the UCPI

- To assist serving and retired officers through the potentially stressful experience of providing evidence to the UCPI
- By providing an immediate contingency response to manage any risk that may emerge to officers' safety and welfare through their identity being revealed, either intentionally or inadvertently, during the course of the UCPI
- To assist in managing the potential impact to officers' families should their identities be revealed, either intentionally or inadvertently, during the course of the UCPI.

Challenges in respect of making contact and developing trust with SDS officers.

13. Officers who have worked on the SDS vary in their perceptions of MPS and attitudes in relation to the UCPI. However, all the officers were trained in the importance of developing and maintaining a covert identity and went to great lengths to do so. There was a very strong unit emphasis on secrecy that led to officers being isolated from the wider organisation and highly secretive about their role both during their service in the SDS and afterward. This secrecy was partly to protect their personal safety but also to protect the methodology and effectiveness of the unit and wider undercover technique. The role and existence of the SDS was kept from the wider MPS, and was not necessarily known even by officers within Special Branch.
14. It is difficult for many of these officers to comprehend the need to now talk openly about their operations to Op Motion. It is further difficult for them to understand how a Public Inquiry into covert national security issues can function. Such officers have long been under the impression that anonymity for UCOs was in effect such an established legal, public interest and national security position that a court would be highly unlikely to ever consider overturning it and that the MPS would always seek to protect anonymity. A number of officers are highly stressed at the possibility of having to give evidence publicly and this is exacerbated by the feeling that this is contrary to assurances and expectations they held.
15. It is important for officers attached to Op Motion to have sufficient understanding of this expectation, the overall culture of secrecy and the reasons for such measures in order to appreciate the position of ex-SDS colleagues and empathise with their

concerns. It is further important that ex-SDS officers have trust in Op Motion officers and previous service on Special Branch assists with building that trust. Op Motion officers need to be sufficiently aware of tradecraft and security principles to gain the trust of ex-SDS officers that they are capable of treating sensitive information appropriately and not inadvertently exposing them. Ex-SDS officers are intimately aware of tradecraft and security principles and it is therefore difficult to obtain and maintain their trust. The current Op Motion team has been very successful in developing trust due to their background, knowledge of the SDS and Special Branch roles and context. Replacing them at this stage of the UCPI would be highly detrimental to this trust.

16. As one example, pre-Operation Motion attempts at contact by the MPS had been rejected by N16 (a former SDS officer) who had been alienated by [REDACTED] [gist: N16's] perceived treatment by Operation Herne and the MPS in general. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] However, during the early stages of 2016, contact was gradually established by Operation Motion officers, through an intermediary, and this eventually resulted in a meeting that assisted in the compilation of an accurate and more detailed risk assessment. In my view this could only have been achieved through the personal intervention of the individual Operation Motion officers who were known to N16. Moreover, a line of communication has now been established and N16 has been reassured that the MPS has a genuine concern for [REDACTED] [gist: N16's] welfare and safety. N16 is a Core Participant and is likely to be a key witness in the Public Inquiry.

17. As a further example, N104 (a former SDS officer) had become so demoralised by the nature and length of an Operation Herne investigation that [REDACTED] [gist: N104] had become hostile to the MPS, and in particular its management. However, through the careful building of a rapport and their previous relationship with N104, Operation Motion officers gradually established a degree of confidence in the support process.

[REDACTED] Operation Motion officers have since maintained weekly and at sometimes daily contact with N104, and have visited N104 on a regular basis. This unique assistance, [REDACTED]

████████████████████ This could only have been achieved by officers with an in depth knowledge of the overall situation and a personal knowledge of the officer ████████. N104 is a Core Participant and is likely to be a key witness in the Public Inquiry.

Other aspects of Operation Motion's role

18. Op Motion is required to visit officers home addresses to conduct security assessments and on occasion risk assessment debriefs for less mobile officers some of whom are elderly or suffer from ill health. Officers may be less inclined to accept some visits from staff whose identities have been promulgated as having a role where they are in regular contact with ex-SDS officers. This would hamper Op Motions ability to conduct security assessments and home visits.
19. Op Motion has been involved in arranging OH support/psychological counselling and briefing line management on issues affecting serving officers. They are trusted by officers to share personal and intimate information about their private lives to an extent that is unlikely to be replicable.

Ongoing use for Operation Motion Officers

20. The UCPI may benefit from the Operation Motion officers' ability to initiate contact with retired officers. For some officers there is more trust in Op Motion than in the wider MPS, Op Herne or the UCPI.
21. The UCPI is very likely to wish to call ex-SDS officers as witnesses. Op Motion may be able to facilitate communication with retired personnel. The UCPI should not underestimate the extent to which such officers will be suspicious of the UCPI's intent or ability to protect their identities even if restriction orders are granted. This suspicion was exacerbated by an earlier security breach where the UCPI circulated personal email details. I believe it may be a challenge to arrange contact between the UCPI and some officers. Officers are obliged to provide home addresses to the

MPS for pension purposes but some of these are overseas, and officers are not obliged to permanently remain in their home addresses.

Why is anonymity necessary for officers carry out the Motion role?

22. Op Motion officers use their real names when in contact with SDS officers, as use of a false name would seriously damage trust and rapport, and is unnecessary from a security perspective.
23. This means, however, that if exposed there is no protective measure around them. This would be very apparent to ex-SDS or NPOIU staff, some of whom closely monitor the UCPI website and media coverage of UCPI related issues.
24. In some ways the role carried out by Operation Motion officers is similar to the tradecraft employed by CHIS handlers and Cover Officers for Undercover Officers (UCOs). The revelation of CHIS handlers and UCO Cover Officer identities could seriously affect both their safety, and the safety of those they are trying to protect. As importantly, it would also have a detrimental effect on their operational effectiveness to carry out their primary functions of risk management and welfare.
25. CHIS handlers are trained to avoid providing sources with their true identity. Even in police circles CHIS handlers' identities are routinely protected, so initial contact with Borough Dedicated Source Unit (DSU) officers is carried out through a generic mailbox or through an on call phone without disclosing true identities. Similarly they are not required to wear a name badge while on duty. Accordingly, they ordinarily only provide CHIS with a first name, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] This is to avoid their identity becoming known in criminal circles. On the SO15 Dedicated Source Unit meetings are arranged in discrete locations [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. SO15 CHIS handlers are given [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. This is to prevent their real identities becoming known by CHIS and then being compromised. Should a CHIS handler's true identity become known in

criminal or terrorist/extremist circles, it is likely that their removal from the unit would be considered. This would become more likely should their photograph be in circulation. To reduce the risk of compromise, counter surveillance measures can be taken to all CHIS/UCO meetings, but these are time consuming and require extra staff. These can include only meeting CHIS or UCOs in police premises but this may then increase the CHIS' likelihood of exposure. Non police premises such as hotel suites can be used for CHIS meetings but the use of such premises requires

[REDACTED]
separate finance. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

26. Therefore there is a significant cost implication if all Op Motion's meetings with former UCOs are to be conducted away from police premises and former UCOs' home addresses, due to the Op Motion officers' identities being compromised.
27. I do not suggest that parties engaged in seeking to identify and expose undercover officers seek to do them physical harm. However, national media outlets and other groups have publicised pictures of individuals they believe to have worked undercover despite the risks that they may either be mistaken or that, if they are correct, that the UCO may have deployed in relation to groups which continue to pose real physical risk. It is possible that photographs or personal details of officers known to deploy routinely to meet with ex-UCOs could be promulgated either by media or other groups seeking to uncover the identities of ex-UCOs. The implications of this are that these officers could find their personal interactions both on and off duty subjected to scrutiny. For example, by being photographed and the picture of the person they are with circulated on the internet as a possible undercover officer. Should such an incident take place it would have a very severe impact on the confidence of ex-UCOs to engage with Op Motion in future.
28. Further enhancing security measures could lead to loss of confidence amongst the ex-UCOs that engagement with Operation Motion will not increase the risk of their identity being exposed. Former UCOs may form the view that the less they engage with Op Motion or, by extension the MPS or UCPI, the better the likelihood that their identity will not be inadvertently compromised or exposed. The potential implications

of this in reducing cooperation from key witnesses could seriously impact the progress of the UCPI.

Would other organisational arrangements be appropriate?

29. I have considered whether it is appropriate for officers responsible for providing welfare and risk management to also complete risk assessments as there is a potential conflict of interest which could undermine a neutral assessment. To counter this I have personally assessed risk assessments to ensure they are appropriate and I am aware that MPS Counsel also review them.

30. I have balanced the advantage in the risk assessment being completed by officers with intimate knowledge of the individuals and the nature of their deployments against the benefit of independence. I have found that this extensive background knowledge generates more accurate risk assessments which have always either maintained or reduced previously assessed risk levels and to date have never increased one.

31. The information gathered in debriefs for risk assessments is very similar to that gathered for welfare/security assessments so it would seem inefficient and unduly intrusive to expect officers to go through such an intimate debrief process twice.

32. I have considered having Op Motion provide material to other officers to write up the risk assessments but this strikes me as a false independence if the authors are effectively dependent on what is disclosed to them.

33. Furthermore I currently do not have sufficient resources on AC-PIT to assign additional officers to this task, even if I considered that other officers could fulfil this task.

How would the Motion identities be used?

[REDACTED] it indicates that activists and researchers are almost certainly conducting speculative open source research utilising keyword searches in the hope of tracing former or serving police officers with any links to undercover policing in the past or present. On this occasion, the link was first made by Twitter user Scumbly Blythe (@piombo) and then picked up by the URG.

Example 2 [REDACTED]

39. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

40. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

41. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

42. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[Redacted text block]

43. [Redacted text block]

44. [Redacted text block]

45. [Redacted text block]

46. [Redacted text block]

Gist of redacted paragraphs 39-46

Example 2 – “Wilf”

47. A person described as “Wilf” appeared in the BBC True Spies documentary broadcast in 2002. “Wilf” was shown with the tag ‘Metropolitan Police Special Branch, 1962-77’. In the programme he claims to have been the handler of an alleged UCO called “Mike Ferguson”, by stating: *“Later on at a meeting Peter Hain felt that there quite rightly was a spy in their midst, and there was one poor devil that Mike Ferguson looked that the room and said ‘I think it’s him’. And he got thrown out, and Ferguson survived – bless him.”*

48. In the book 'Undercover – The True Story of Britain's Secret Police' by Rob Evans and Paul Lewis (published 2013), the following is written on page 19: *“One of the SDS spies who joined [Peter] Hain's campaign was called Mike Ferguson. The SDS operative's handler, a fellow Special Branch officer named Wilf Knight, says the mole used cunning to climb the ladder of the anti-apartheid campaign. Knight recalls how, at one meeting, Hain told the group he believed they had been infiltrated by a spy. “There was one poor devil that Mike Ferguson looked down the room at and said: “I think that's him”” says Knight. He got thrown out, and Ferguson survived – bless him.”*
49. On 8 May 2016, Twitter user 'Strip ExSpyCop's MBE (@SackBob2), which is an account associated with a campaign directed against former SDS officer Bob Lambert, posted the following tweet: *“#JimmyCarr at the @SyInstitute's #WilfKnight Award named after the SDS handler who managed #Spycops who abused women security-institute.org/About_Us/award...”*
50. This tweet makes reference to the Security Institute, the UK's largest professional membership body for security professionals. The link in the tweet goes to their website and an article and photograph dated 25 November 2015 concerning a ceremony at which the Institute presented their “Wilf Knight Award”.
51. The website of the Security Institute states that *“Wilf Knight was a Fellow of the Security Institute until his untimely death in 2008. He had an exemplary career with the Metropolitan Police Service, before becoming a security consultant...This award is in his memory.”*
52. The development from True Spies “Wilf” to Undercover's “Wilf Knight” to the “Wilf Knight Security Industry Award” would appear, given that there is limited publicity of the award, to suggest that such purported connections are made as a result of speculative open source research utilizing keyword searches in the hope of tracing former SDS officers. [end of gist]
53. The technology now exists to make an identification using a photograph of an unknown subject as the originating point for the enquiry using facial recognition

technology, which will enable positive identifications to be made in circumstances where previously it would have been impossible. For example, if you were trying to identify and find a photograph of 'John Smith' online and you only knew his name, this would not be possible without other unique identifiers to distinguish records of interest from the mass of similar data available. However, if you were trying to identify 'John Smith' and have a quantity of unidentified images in which he might feature, then use facial scanning technology could link one of the unidentified images to an open source photograph with the name 'John Smith', enabling a positive identification to be made.

54. If the true identities of KARACHI and JAIPUR are disclosed, facial scanning technology has the potential to have a detrimental impact on the future operational capability of Op Motion and the ability of the AC PIT SIO to deploy the officers flexibly in response to any scenario. At present, the officers have the advantage of being able to operate in a covert capacity when required while still being able to perform overt roles without making any special arrangements. However, were their names to be revealed precautions would have to be employed at any time they attended a police premises, venue or event with any links to the UCPI to prevent their image being captured by the media or other interested parties which could then be used for facial scanning.

55. This technology could also be used to identify open source images of former UCOs using a photograph of them from their time in the field as the originating point for the enquiry. The application of facial recognition technology for this purpose has been recognised by a Twitter user with a self-declared interest in 'Spycops. On 2 May 2016, 'Matthias Monroy' (@gipfelsoli) posted the following message: "*#Spycops Undercover cops next? Facial recognition used to strip sex workers of anonymity*" alongside a link to the relevant article (<https://nakedsecurity.sophos.com/2016/05/02/facial-recognition-used-to-strip-sex-workers-of-anonymity>).