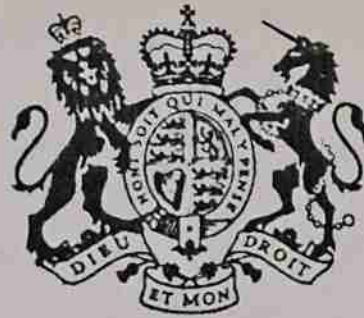


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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

16 March 1983

Visits to Northern Ireland by the
Prime Minister

Thank you for your letter of 15 March enclosing a revised version of the standard operating procedure for visits to Northern Ireland by the Prime Minister. I agree with the changes and have no further amendments to suggest.

A. J. COLES

John Lyon, Esq.,
Northern Ireland Office.

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Our ref; ADM 18/47/04

NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE

GREAT GEORGE STREET,

LONDON SW1P 3AJ

SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR
NORTHERN IRELAND

John Coles Esq
10 Downing Street

Mr. Coles

I agree

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16.3

Copy no 1 of 3

Mr. Butler

of the title is all right.

Agree?

A.J.C. 16.3

15 March 1983

Dear John,

VISITS TO NORTHERN IRELAND BY THE PRIME MINISTER

Our current Standard Operating Procedure for visits to Northern Ireland by the Prime Minister (document SOP NIO 1/81, issued on 21 July 1981) needs revision to reflect the following changes:

- (a) the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland is no longer accompanied by Metropolitan Police Special Branch officers when he is in Northern Ireland but by officers from the Royal Ulster Constabulary, and
- (b) responsibility for the Prime Minister's travel by RAF aircraft lies with the Head of Mov Ops (RAF) rather than the Personal Air Secretary to US of S(DP).

I enclose a copy of the proposed amendments to the SOP. The relevant paragraphs are sidelined. Those concerning the RUC have been agreed in principle with the Chief Constable, RUC. I should be pleased to know if you also agree the changes and for any detailed drafting amendments you might wish to offer. I am writing in similar terms to Deputy Commissioner Hewett, New Scotland Yard, with a copy to the Chief Constable, RUC.

Yours ever,

John Gya

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Dissemination of Information Concerning the Visit

3. The Prime Minister's decision to visit Northern Ireland will be agreed with the Secretary of State and the PUS. All those who are subsequently informed will receive the information on a strictly personal basis.

4. At the outset the PUS will sound out those most directly affected including the Chief Constable and the GOC on the timing and content of the programme so that he can advise PS/Prime Minister accordingly. Initially, only the following will be informed within the NIO:-

- (a) The Secretary of State
- (b) PS/Secretary of State
- (c) The PUS
- (d) PS/PUS
- (e) The Head of the NICS
- (f) The Deputy Secretary (London)
- (g) The Deputy Secretary (Belfast)
- (h) Under Secretary (Political Affairs and Information Policy) (Belfast)

The Principal Private Secretary to the Prime Minister will be responsible for informing the Head of the Prime Minister's Special Branch Protection Team of the planned visit and asking him to consult the Chief Constable about security arrangements.

5. Detailed consultations with the Prime Minister's Private Secretary concerning the programme and the theme of any major speeches should be started by PUS at least 10 working days before the visit.

6. Seven working days before the visit the Press Secretary at No 10 and the Director NI Information Services should be informed and should meet to discuss speeches and press coverage before the programme is finalised. Others who should be informed at this stage are:-

- (a) The Assistant Secretary, Political Affairs Division
- (b) The Principal Establishment and Finance Officer (PEFO)
- (c) NI Permanent Secretaries concerned with the visit
- (d) The APS/Secretary of State (Belfast)
- (e) The APS/Secretary of State (London)

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7. Not more than 24 hours before the visit, PS/Prime Minister will inform the Head of Branch Mov Ops (RAF) (Ministry of Defence, Main Building, Tel 01-218-6073) who should notify directly the Station Commander, RAF Northolt, by-passing all normal chains of command. No other officers in the MOD or the RAF need to know about the visit before the Prime Minister's departure.
8. During the 24 hours prior to the visit the areas which the Prime Minister will visit will be checked in accordance with arrangements made between the Chief Constable and the Head of the PM's Special Branch Protection group.
9. PUS, or AUS (Political Affairs and Information Policy) (B) on his behalf, will consult with the Chief Constable and GOC to determine at what point before the visit they can inform those of their subordinates who need to know and to make dispositions that a visit is in prospect. However, unless the PUS authorises otherwise, the Chief Constable and GOC may only issue orders for arrangements to be made for a "proxy" visit.
10. One hour before the estimated time of arrival of the Prime Minister's aircraft the Assistant Private Secretary (Belfast) to the Secretary of State will notify the Station Commander, RAF Aldergrove, by passing the codeword and timing to him personally by telephone.
11. When the Prime Minister's aircraft has landed at RAF Aldergrove, the Senior RUC Officer on the Stormont Estate will be informed by the Assistant Private Secretary (Belfast).

Co-ordination of the Visit.

12. Although overall responsibility for co-ordination of the visit and for preliminary arrangements will rest with the group at paragraph 4, working through PS/Secretary of State to PS/Prime Minister, there is a requirement for a small co-ordination team to take over the detailed planning of the visit not more than seven days before it takes place. This team will be chaired by the AUS (Political Affairs and Information Policy) who will be supported by the Director of NI Information Services, the Assistant Secretary, Political Affairs Division and APS/Secretary of State (Belfast).
13. The Assistant Secretary, Political Affairs Division will act as PUS's special assistant during the period of the visit, to be available to deal on the spot with the various unforeseen problems which are likely to arise. His task is to ensure that the visit goes as smoothly as possible. He will also be available, in the absence of the PUS or the Private Secretary, to effect any necessary immediate co-ordination with the PS/Prime Minister.

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ARRANGEMENTS FOR PM's VISIT IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER

Serial	Date	Activity	Person Responsible	Comments
1	V - ?	SOS, PUS and No 10 agree on a visit taking place	SOS PUS PM	(Prior information about the visit will be classified TOP SECRET up to 24 hours before the visit.)
2	V -?	PUS informs GOC, Chief Constable and all those at (A) not yet informed and discusses timing and content of visit	PUS	(A) SOS, PS/SOS, PUS PS/PUS, Hd of NICS, DUS(L), DUS(B). (This group will have responsibility for overall co-ordination working through. PS/SOS to PS/PM).
3	V - ?	Draft outline programme and outlines of speech (es) prepared (to include flying and non-flying arrangements) including decisions on whether any meetings and receptions will take place, and if so of what nature.	PUS	
4.	V - ?	Chief Constable asked by PUS to consider Security and arrangements for additional RUC cars	Chief Constable	Contingency plan required without disclosing true identity of visitor.
5.	V --10	Draft programme and speech(es) discussed and cleared with PS/Prime Minister (including plans for any meetings or for receptions). AUS (Political Affairs) to ensure that objectives of visit are clearly defined in advance.	PUS AUS (Pol Affairs)	

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Serial	Date	Activity	Person Responsible	Comments
6	V - 10	DUS(L) will commission briefing for the visit	DUS(L)	Briefing should contain a statement of the agreed principal objectives of the visit, a background note on the general situation in the Province and further notes on other relevant topics.
6A	V - 10	PS/PM informs Head of PM's Special Branch Protection Group of draft programme. Head of PM's Protection Group and Chief Constable make all arrangements before and during the visit, to check the areas the Prime Minister will visit.	PS/PM Chief Constable Head of PM's Special Branch Protection Group	
7	V - 7	Director of Information Services and Press Secretary at No 10 meet and discuss speeches and press coverage subject to guidance from PUS, PS/PM and AUS (Pol Affairs).	Director of Info Services	No action to be taken with the media in advance of the visit without PUS's authority.
8	V - 7	Co-ordination team established to be chaired by AUS (Pol Affairs) and composed of Head of Info Services, AS(PAB), and APS(B).	AUS (Pol Affairs)	The Co-Ordination Team will be responsible for precise details of programme, liaison as necessary with other Whitehall Depts, fleshing out outline speech(es), ensuring all transport arrangements are made and all proper arrangements made for meetings and receptions (see below)
9	V - 7	The following informed of the visit - PEFO, NI Perm Secs involved in the visit, APS(L).	PS/PUS	

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Serial	Date	Activity	Person Responsible	Comments
10	V - 7	Once proposed meetings are agreed with No 10, the Co-ordination Team will discreetly ascertain the availability of the appropriate groups, individuals and organisations subject to PUS's approval	Co-ordination Team	
11	V - 7	Co-ordination Team begins detailed arrangements for reception(s).	Co-Ordination Teams	
12	V - 5	Final speech(es) and programme sent to No 10	PS/PUS	
13	V - 5	Briefing submitted to PUS.	DUS (L)	
14	V - 4	Briefing forwarded to No 10	PS/PUS	
15	V - 3	Draft press release agreed between Hd of Info Services and Press Sec at No 10 (Cleared by PUS and PS/PM).	Head of Information Services	Amendments in the light of developments should be made. Procedure and timing of release will be agreed between Hd of Info Services and Press Sec at No 10 and cleared as appropriate.
16	V - 2	APS (B) - with PUS's authorisation - issues invitations, normally by telephone to a reception with the "proxy" visitor - guests will be told that car parking is available and RUC will arrange secure car parking.	APS (B)	RUC will produce addresses and telephone numbers of guests about whom such information is not known.
17	V - 1	PS/Prime Minister informs Head of Branch, MOV OPS (RAF) 01-218-6073 of visit who will notify directly the Station Commander, RAF Northolt (by-passing all normal chains of command.	PS/PM Head of Branch MOV OPS (RAF)	No other officers in the MOD or the RAF need to know about the visit before the PM's departure.

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Serial	Date	Activity	Person Responsible	Comments
18	V - 1	Check of areas which the PM will visit.	Chief Constable Head of PM's Special Branch Protection Group	
19	V - 1	APS(B) arranges with FATOC (Forward Air Traffic Operations Centre) at HQ NI for helicopters of the required capacity to be provided for the "proxy" and his/her party.	APS(B)	
20	V day - 1 hour	APS(B) informs Station Commander, RAF Aldergrove by-passing codeword and timing to him personally.	APS(B)	
21	V day	When PM's aircraft lands at Aldergrove, APS(B) informs the Senior RUC officer on the Stormont Estate	APS(B)	PM met by SOS and AUS (Pol Affairs). AUS (Pol Affairs) to accompany PM throughout visit.
22	V day (1 or 2)	APS(B) provides a guest list for reception to the Senior RUC officer at Stormont Castle or Hillsborough at 9.00 am on day of <u>reception.</u>	APS(B)	
23	V day	AS(PAB) will act as PUS's special assistant during visit.	AS(PAB)	
24	V day	APS(B) will ensure that PM's staff have full day and night office support, and that the Co-ordination Team, PS/SOS and PS/PUS are fully briefed on the arrangements.	APS(B)	

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Key Official	V - 1	V - 1 hour	V Day
S of S			Meets PM at Aldergrove
AUS (Political Affairs)			Meets PM at Aldergrove and accompanies PM throughout visit.
AS (PAB)			AS (PAB) will act as PUS' special assistant during the visit.
APS(B)	APS(B) arranges with FATOC at HQNI for helicopters to be provided for the "proxy" and his/her party.	APS(B) informs Station Commander RAF Aldergrove by passing codeword and timing personally.	When PM's aircraft lands, APS(B) informs senior RUC officer at Stormont Castle.
PS/PM	PS/PM will inform the Head of Mov Ops (RAF) of the visit.		
Head of Mov Ops (RAF)	Head of Mov Ops (RAF) will notify directly the Station....		

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Key Official	V - 1	V - 1 hour	V Day
	Commander, RAF Northolt by-passing all normal chains of command.		
Chief Constable & Head of PM's Special Branch Protection Team	Head of SBPT will check areas which PM will visit.		

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B-5

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