

# NATIONAL ARCHIVES

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bordered in Ireland  
negotiations on 14/11/85

14/11/85

Note on increased activity of the Garda Síochána in Border  
areas and in related activity elsewhere

1. The increased resources that are being made available in the Border areas may be described under two heads -
  - A. Increased man-hours and support facilities (mainly cars) in the local Divisional and District organisation.
  - B. Task Force units.

A : Increases in local effective strength

2. Those increases are provided in part through the allocation of increased overtime and in part through the assignment of additional members to the relevant local Divisions (an arrangement which, in turn, has to be balanced by increased overtime in the other areas from which the members are withdrawn). The allocation of cars to Border-related duty is being doubled.
3. The increased Garda activity, which includes vehicle check-points as well as general patrolling and associated work, is in the main equally directed at (and, it is hoped, equally effective against) paramilitary groups on both sides though some of the Garda activity (especially information-gathering) is likely to be mainly relevant to PIRA/INLA and

some (mainly certain foot patrols in some towns) is likely to be mainly relevant to the UVF. The Garda Síochána are conscious of the fact that, apart from the more "direct" dangers, extremists on either side may set out to act in such a way as to provoke extremists on the other side or to engage in outrages for which they know the public would be disposed to blame extremists on the other side.

4. There is also increased Garda activity of a related kind in certain "non-Border" areas. This mainly falls under two heads, viz.
- (a) vehicle check-points and
  - (b) increased work by way of information-gathering.

There is an increased financial allocation for this particular additional work (as well as for the work referred to earlier).

B : Task Force Units

5. What is proposed under this heading is an arrangement of the same kind and with the same level of resources as obtained a few years ago. That arrangement is described in the following paragraphs.
6. In the present context, the term "Task Force" is meant to apply to a group of members of the Garda Síochána of various ranks whose permanent "base" is Dublin. From that Task Force, "units" of (usually) 15, headed by an Inspector, may be detached and assigned as required for special (usually "mobile") duties in any part of the State. Where there is a continuing need in a particular area, the particular unit is replaced by another rather than being retained for an extended period

in the same area. A Task Force Unit might, if circumstances so indicated, sub-divide so as to provide a "half-strength" service round-the-clock in a particular area.

7. As regards Border duties, the extent to which Task Force Units were assigned depended very much on the situation "on the ground" at any particular time; but it was never the practice to have several Units deployed simultaneously for extended periods. On the other hand, additional units were assigned to the Border to cope with unusual short-term needs. The same approach will be adopted now.
8. Additional recruitment to and training for members of the Task Force are at present proceeding and will have been completed shortly but if in the meantime a need were to arise already-trained personnel could be re-deployed immediately.
9. The Garda Síochána are satisfied, having carried out a full review, that the use of Task Force Units in the way and to the extent now envisaged is a cost-effective way of making the kind of contribution that they will be able to make but, beyond that point, in present circumstances at all events, they have concluded that the other arrangements they have made - those referred to in paragraphs 2 to 4 - represent the best use of resources.

Temporary nature of arrangements

10. The arrangements described above are very costly and it is strongly hoped that circumstances will permit their being scaled-down in the

not-too-distant future. On the other hand, it is recognised that there will be a period of high risk not only just before but for some time after the signature of any Agreement that may emerge.

Confidentiality

11. From the point of view of the authorities here, there are serious problems in any great emphasis on the commitment of increased resources to Border areas. It is recognised, however, that some references to it need to be made from the British side and, despite the Garda view that the importance of Task Force Units has in the past been given a disproportionate emphasis, it is also recognised that a suitable reference to them is important in the presentation of the position to the Unionist sector.
12. Accordingly, no objection would be raised from our side if it were said that -
  - A. The Irish Government clearly recognise that an Agreement designed to achieve progress towards peace and stability could provoke reaction from extremists on both sides and have assured [the British side] that important increases in Garda resources, both in terms of manpower and transport, have already been provided in Border Divisions.
  - B. In addition to the increases in the local strength of the Border Divisions, special arrangements have been made for the deployment of Task Force Units to be available to deal

with particular outrages or threats or other special problems.

- C. More frequent meetings are now taking place between officers of the RUC and of the Garda Síochána at various levels with a view to maximising co-operation in the common fight against terrorism and, in particular, in the common determination to defeat any attempt, from whatever source, to disrupt the effective working of the Agreement.