



# Home Office

HOME SECRETARY

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Dominic Grieve MP  
House of Commons  
London SW1A 0AA

19 MAR 2007

*Dear Dominic,*

## COUNTER TERRORISM OPERATIONS – PRESS BRIEFING

Thank you for your letter of the 5<sup>th</sup> February about the media handling of the recent police counter-terrorism operation in Birmingham.

I share your concerns about the information the media speculation on the day of the operation. As you may recall, both I and the Attorney General expressed concern about the reporting of the operation on the day of the arrests. Our joint statement on that day reminded the media not to do anything which would prejudice the current operation or the future trial.

Operational issues are a matter for the Chief Constable and it is normal practice in such cases for the police to take the lead in briefing the press and public on ongoing operations and in deciding what can be safely put in the public domain. When asked about ongoing operations it is the Home Office Press Office's practice to refer callers to the relevant police force.

Given so much of the attention has focussed on whether my political staff briefed the media I would like to take the opportunity to assure you that they did not brief the media on operational matters on or off the record; and that it is not their practice to do so.

*John Reid*  
*John Reid*  
JOHN REID