



Chief
Surveillance
Commissioner

10th January 2013

Dear Permanent Secretary,

Covert Surveillance

On 28th September and 29th November 2012, an Assistant Surveillance Commissioner, Sir David Clarke, visited your Department on my behalf to review your management of covert activities. I am grateful to you for the facilities afforded for the inspection.

I enclose a copy of Sir David's report which I endorse. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] But substantial work has been done to meet the recommendations then made. RIPA awareness is maintained, reducing the risk of unauthorised covert activity. The officers whom Sir David met, particularly those with senior police experience, impressed him with their knowledge and commitment. The Maritime Management Organisation's lack of RIPA powers, apparently due to a legislative error in 2010, should be remedied by statutory instrument as soon as possible.

The recommendations are that your RIPA Policy be further revised as indicated in Para 13 of the report, that the next few RIPA authorisations be quality assured by legal advisers as well as by IRD, that training be provided for those in DIS who may be required to act as CHIS handlers and that MMO be invested with RIPA powers as soon as possible.

I shall be glad to learn that your Department accepts the recommendations and will see that they are implemented.

One of the main functions of review is to enable public authorities to improve their understanding and conduct of covert activities. I hope your Department finds this process constructive.

Please let this Office know if it can help at any time.

M/s Bronwyn Hill
Permanent Secretary
DEFRA
Nobel House
17 Smith Square
London
SW1P 3JR

*Yours sincerely,
Christopher Rose*