

ELECTRONIC DIGEST OF MATERIAL, FOI 0051-17

UK NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW, MINUTES, 16 OCTOBER 2001

IHL Training

5. [redacted] outlined progress on training within the FCO and Whitehall. The speaking slot on the FCO Human Rights Course had now been established as a regular feature. There was also a module in the International Law Course. The possibility of a further slot in the Legal Awareness Course was being investigated.

6. Contact had been established with the Civil Service College about inclusion of a module in a suitable training course. Although the Director responsible for the Legal Awareness Programme, [redacted], felt that IHL might prove too specialised for the introductory courses offered, there might be scope for a pilot seminar or workshop, perhaps at the College's Belgrave Road site. [redacted] confirmed that he had been in correspondence with [redacted]. [redacted] noted that some time had passed without a further response from the College and undertook to follow up.

7. The recent analysis of Whitehall IHL training provision had revealed that, with a few notable exceptions, there was little regular training on offer within OGDs. [redacted] noted that any training offered would have to be targeted to be at all realistic. [redacted] said that an analysis of the Articles of the Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocols was worth considering. [redacted] had carried out such an exercise on GC III, and it had been remarkable how many different government departments had been found to be involved in its implementation. If a more extensive exercise were undertaken, so that it could be demonstrated that people in particular departments had certain responsibilities, that might help. In reply to a question from the [redacted] said that it would be possible to obtain a copy of the analysis. [redacted] said that it would also be relevant to look at various instruments, for example the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, which would be applicable to agriculture, and hence to DEFRA. If it could be demonstrated to departments what actually could affect their interests, in peace as much as in war, a more positive response might be had. [redacted] noted that the possibilities of bio-terrorism had already been demonstrated by the recent anthrax attacks in the US. There was no reason to suppose that terrorists could not attack economic targets eg food supplies. [redacted] said that it was not far-fetched to suppose that the military action in Afghanistan could lead to POWs being detained in the UK, as had happened during the Gulf War. This would involve the Home Office. [redacted] said that what was needed was something imaginative to point out to departments that IHL was relevant to them. The first line of attack was the Civil Service College. [redacted] reported that there had been a resurgence of interest in IHL within DfID. Now was accordingly an opportune time to offer training.

Guidelines for funding

8. [redacted] said that the DfID were rewriting their internal guidelines, which incorporated IHL. But it had to be recognised that the department's agencies on the ground, eg in Afghanistan, were really pressed, and this might take time.

Education

9. [redacted] said that the BRCS was about to apply to DfID for funding for the "Exploring Humanitarian Law" initiative. There had, however, been no contact with DfES.

Outreach

10. [redacted] said that some progress had been made with outreach. But the Bar Committee met only once a month. His own schedule had as yet prevented him from attending a meeting.

ICC Act

11. [redacted] said that she had guidance ready. She could also use the FCO publication on IHL. Guidance had been widely circulated and comments were coming in. These could be circulated to the Committee if desired. [redacted] accepted this offer with thanks. It was important that IHL was correctly explained in the guidance.

Relevance of IHL to civil servants

12. [redacted] said that he had written to the ICRC but they had been unable to provide anything. He had been intending to write something himself but the matter had slipped. [redacted] said that she would be grateful if [redacted] would pursue.

IHL training within Armed Forces

13. [redacted] asked for the state of play on Armed Forces IHL training. [redacted] said that, as he understood the situation, it was being approached from the top down. [redacted] had been tasked with reviewing training for all the services. This was being conducted from the centre, not individual service branches. But the branches were keen to play their part and ensure that the review took off as soon as possible. [redacted] said that [redacted] had responded to the review. But there were so many competing training demands that it was difficult to get it going. However, an instruction from [redacted] was as powerful as it was possible to get.

**UK NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW, MINUTES,
09 OCTOBER 2013**

Item 6: Dissemination and Communication

[redacted] asked whether the Department for Education plan to do any sort of outreach to schools to promote IHL. **Action Point:** [redacted] will be speaking to Dept for Education about this.

b) Updating the “United Kingdom and International Humanitarian Law” publication: Was being updated and would be published on .gov website by end of November.

c) Handbook and Field Guide for Media Professionals: [redacted] reported that this should be finalised in February and published soon after.

d) Event for anniversary of 150 years since the original Geneva Convention: In response to [redacted] suggestion that FCO organise an event with the BRC to mark one of the many IHL relevant anniversaries next year, [redacted] confirmed that FCO were willing to consider this.

**UK NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW, MINUTES,
28 JANUARY 2015**

ITEM 6: Dissemination and Communication

National Curriculum Review ([redacted]): After further consultations in 2014 there are two references to IHL in National Curriculum KS4 under ‘Human Rights and International Law’, which is good news.

The UK and International Humanitarian Law Publication ([redacted]): The UK brochure on its work on IHL was updated to mark RCRC Day last year. It’s on the gov.uk website but is not easy to find.

Handbook and Field guide for Media Professionals on IHL ([redacted]): The third version of the manual will be finalised this year. The BRC are planning a launch event and would welcome FCO/IHL Committee support.

**UK NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW, MINUTES,
27 OCTOBER 2016**

ITEM 6: Dissemination and Communications

- (a) Handbook and Field Guide for Media Professionals on IHL**
The handbook will help inform media professionals about their rights and responsibilities under IHL. Publication is anticipated before the end of the year. [redacted] agreed to share a draft with FCO legal advisers.