



Policy Legacy FOI Team  
Headquarters 38 (Irish) Brigade  
British Forces Post Office 801

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Reference: FOI: 2019/02349

Date: 12 March 2019

Dear [REDACTED]

**REQUEST FOR INFORMATION – COPY OF THE “RED CARD” ISSUED TO MILITARY ON INTERACTION WITH JOURNALISTS**

I can confirm that your request has been considered under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI(A)), and the process is now complete.

You asked for the following:

***“Under the FOI Act, could you please provide a copy or details of the “Red Card” which was issued to British soldiers serving in Northern Ireland during Operation Banner and provided details on how soldiers interact with journalists. The specific period I am interested in is between 1989 and 1992.”***

I can confirm that, the card that you refer to is called “Public Relations Instructions” and “Press Awareness” which is green in colour. The only version that this office holds is dated 1990 and a photocopy of the card is attached at Annex A.

If you have any queries regarding the content of this letter, please contact this office in the first instance

If you wish to complain about the handling of your request, or the content of this response, you can request an independent internal review by contacting the Information Rights Compliance team, Ground Floor, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (e-mail [CIO-FOI-IR@mod.uk](mailto:CIO-FOI-IR@mod.uk)). Please note that any request for an internal review should be made within 40 working days of the date of this response.

If you remain dissatisfied following an internal review, you may raise your complaint directly to the Information Commissioner under the provisions of Section 50 of the FOI(A). Please note that the Information Commissioner will not normally investigate your case until the MOD internal review process has been completed. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner’s Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. Further details of the role and powers of the Information Commissioner can be found on the Commissioner’s website at <https://ico.org.uk/>.

Yours sincerely

38X Brigade FOI Team

Enc: Annex A Copy of the Green Card (Revised 1990) (1 Page)



**PUBLIC RELATIONS INSTRUCTION**

1. **Warning:** You must not answer questions from TV, radio or newspaper reporters without authority from Army Information Services HQNI.

2. **Handling the Media:** Journalists in Northern Ireland provide an important service to the public by informing them of the ongoing security situation. They often do this at great personal risk. **THEY ARE TO BE HANDLED WITH THE UTMOST CARE AND COURTESY. DO NOT MAKE A FRIENDLY OR NEUTRAL JOURNALIST INTO AN ENEMY.** If approached by press, TV or radio, politely refer them to the RUC Press Office (0232 860202) or Army Information Services (0246 800197).

3. **Presenting the Army's Case:** The media will be attracted to all incidents, even to those which appear unimportant. To put forward the Army's side of the story your Unit Press Officer will need to know quickly:

- What happened.
- Where it happened.
- Who was involved.
- Why the incident occurred.

**CHECK THE FACTS AND MAKE A NOTE OF THEM. ACCURACY IS VITAL. MISTAKES ARE ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE TO CORRECT ONCE THEY ARE PASSED TO THE MEDIA. FIND OUT HOW WHO YOUR UNIT PRESS OFFICER IS.**

4. **Unit Press Officer:** All UPOs should be aware of their responsibilities as detailed in 'Op Fireblanket', 'Media Mechanics' and SIM Vol 2 Chapter 67.

**FOREWARNED IS FOREARMED**

**RESTRICTED**

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**PR/PRESS**

**RESTRICTED**

**PRESS AWARENESS**

**EVERY INCIDENT HAS PRESS POTENTIAL**

**EXAMPLES WHERE THE MEDIA BECOME INTERESTED:**

- Terrorist Attacks and Aftermath
- Harassment and Assault
- Security Lapses (eg Loss of equipment or documents)
- NDs and Suesides
- Border Incursions
- RTAs involving death or injury (especially civilian)
- Positive PR (eg Assistance to Population)
- Negative PR (eg Damage to property, injury to animals, etc.)

**IF THE INCIDENT HAS PRESS SIGNIFICANCE THEN RING THE PRESS DESK, HQNI 42291-42419**

**INFORMATION REQUIRED:**

- What happened \_\_\_\_\_
- Where \_\_\_\_\_
- When \_\_\_\_\_
- Who involved \_\_\_\_\_
- Any other relevant details \_\_\_\_\_

An **EARLY** warning is essential before all details are clear to help answer press enquiries.

**ACCURACY** is vital. Mistakes are almost impossible to correct once passed to the media.

**RESTRICTED**

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