



03 July 13

Chief Constable's statement in response to the publication of the HMIC Inspection of the Historical Enquiries Team

In April 2012, I agreed with the Policing Board that the HMIC should be invited to conduct an inspection of the HET's interviewing of former military personnel. The report was commissioned due to concerns raised in Patricia Lundy's research on the issue, the need for independent examination of this sensitive area and most importantly for the families of those who have lost loved ones. I am grateful to HMIC for their hard work, the Policing Board for the constructive scrutiny and to Patricia Lundy for her valuable challenge.

The report has raised significant concerns which I and my colleagues are taking very seriously. I have already met with the Policing Board this morning.

Let me say at the outset that I am sorry that HET put in place a policy that was wrong. I accept the recommendations of the HMIC Report in full and I will work with the Board on ensuring their delivery.

The establishment of the HET in 2005 was a brave move and yet always going to be contentious. The approach was endorsed by many, including government, as a step towards a more holistic societal approach to the past; an issue which has yet to be resolved politically. The HET has done a great deal of good in bringing a measure of resolution to families.

HET is unique and so is the task they fulfil. There was no easy or established template to be followed. Notwithstanding this, a differential approach to military cases is wrong. I give you my assurance that this has ended.

The report presents a number of recommendations, upon which work will begin immediately. However, as Chief Constable of PSNI, I must make it clear that a way forward on the sensitive and important issue of dealing with the past cannot, and should not, be left to policing alone.

In response to this review and the clear public confidence issues presented, I intend to take the following action.

- All military cases will be re-examined in line with the national murder investigation manual for any evidential opportunities. I will discuss the options for this with the Policing Board.
- All guidance and operational practice within the HET will be reviewed under the direction of an Assistant Chief Constable and the recommendations within the HMIC report taken forward.



- With support and input from the Policing Board, a long term review of the HET and the wider impact of the past on PSNI will be commenced. This review will include consideration of the HET's current accountability arrangements, its longer term structure and priorities; as well as funding.

Beyond policing and beyond these immediate actions, I am mindful that there is a forthcoming report by the Criminal Justice Inspectorate on legacy issues. Importantly also, the First and Deputy First Minister have announced an all party working group which will consider the issue of the past. The future of the HET should form part of these discussions.