



Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

Com Sec: 10\4605

July 2010

*Dear Lord Morrow,*

**To ask the Minister of Justice (i) how many PSNI Officers are currently trained in tactical support; (ii) whether these officers will be taken from other duties to assist in the event of disturbances or unrest; and (iii) for his assessment of the adequacy of the tactical support provision available to ensure public safety and welfare.**

The above mentioned question was placed before the Minister of Justice, who has deemed that this is an operational matter for the Police Service of Northern Ireland. Therefore the Chief Constable has been asked to respond directly.

Within the PSNI, there are different levels of training in Public Order skills, dependant upon officers' role profile. As the question relates to "serious" public disorder the reply has been confined to that area.

The PSNI has 16 Tactical Support Group (Level 1) Units. The total strength of the units comprises 14 Inspectors, 67 Sergeants, 326 Constables, 30 Reserve Constables and 23 Dog Handlers. A total of 460 trained officers. In addition, we have 47 Officers within our Armed Response Units who are trained to level 2, and who are available for deployment in support of the full time (Level 1) units.

Over two thirds of the operational officers within PSNI are trained to either Level 1 or 2 standards. Indeed, from 1 January 2010, to date, a total of 790 officers have been trained or received refresher training in Public Order level 1 duties.

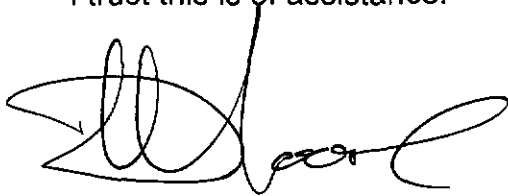
By way of clarification, Level 1 Tactical Support Group officers, who are permanently attached to these units, undergo three, 10 hour periods of public order training with staff from our Combined Operational Training per year. They also undergo additional training, throughout the year, to ensure their skills are maintained at a high level.

Level 2 Police Support Unit officers are drawn from the pool of officers, not at present deployed full time in Tactical Support Groups, but who are trained in the same tactics and to the same level as their Level 1 colleagues. Whilst they do not routinely operate as a Support Unit on a full time basis, they are brought together at times of Operational need, and in proportion to the threat and risk assessment. This includes most operational police officers within the PSNI.

Given the resources available, we are confident that these are more than adequate to deal with the current situation in Northern Ireland

If you have any queries regarding this response, please address your correspondence to Command Secretariat, PSNI Headquarters, 65 Knock Road, Belfast, Northern Ireland BT5 6LE.

I trust this is of assistance.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Moore', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**David Moore**  
Chief Inspector  
for Chief Constable

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