

An Chartlann Náisiúnta
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The Royal Ulster Constabulary

FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION

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Comments

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PRESS RELEASE

RUC CHIEF CONSTABLE ANNOUNCES SECURITY CHANGES

Further relaxation in security measures have been announced today by the Chief Constable of the RUC, Mr Ronnie Flanagan.

The Chief Constable said the latest in a series of adjustments were the result of the ongoing review of the security situation maintained by himself and the General Officer Commanding Northern Ireland. This, he said, reflected their commitment to ensuring protection for the public, whilst continuing moves towards a normal policing environment.

Said Mr Flanagan: "We have already seen the total ending of routine military patrolling widely across the Province and significantly reduced patrolling elsewhere. Restrictions on movement around Belfast International Airport have been ended and there have been significant reductions in other security measures in Londonderry and Bessbrook. Troop levels, too, have been reduced.

"I am now in a position to announce that the military presence will be withdrawn from the permanent vehicle checkpoints at the Letterkenny Road and Culmore Road in Derry and on the Lifford Road in Strabane. In addition, two observation sangars at the Crumlin Road in Belfast and on the main Dublin Road outside Newry are to be demolished, as is the permanent checkpoint at Aughnacloy from which the military presence has already been withdrawn".

The Chief Constable stressed that the security situation continued to be kept under close scrutiny and further progress was planned but will always depend on the operational assessment of the terrorist threat.

RUC HEADQUARTERS
30 September 1998

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PRESS RELEASE

STATEMENT BY CHIEF CONSTABLE ON TROOP LEVEL REDUCTIONS

The Chief Constable has announced that, as a result of their ongoing review of the security situation, the GOC will be making a reduction in the level of troop deployment in the Province.

He said this morning that he was pleased to announce that the improving security situation allowed him to operate increasingly widely across the Province with a reducing need for military presence. For example with effect from this weekend there will be no routine military patrolling in South Derry.

As one immediate consequence, the GOC is making arrangements for members of 39 Regiment (Royal Artillery) and of the 1st Battalion the Highlanders, to return to their respective bases in Great Britain. The Chief Constable and the GOC are also reviewing the position in relation to bases within the Province and hope to be in a position in the near future to initiate some scaling down in this regard.

The withdrawal of these two battalions to Great Britain will be completed within the next two weeks.

The Chief Constable stressed that these battalions remain under the command of the GOC (Northern Ireland) and can be returned to the Province immediately should circumstances warrant it.

GUIDANCE:

This leaves overall troop levels lower than at the best point of the last ceasefires prior to the bombing of Canary Wharf in February 1996.

RUC HEADQUARTERS
22 September 1998

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PRESS RELEASE

EMBARGOED until 0700 hrs 24 September 1998

AIRPORT CHECKPOINTS REDUCED

The continuing improvement in the security situation has again been further underlined by the reduction in road closures and vehicle checkpoints around Belfast International Airport. Speaking earlier today, Superintendent Richard Meeke, the Police Commander for the Antrim area said, "Having regard to the obvious improvement in the overall security situation, we have reviewed our protective measures particularly in terms of vehicle checkpoints and road closures in the immediate vicinity of Belfast International Airport. With immediate effect the permanent vehicle checkpoint on the main airport approach road will be discontinued as soon as possible, and we have also opened the Dublin, British and Drennan Roads, which had until now been permanently closed. The opening of the Dublin Road and the British Road will now allow much easier access to the airport, but obviously all of these measures will be kept under constant review".

NOTE TO EDITORS:

The opening of the Dublin Road and the British Road will provide much easier access for people travelling to the airport from the North of the Province. The removal of the permanent vehicle checkpoint and security road ramps should also better facilitate traffic and reduce delays on the main airport road.

RUC HEADQUARTERS
24 SEPTEMBER 1998

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