

# **ROYAL MILITARY POLICE**

## **SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS BRANCH (GERMANY)**

### **History 1945 – 2006**

On the 8<sup>th</sup> May 1945 the German High Command signed the Military Act of Surrender. This Act was followed by the Assumption of Supreme Authority over Germany by the United Kingdom, the United States of America, the then Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the Provisional Government of the French Republic. In simple terms this Assumption made the Military Police forces of these nations responsible for the investigation of crime and the reforming of what today is the German Civil Police (GCP) under the auspices of the United Nations.

The signing of the Status of Forces Agreement on the 19<sup>th</sup> June 1951 and the Supplementary Agreement between the UK and Germany on 3<sup>rd</sup> August 1959 laid the foundation for the role, function and duty which the RMP carry out in Germany to this day. The Agreements formally relinquished jurisdiction by Germany over members of UK forces, dependants and UK Based Civilians.

The Special Investigation Branch has had a presence in Europe since the D-Day landings. Initially the role was one of investigating 'war crimes', racketeering and theft of stores however the role was to expand following the end of World War 2 and the beginning of the Cold War. Sadly few records exist showing the war time locations of the Special Investigation Branch (Germany) (SIB(G)) however early SIB Sections were deployed to Hamburg, Kiel, Bielefeld, Oldenburg, Bad Rothenfeld, Celle, Dortmund, Düsseldorf, Krefeld, Köln and of course Berlin itself.

February 1947 saw the formal establishment of HQ SIB (G) at Bad Oeynhausen under Lt Col KG Thrift with Sections in Hamburg, Hanover, Bielefeld, Berlin, Bad Rothenfeld, Celle, Düsseldorf and Munster. Duties included not only the investigation of serious crime but also the provision of close protection to Field Marshal Montgomery and other senior officers.

Today the 5 SIB (G) Sections are based in Hohne (70 Section), Osnabruck (72 Section), Bielefeld (76 Section), Sennelager (74 Section) and JHQ (87 Section). However in the 1940s the situation was somewhat different, below is a potted history of some of the new, and old, SIB Sections:

### **Celle – 70 Section**

Established in 1948, their first home was at No 1 Georg-Wilhelm Str, an imposing building now housing the Landessozialgericht (County Court). In 1954 they moved a short distance to the Von Blomberg Villa in Rhegius Str and the following year to Behoerden Haus at 3 Muerlen Str. In 1956 the Section moved to its first real military location within Artillery Bks, Hannoversche Str. Finally, in 1960 the section moved to an enclave of Trenchard Bks, Sprenger Str where they were happily ensconced until they moved to Hohne and co-located with the local RMP GPD Company.

### **Osnabruck – 72 Section**

Originally located at Bad Rothenfelde, some 25km South West of the town, the Section HQ moved to Roberts Bks, Osnabruck in the early 1950s and later fostered a Detachment at Munster. Over the years the Section HQ and Detachment swapped roles on a number of occasions, at times looking after other Detachments as far a

field as Iserlohn, Dortmund, Werl, Bielefeld and even Berlin. Probably the most famous enquiry the Section dealt with was the murder of a German taxi driver, Felix Reese, by the then LCpl Leslie Grantham, 1<sup>st</sup> Bn Royal Fusiliers in December 1966. This case subsequently attracted world-wide media attention when Grantham found fame as a TV actor in a well known soap opera. Enough has been written about this despicable crime to make further comment unnecessary but for one interesting and unique procedural point; before being brought to trial, Grantham was brought onto a posted strength of SIB BAOR and subsequently charged with Murder by the then WO1 Stan Upton, who also acted as the Assistant Prosecuting Officer. Munster Detachment, who have succeeded in occupying part of every barracks in the town at some stage in their 35 years. Suffice to say that they are now located in Winterbourne Bks and were for a period commanded by an Australian exchange officer. Munster used to have a reputation for some bizarre sexual offences involving cavalrymen and horses and even had a German farmer once claiming compensation from an RAOC soldier for damage to his cow! Even the terrorists cannot leave Munster alone and it was the shooting of two unarmed RMP NCOs on patrol in March 1980 which caused RMP BAOR to revert to being a permanently armed police force. Today the Section is preparing to return to its roots in Munster with the imminent closure of Osnabruck Garrison.

### **Sennelager – 74 Section**

74 Section was originally based in Werl and was born on the 1<sup>st</sup> January 1975, following the move of Canadian Forces from the Soest/Korbecke area down to Lahr in Southern Germany. Cover during the period 1971-74 was originally provided by Dortmund, who then provided the manpower for this new Detachment but the child eventually outgrew the parent to become Section HQ in 1976. Sennelager Detachment, for so long the training ground of SIB Subalterns, has been variously commanded from Bielefeld, Werl and Detmold. It is still in Normandy Bks, just off the famous 'Sennelager Strip'.

### **Bielefeld - 76 Section**

Born in April 1975, following the closure of Bielefeld as a Section HQ, the Detmold Section were initially housed with an Ordnance Company in Elles Bks but in 1979 moved to a self contained wing of the Provost Company building in Hobart Bks, home of HQ 20 Armd Bde and the largest self contained barracks in Germany. The old nominal rolls of Minden Detachment (formerly 83 Section) indicates that the majority of SIB seem to have served there at some stage but none can compete with Sgt John Botting, known as the Warden of Minden after nearly 9 years in the town. Since 1957 the Detachment have been settled in Kinsley Bks, the HQ of 11 Armd Bde. Detmold also boasted a second Detachment at Hameln from 1977 to 1986 but this was eventually closed. During 1957, the German Stadt authorities designed a new purpose built HQ for the English Kriminal Polizei at No 243 Hellweg (later renamed Lipper Hellweg). Built along the lines of a German Police Station (which it was intended to become) it could also have been mistaken for a small suburban hotel with imposing foyer, reception area, carpeted corridors and rooms. It was only the presence of uniforms, still the normal working dress, which gave the game away.

### **JHQ – 87 Section**

Until 1958, the Section HQ was based at the Polizei Präsidium in Dusseldorf, with a Detachment in Krefeld and JHQ. Thereafter they moved to Caernarvon Bks and have since occupied five different office blocks within that location. Being the most Southerly positioned unit, 87 Section are responsible for the training areas in Bavaria and as the occasion demands, investigative forays into Austria, Switzerland and Italy.

The Detachment at Rheindahlen assumed responsibility for the Benelux countries following the closure of Grobbendonk. The closure of Dusseldorf saw the Section move to JHQ along with the Photo processing laboratory. Today JHQ is home to not only the HQ and 87 Section but also the Regional Intelligence Office (Germany), Fraud Investigations Department, Forensics Lab and Multimedia & Evidential Imagery Dept.

### **Berlin – 93 Section**

Not only being fortunate in their location, the Berlin Section (formerly 89 Section) the Section was housed next to the Provost Company in the Olympic Stadium and the name board recording Officers Commanding reads like an SIB version of 'Whos Who' with no less than 34 officers and 1 WO1 sharing the unbroken honours from August 1945 to May 1994.

### **Present & Future**

Although the Sections have remained largely unchanged in terms of location the Specialist Support Teams now fielded by the Unit demonstrate the changing nature of the world we live in. Outlined below are some of the technical support the Sections and Investigators can call upon if required:

### **Regional Intelligence Office (Germany) (RIO (G))**

The latest addition to the Unit the RIO (G) is responsible for the process of all criminal intelligence. Close links are maintained with external agencies both in the UK and in Europe to ensure the timely processing of criminal intelligence.

### **Covert Operations Team (COT)**

Responsible for the provision of covert monitoring and surveillance of personnel in accordance with Home Office Legislation. For obvious reasons little can be mentioned here.

### **Fraud Office**

Located in the HQ the Fraud team deals with all investigations where public i.e. taxpayers, money has been misused.

### **Forensics**

Probably the most expensive support team in the Unit in terms of resources. The team is responsible for the processing of all criminal exhibits, either utilising their own equipment or if too complicated via the Forensic Science Service in the UK. The Forensics Laboratory has recently undergone a €500,000 facelift in order to ensure that it can provide the latest in terms of forensic support to the investigators.

### **Multimedia & Evidential Imagery Team**

In the age of Big Brother there is little that we can do that is not caught somewhere on CCTV or camera. This team is responsible for the processing of imagery and any enhancement that may be required in order to assist with the identification of those involved in crime or what actually happened.

### **Joint Response Team (JRT)**

This team conducts specialist interviewing of vulnerable victims e.g. young people, victims of sexual crimes and the like. The team works closely with the Social

Services in dealing with child abuse and the monitoring of those children deemed to be at risk.

## **Crime Reduction**

SIB (G) RMP also provides the Crime Reduction co-ordinator for the whole of BF(G). Their role is to provide a co-ordinated approach and advice on aspects of Crime Reduction to each of the dedicated Crime Reduction NCOs located throughout the Garrisons in Germany.

## **Summary**

Since the end of World War 2 SIB (G) RMP has remained at the forefront of Service Policing. This coupled with the support currently provided to Operations TELIC (Iraq) and HERRICK (Afghanistan) has ensured that the Unit remains as busy now as it did then. The increased use and employment of specialist teams has enhanced the capability we provide ensuring that, as the Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary stated in September 2006, we remain 'competent and capable of conducting Level 3 reactive investigations'.