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SCB-195-69

Summary of Discussion  
SECURITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING  
June 24, 1987

Present:

J. Tait (Chairman)

Major W. Hewson

H. Intscher

H. Jensen

G. Mazowita

P. Peters

G. Seymour

MSG  
CSIS  
DND  
CSE  
PCO  
RCMP  
TC  
DOJ  
DEA

A. MacLaren A/Secretary

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The Chairman opened the first meeting of the revised SAC by setting out for members his views of the Committee's role. He saw the Committee as having three principal functions. First, SAC will provide a senior level forum for regular discussion of security matters, and will be a source of advice within the community on issues of common concern. The second function of SAC will be to provide ICSI with advice on policy issues. It will fall to the functionally specialised sub-committees to develop policy proposals for the consideration of SAC in support of this function. PSB will take the lead on matters of broad interdepartmental impact, other departments and agencies will take the lead on issues falling within their areas of competence.

SAC's third function will be to maintain an ongoing review of policy and program matters in the security sector, including the identification of current and emerging problems. In addition, the Committee will provide an annual report to ICSI concerning its activities and those of its sub-committees. The annual report will provide deputies at ICSI with a qualitative review of SAC and SAC sub-committee activity.

Making the point that a committee of this nature had to meet regularly in order to fulfil its role, the Chairman asked members to determine a convenient day and time when they might convene, and it was agreed that SAC would meet on the first Tuesday of the month at 2:30 p.m.

On membership, the Chairman emphasized that the success of this forum depended on senior representation from departments and agencies and that while substitution was acceptable on an occasional basis, Committee membership would be at the ADM level. The Department of Transport is an exception to this rule given the organization of its security function.

Concerning sub-committees, members agreed that existing groups with direct links to SAC should report on their terms of reference, work plans, and also provide an appraisal of their work. The Committee agreed that two new sub-committees should be struck: one on counter-terrorism to be chaired by the Solicitor General's Secretariat; and one to provide guidance and advice to departmental security officers. In the absence of an alternative, this latter group will be chaired, at least in the short term, by the Secretariat. There was also agreement that the Public Communications sub group would broaden its focus from counter-terrorism, to include security in general. The establishment of a group to deal with security sector resource management, was deferred

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pending further consultation. The SAC will consider sub committee reports, including terms of reference for new groups, at subsequent meetings. The chairman noted that a review of sub-structure activity would not only help SAC in appreciating the nature of the work of sub-committees, but would enable the senior committee to provide advice and guidance to the groups.

The third area of discussion concerned the drawing up of an inventory of security sector issues, both short and longer term, that will constitute the SAC's work plan. The items identified were: use of the polygraph; sexual orientation in government as an aspect of Security Policy; Security Policy implementation; CEIC review of the adequacy of the security and criminality provisions of the Immigration Act, an overview of counter-terrorism and our future direction; the revised Scheduled Countries list; contact reporting regarding personnel from those countries; review of the Access to Information legislation; issues affecting the DSO community; the forthcoming Senate Report on Terrorism; the SIRC Annual Report; security screening backlog; and, the provision of comments to CSIS on the utility of their security intelligence analyses.

There followed a general discussion of the polygraph issue that touched on the need for SAC to define the problem in a series of parts that would facilitate the development of policy. Members agreed on the urgency of the polygraph issue in view of the lack of progress to date, a situation criticized in the SIRC Report, and outlined the need, for example, to contract a study, and to review the literature on the subject. While discussion was of a general nature and did not produce consensus on the next steps to be undertaken, the Secretariat will set out for the consideration of SAC a phased approach to the issue intended to produce a government policy as soon as possible.

The next meeting of the Committee will take place in early September. Departments are asked to provide the Secretary of SAC with items for discussion in advance of the meetings. An agenda and documents will be distributed by the Secretariat.

Alasdair MacLaren  
A/Secretary  
Security Advisory Committee

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