

I was in receipt of a number of intelligence reports and anonymous information that clearly indicated that Loyalists made and deployed the device. These came from the RUC Special Branch which, in addition to being the largest SB in the UK, had at its disposal all the sophisticated equipment available to MI5. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Although such intelligence was never absolute, it had to be taken seriously by an SIO. Examples that came to me as the SIO included:

- SB reports naming local LVF suspects and indicating an association with a Loyalist bomb-maker who had a previous history of making UVIEDs.
- SB reports indicating that [REDACTED] played a role. I viewed this intelligence in the light of my knowledge and experience of earlier Loyalist devices in Belfast in relation to which it was believed [REDACTED] had played a role. I was also aware of [REDACTED] contacts with [REDACTED] Belfast Loyalists, which was relevant because the magnets used in the device were strongly believed to have come from a company located in that area.

In addition to the information from Special Branch, I was given information [REDACTED] amongst Loyalist paramilitaries indicating that the explosives had come from the UFF. It is relevant to note that I had attended the scene of two murders in 1997 in North Belfast where the UDA in Belfast and South East Antrim assisted the LVF to carry out a sectarian murder. These were the murders of Mr Devlin on 05.12.97 and Mr Trainor on 31.12.97. In the case of the murder of Mr Trainor, an Active Service Unit from C Company of the UDA carried out the murder whilst the LVF claimed it. Naturally this previous experience meant that I had to treat in a serious manner any reports of assistance from Belfast Loyalists.