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# ACPO comment on Home Affairs Committee interim report on undercover officers

**ACPO has long supported increased oversight of undercover policing and would welcome a review of RIPA**

ACPO head of crime Chief Constable Jon Murphy said:

"Undercover officers play a critical role gathering evidence and intelligence to protect communities from harm. Used correctly, the tactic is lawful, ethical, necessary and proportionate. But it is also one of the most challenging areas of operational policing and can have considerable impact on public confidence. For this reason ACPO has long supported increased oversight of undercover policing and would welcome a review of RIPA. In a February 2011 speech Sir Hugh Orde recommended there should be judicial involvement in pre-authorising operations and HMIC later proposed a role for the Office of the Surveillance Commissioner in its 2012 report. The need for clear oversight was also why chief officers took the decision to place governance of the National Domestic Extremism Unit within the Metropolitan Police structure in January 2011.

"The new College of Policing has now taken on responsibility for identifying good practice in policing and bringing it forward through policy proposals. This is a hugely positive opportunity to build on professionalism within policing with the College working alongside ACPO, which continues to represent the collective operational leadership of the police service. ACPO's legal status as a company limited by guarantee does not affect its position as the professional association for police leaders and it is worth noting that other bodies, including the College of Policing itself, are also companies limited by guarantee."

"ACPO will continue to work with the College to raise standards in this critical area of policing. A memorandum of understanding to ensure consistent and thorough handling of cases involving undercover officers was signed by the CPS, ACPO, SOCA and HMRC in June last year, further strengthening our approach to securing the best evidence and justice."

### Notes to Editors

Sir Hugh Orde speech to Liberty in Feb, 2011: Undercover policing and public trust: <http://www.acpo.police.uk/ContentPages/Speeches/SirHughOrdeSpeechtoLiberty.aspx>

HMIC report of national police units which provide intelligence on criminality associated with protest: Feb 2012  
<http://www.hmic.gov.uk/publication/review-of-national-police-units-which-provide-intelligence-on-criminality-associated-with-protest-20120202/>

The Home Affairs interim report published today is available on their website:  
<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201213/cmselect/cmhaff/837/83702.htm>

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ACPO's 311 members consist of 223 chief police officers from the home forces of assistant chief constable rank (commanders in the Metropolitan Police and City of London Police) and above, plus 60 senior police staff members from the 44 forces in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Non home forces such as British Transport Police have 25 chief police officer members and there are three members from the Service Police.

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