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RUC to PSNI: A Study of Radical Organisational Change

A thesis submitted to University of Dublin, Trinity College

for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Joanne Murphy

Trinity College Dublin

October 2008

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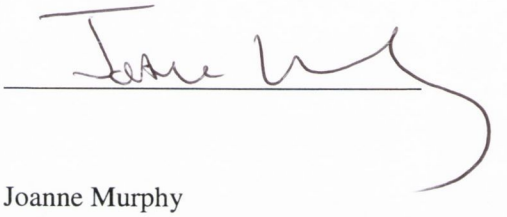

Joanne Murphy

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Summary

This aim of this thesis is explore and explain the process of organisational change which saw the Royal Ulster Constabulary become the Police Service of Northern Ireland. The research approach adopted was process based, longitudinal and multi-method, utilizing a 'single explanatory case study' method. In its focus it followed the 'processual' approach outlined by Pettigrew (Pettigrew 1990, 1997) in that it was primarily selected as a route to capturing the complexity of organizational change in a situation which has changed over time, and on many levels. The time period spanned by the research stretched from the RUC's Fundamental Review in 1996, through the Report of the Independent Commission on Policing in 1999 to the retirement of Chief Constable Ronnie Flanagan and the appointment of Hugh Orde in 2002.

The research set out to answer two central questions. The first read: *How did the police in Northern Ireland go about conducting a process of organisational change?* In answering this question, the research defines four main periods of change: the pre-story, when change was looming on the horizon; the second stage at which the complexion of change begins to be defined; the third and most dynamic phase when change is implemented and; the forth phase when the process begins to settle down to a period of equilibrium. All of these phases contain important change 'dramas' (Pettigrew 1997). Significant 'motifs' appear, some of which are only present within a discrete phase, and others which reappear throughout the narrative as a whole. From these motifs, four important themes are isolated and explored. These are: the significance of leadership; the importance of resources; the role of external agents and; the pace and sequencing of the change process.

The second question posed is more directly concerned with decisions around change within the organisation itself. It read: *Was the change strategy adopted appropriate?* This question addresses the interaction between the organisations internal processes and the challenges it faced implementing change and refocusing the organisations internal structures, symbols and practices. The research reflects on the main themes of change identified within the case (leadership, resourcing, external agents and pace-and-

sequencing) and concludes that the realised strategy was less of a linear plan than a messy and constantly adaptive and reactive approach to getting the organisation through the change. In this sense it was less a rational understanding of strategy formulation, than an approach which lived in the heads, and was articulated through the actions, of the organisation's leaders. In this it reflects a concern about how strategies are defined in principal, but enacted in very different ways in practice.

This research has set out to make a contribution to the existing literature in three areas: that of the understanding of organisational change generally and strategic change in particular; changes in policing organisations; and literature on processual methodology. .

Acknowledgements

This thesis was completed under the supervision of Professor John Murray. My sincere thanks go to him for his unfailing interest, enthusiasm and advice. This work would not have been finished without his support. The staff and students of the School of Business have been consistently helpful and sustaining. In particular I'd like to mention Valerie McCarthy and Mary Lee Rhodes whose practical help, support and encouragement has been invaluable. I would also like to express my thanks to Professor Colm Kearney who initially stood in as my Supervisor, before John's return.

Thanks also go to IRCHSS for the practical support they provided through their Postgraduate Scholarship Scheme. Many people contributed towards the development of this thesis and gave generously of their time. I'd especially like to mention Brendan McAllister, who like all the best mediators, found a path where none had existed before. Former Assistant Chief Constable Stephen White, my PSNI Liaison Officer Chief Superintendent Genny Belton and Dr James Drennan all provided extensive help and support.

Thanks also go to my Mother for her help with the kids and for everything she has done for me. I'd also like to mention my children Oisin, Clara and Naoise, for being simultaneously wonderful, extraordinary and no help whatsoever. Enormous gratitude goes to my husband Conall McDevitt for coming up with the original idea and then having the sense to stay out of it execution. He has been supportive in ways too numerous to name and will always have my love and my thanks.

For my father Joseph Murphy

Because you always believed

I tan i epi tas

Best of all he loved the fall

The leaves yellow on the cottonwoods

Leaves floating on the trout streams

And above the hills

The high blue windless skies

Now he will be a part of them forever

Ernest Hemingway - Idaho - 1939

List of Abbreviations

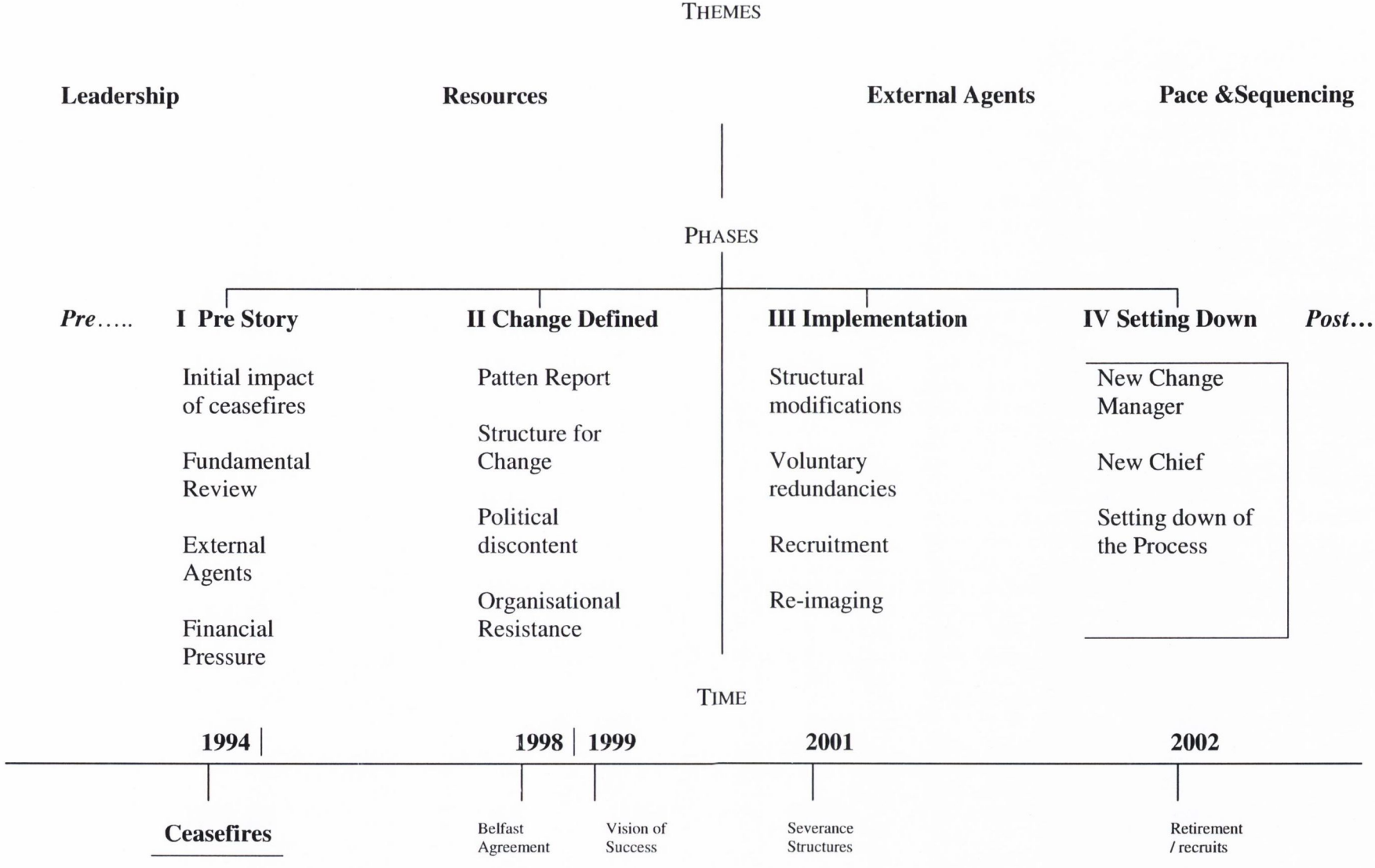
ACC	Assistant Chief Constable
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
CAJ	Campaign for the Administration of Justice
CLMC	Combined Loyalist Military Command
CMT	Change Management Team
CNR	Catholic nationalist republican
CRC	Community Relations Council
DCC	Deputy Chief Constable
DCU	District Command Unit
DSU	Divisional Support Units
DUP	Democratic Unionist Council
GAA	Gaelic Athletic Association
HQMSU	Head Quarters Mobile Support Units
ICPNI	Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland
IRA (also PIRA)	Irish Republican Army (Provisional)
NI	Northern Ireland
NIO	Northern Ireland Office
OO	Orange Order
PSNI	Police Service of Northern Ireland
PUL	Protestant unionist loyalist
RUC	Royal Ulster Constabulary
SAS	Special Air Service
SDLP	Social Democratic and Labour Party
SF	Sinn Fein
UDP	Ulster Democratic Party
UDR	Ulster Defence Regiment
UUP	Ulster Unionist Party
USC	Ulster Special Constabulary
UTV	Ulster Television

UVF	Ulster Volunteer Force

Table 1

Major Events : 1999-2002

1999	
6th Sept	Establishment of the change team under Tim Lewis
9th Sept	Publication of Patten
Sept - Dec	Change Team recruited
Dec 23rd Dec	Flanagan contacts A. Kakabadse and asks him to assist Lewis writes to change team advising them of process
2000	
24th Jan	Meeting of key stakeholders to progress main change issues
29th Jan	South African exchange
15th Feb	Position paper on culture distributed to top team
29th Feb	Award of George Cross collectively to RUC
13th April	Decision to pursue a 'Vision of Success'
April	Creation of 'operational inspectorate'
May	Appointment of Tom Constantine as Oversight Commissioner
June	Release and withdrawal of first Gov Implementation Plan on Patten
Sept	Vision of Success – responses
Oct	Consolidated Vision of Success
Nov	Original aim for DCU implementation – moved to April 01
Dec	MNI facilitated visit to San Diego
2001	
Jan	Identification of DCU commanders
April	DCU implementation
August	Revised Implementation Plan Catholic Church, Irish Government and SDLP endorse PSNI and call for Catholics to join
Nov 4th Nov 15th	Title changes from RUC to PSNI First new recruits begin training PSNI granted £1million funding for RUC memorial garden
Dec Dec 12th	Tim Lewis takes early retirement. New Change Manager appointed (ACC Sam Kincaid) Policing Board meet and agree new PSNI badge and symbols Police Ombudsman Report into Omagh Bomb Published
2002	
March	Sir Ronnie Flanagan retires as Chief Constable
April	New Recruits graduate into PSNI, new uniform, emblems and badge come into service
Sept	Hugh Orde takes up post as Chief Constable
Oct	First GAA match between PSNI & Garda


THEMES
Leadership
Resources
External Agents
Pace &Sequencing
PHASES
Pre.....
I Pre Story
II Change Defined
III Implementation
IV Setting Down
Post...
Initial impact of ceasefires
Fundamental Review
External Agents
Financial Pressure
Patten Report
Structure for Change
Political discontent
Organisational Resistance
Structural modifications
Voluntary redundancies
Recruitment
Re-imaging
New Change Manager
New Chief
Setting down of the Process
TIME
1994
1998
1999
2001
2002
Ceasefires
Belfast Agreement
Vision of Success
Severance Structures
Retirement / recruits

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1. CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH

The Belfast or 'Good Friday' Agreement which was signed by the British and Irish Governments on the 10th of April 1998 heralded a new beginning for politics and policing in Northern Ireland. As a major breakthrough for the Northern Ireland Peace Process it set in train a series of events which lead to the devolution of power to a Northern Ireland power sharing Assembly. Policing, always a major issue of contention within the 'Troubles', was deemed too sensitive an area to be included directly in this negotiation process. Instead, shortly after the Agreement, the British Government appointed Chris Patten, the ex Governor of Hong Kong and Cabinet Minister to head up an Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland. The Commission reported in September 1999 and recommended a wholesale change in the way in which policing was conducted.

Many of Patten's recommendations relate specifically to a change in the structure and processes of how the new police service (the PSNI) is managed. These changes related to strategic planning, training, community policing and community relations. The organisation developed a change management strategy to implement those recommendations through a 'change team' initially managed by Assistant Chief Constable Tim Lewis, responsible directly to the Chief Constable Ronnie Flanagan. This research sets out to analyse that radical organisational change process: its context, actions and outcomes. As a study of radical organisational change, it defines 'radical change' as a transformatory shift from one organisational form to another (McNulty & Ferlie 2004). One of the outcomes of the change process was the name change of the organisation itself (Royal Ulster Constabulary to Police Service of Northern Ireland). Throughout this thesis the organisation is referred to at different times by both names (RUC or PSNI) as the timeframe for study overlaps the period of name change. More specifically, when the organisation is referred to by the name RUC it refers to the period preceding November 2001, while the name PSNI indicts the period of study after that date. The term RUC/PSNI indicates the totality of the process within the timeframe of this research.

The research approach adopted was process based, longitudinal and multi-method, utilizing a 'single explanatory case study' method. In its focus it followed the 'processual' approach outlined by Pettigrew (Pettigrew 1990, 1997) in that it was primarily selected as a route to capturing the complexity of organizational change in a situation which has changed over time, and on many levels. However, it differed from the 'classic' model in that it did not attempt to look comparatively at a number of cases; rather it stuck to one large general case. There were two reasons for the deviation. Firstly, the case in question is large, almost unique and data rich and secondly, the resources available (in particular those of time and the necessity of a 'sole investigator') realistically pointed towards one single in-depth analysis. At an early stage of the research when the design was still being defined it was mooted with the PSNI that the 'comparative' aspect of the 'processual' approach could be satisfied by the elucidation of a number of small cases within the larger general case - an embedded approach (Yin 2003). However, these initial plans did not survive the access negotiation process. The data collection was also largely limited to access to the top-team, a criticism which is made of some processual research (Dawson 2003b, Buchanan & Boddy 1992) but which was unavoidable in this case, and not unusual in terms of processual research generally (Pettigrew 1992). However, attempts were made to 'cross check' data with research contacts at a number of levels within the organisation and outside it. Originally, the research had set out to explore the success or otherwise of the change process. After negotiation with the organisation the focus of the research questions changed slightly and the eventual questions agreed upon were as follows:

How did the Police in Northern Ireland go about conducting a process of organisational change?

and

Was the change strategy adopted appropriate?

The access issues alluded to above relate in some way to the difficulties that present themselves to researchers doing work in the context of a politically and communally divided society. This researcher's experience was no different to that of others who has been through similar

negotiation processes with the same organisation (Brewer 1991; Mulcahy 2000). However, as someone who has worked within the community relations sector in NI, this researcher had an awareness of the difficulties that may present from the outset and was also in a position to call on the help and support of others who had worked in a professional capacity with the police previously. Both the tacit knowledge of the researcher and the contact with those engaged on the periphery of the process significantly contributed to how the research was able to progress: a previously recognised advantage in such access situations (Dawson 2003b). Data analysis was carried out through generally advocated techniques of data reduction: with the case narrative attempting to provide open contextual descriptions of the dynamic change process (Dawson 2003b; Pettigrew 1997; Miles & Huberman 1994).

The thesis begins with a general literature review of the study of 'change' and 'changing (Bennis 1966), which narrows to a focus on strategic change in large complex public sector organisations, and policing organisations. It then moves on in Chapter Three to set the change process of the RUC in its historical, political and social context in order bring into the analysis the rich environmental circumstances within which the organisation was operating (Pettigrew 2003). Chapter Four sets out the research methodology in detail, as well as laying out the challenges and serendipity of the actual data collection process. The analytical framework used to make sense of the data is outlined in Chapter Five, as are the coding mechanisms used and an explanation of decisions taken to pursue some lines of enquiry, rather than others. In Chapter Six, the analytical process interacts with the data to provide the case narrative. This is divided into four phases each of which encompass particular issues or change 'breakpoints' (Pettigrew 1990). In the first of these phases we identify the 'Pre-Story' – the 'preparation period' when change was looming but not quite there, and there was a sense within the organisation and outside it, that movement was afoot. The second phase is the period in which the 'change' begins to be defined. This is the time at which change became inevitable, where the political environment 'tips' and the organisation is plunged into a process it can no longer control. The third and substantive stage is the 'Implementation Period' – when the change process really began to 'bite' and genuine upheaval, rather than its anticipation, became the issue. The fourth period and the briefest discussed, is the 'Setting Down' phase. This is when some elements of change became 'normal' practice, when leadership altered at all levels and the organisation

transition was solidly entrenched. Chapter Seven builds on the narrative focus of Chapter Six, but looks at four key themes and how they arose and came to be realised within the case. These themes are: leadership; resources; external change agents; and pace and sequencing of the change process. It looks back at the considerable literature on organisational change, and in particular strategic change, and attempts to ascertain what the RUC case tells us about change and changing in large complex organisations, policing organisations and the development of change under pressure. The conclusion draws together the research as a whole and makes an assessment on how far the thesis has gone to answer the original research questions. It attempts to identify where the research has made a contribution to the existing literature on change strategic change in particular, change in policing and the empirical application of a processual methodology. It also looks at the implications and relevance of this research for those implementing change in practice, and pinpoints some further work which could contribute to understanding in this area in the future.

2. CHAPTER TWO A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE: STRATEGY, POLICING AND ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The literature on organisational change is large and varied. This Chapter considers the current state of theoretical and empirical research on change and particularly change in large, complex public sector organisations and policing organisations. It includes a discussion on alternative definitions of organisational and strategic change, and makes a distinction between '*theories of change and theories of changing*' (Bennis 1965). In doing so it reviews existing work on underlying motors of change, as well as a discussion on the pace and tempo of change and how the divergent perspectives often held by researchers, change agents and participants influence change research. The sheer volume of research on change and the thematic areas associated with it mean that this Chapter can provide a basic coverage of concepts associated with change and changing that will re-emerge and be discussed in other aspects of this thesis.

By exploring perspectives that have been adopted previously by researchers in this field, this Chapter will also elaborate on the research perspective adopted by this research and the reasons for its selection. By concluding with a discussion on existing research that looks specifically at change processes in large complex organisations and within policing contexts, it will assess how far the existing literature goes in answering two central questions: *how do we understand the process of organisational change? And how does our current understanding relate to public sector organisations in general and policing organisations in particular?*

2.2 AN OVERVIEW OF APPROACHES AND DEFINITIONS

While it can be argued that within organisations some level of change is constant, it seems important to differentiate this 'ordinary' change' from the type of 'organisational change' that alters how an organisation functions, what form it takes or how it allocates its resources (Sheldon 1980; Huber 1993). Burnes (2004) makes the point that organisations themselves can define change both as a one off event or as a continuous process. Within this thesis we are concerned with observing and analysing a process of 'radical change' and we define such change as a transformatory shift from one organisational form to another (McNulty & Ferlie 2004).

The study of change is multi-disciplinary in nature. As such, those concerned with it adopt many perspectives. Such diverse approaches give rise to a rich but unwieldy seam of thinking on organisational change, which is at once an advantage and a disadvantage to any potential study, especially when it is necessary to focus alternate, divergent theories into a coherent and manageable form. Definitions of what constitutes organisational change vary widely and often betray their distinct theoretical origins. For example, the essentially cognitive approach to the study of organisational change by Ford and Ford (1994) conveys a concern for the dynamics that occur between individuals within a change process, rather than the process itself. As they comment: '*Change is a phenomenon of time. It is the way people talk about the event in which something appears to become, or turn into, something else, where the 'something else' is seen as a result or outcome*' (Ford & Ford,1994: 759). This is change at a general level, but it illustrates that theorists, (like Ford & Ford) who adopt a broadly organisational development approach to the complexities of change, share a concern with 'people' as the key forces within the process. Indeed, Porras and Robertson (1992) have defined the organisational development approach to change thus:

'*Change is a set of behavioural science based theories, values, strategies and techniques aimed at the planned change of the organisational work setting for the purpose of enhancing individual development and improving organisational performance, through the alteration of the organisational members ' on the job' behaviours*' (Porras & Robertson 1992: 723).

This concern with linking 'individual development' so closely to 'organisational performance' is also characteristic of an organisational development approach, as is the association of 'behavioural science' with organisational change. Indeed, those who promote cognitive change frameworks within a general organisational development perspective (Weick 1995; Ford 1995) see organisational development as closely aligned to individual cognitive change.

From a similar viewpoint, the large body of work on organisational learning (Senge 2000) goes further and asserts that organisational development is intrinsically linked to individual development within an organisational setting. The organisational learning model, which owes its theoretical foundations to system dynamics, focuses on maximising the ability of individuals and organisations to be flexible, adaptable and productive (Senge 2000).

Strategic change theorists have a different perspective and one that identifies change much more closely with executive led planning. Rajogopalan and Spreitzer (1997) make the important distinction between organisational change and strategic change by defining strategic change as something which occurs in relation to the organisations strategy alone: other changes which may occur are not necessarily regarded as falling into the category of strategic change. Van de Ven and Poole have defined this 'purposive change' (Bower 2000) as being concerned with the difference in the 'form, quality or state' of an organisation's alignment with its external environment and its performance (Van de Ven & Poole 1995). This focus on external alignment and top down development is very different from the essentially internal one adopted by proponents of an organisational development perspective.

Strategic change processes are regarded as predominately situational when viewed through an institutional lens (Bloodgood 2000). Although institutional theory is not normally regarded as a rationalization of organisational change itself, rather than as an explanation for the isomorphism of organisations within a given population (Greening 1994) it does provide a robust framework to the change debate. By legitimating certain changes and not others, institutional environments can guide and effect change in complex ways (Di'Maggio & Powell 1991).

Population ecology is another perspective that regards environmental selection as the primary determinate in organisational survival and development (Hannan & Freeman, 1984). While largely sceptical about the possibilities of change within organisations, population ecologists observe change via the births and deaths of organisations and their forms. Structural inertia is also regarded as a key issue within any change process.

As definitions of organisational change become more specific to the organisational context, language used also becomes more concrete. Huber (1993) takes a more prosaic approach to defining change and also adds an internal focus to the debate. By concentrating on the activities and actions that occur within organisations - those activities which themselves constitute the change process, Huber provides a practical framework for looking at the *process* of organisational change within a given organisation. He defines change as alterations '*in how an organisation functions, who its members are, what form it takes, or how it allocates its*

resources'. (Huber 1993: 216). Pettigrew, Ferlie and McKee in their 1992 study of the strategic change process within the NHS define the study of change in a similar way. " *For the analyst interested in the theory and practice of changing, the task is to identify the variety and mixture of cause of change and to explore through time some of the conditioned contexts under which these mixtures occur*" (Pettigrew, Ferlie, McKee, 1992: 269). The reference to 'conditioned contexts' illustrates an interest in the situational complexities of the change process and a belief that change itself is intrinsically linked to these wider, contextual variables (in particular the passage of time) and cannot be fully understood without it.

Now we turn to an analysis and assessment of current thinking around 'theories of change' and 'theories of changing' (Bennis 1965).

2.3. THEORIES OF CHANGE: SOME BIG IDEAS

When Bennis (1965) made a distinction between 'theories of change' (how and why change happens) and 'theories of changing' (how to engender change and steer it) he defined the two big debates around the issue of organisational change. Porras and Robertson (1992) have looked further into these two distinct processes and labelled them 'change process theory' and 'implementation theory'.

Perhaps the most comprehensive 'theory' of the underlying antecedents of change has been developed by Van de Ven and Poole in their work on ideal change theories and motors of change (Van de Ven 1995). By gathering together and analysing a considerable body of work on change Van de Ven and Poole distinguish four 'ideal type' development theories or motors that facilitate the integration of pluralist change theories. These four types are; Life cycle, Dialectic, Evolutionary and the Teleological change motor. All types arise from existing change theories and in their purist forms reflect well-known development processes. As they effectively incorporate, reflect and seek to explain the driving forces behind general theories of organisational change, this section will spend sometime looked at each type and the interaction between them in more detail.

2.3.1 Life cycle, Dialectic, Evolutionary and Teleological Change Motors

In developing their integrated typology of change Van de Ven and Poole developed key metaphors, logics, event progressions and generating forces that illustrate the basis and development of each of the motors within an organisational framework. For example the metaphor of the Life Cycle motor is that of organic growth with immanent programme logic and a linear and irreversible event progression. Its generating force is, unsurprisingly that of a prefigured programme with its rules regulated by nature, logic or an institutional framework. In comparison the Evolutionary motor's key metaphor is one of competitive survival, with a logic that prescribes natural selection among competitors within a population; an event sequence which is recurrent, cumulative and follows a sequence of variety, selection and retention. Its generating force is resource scarcity and competition. Unsurprisingly, the Dialectical motor takes its theoretical form from Hegelian conflict theory and has a key metaphor of opposition. Its immanent logic is one of contradictory forces and the thesis – antithesis – synthesis model, and the nature of its event progression follows the same theme; that of a recurrent, discontinuous sequence of confrontation, conflict and synthesis between contradictory values or events. The generating force is conflict and confrontation between opposing forces and entities. The last 'motor' identified by Van de Ven and Poole is perhaps the most interesting from the perspective of this research project. A teleological change process is, according to the authors, one that is characterised by a metaphor of purposeful co-operation. Its logic is of an envisioned end state – a process of goal setting strongly linked to strategic planning. Event progression occurs as a recurrent, discontinuous sequence of goal setting, implementation and adaptation and its generating force is one of goal enactment, consensus on means of co-operation and symbiosis. This motor is socially constructive in nature and relies on the ability of individuals to see goals and envision ways to achieve those goals.

While these four 'motors' identify specific change processes underway and their different modes of operating, Van de Ven and Poole acknowledge that very rarely do these 'motors' operate singularly within an organisational setting. Rather it is the interaction of these forces that is of interest and allows for the identification of other theories of change through Van de Ven and Poole's typology. The 'unit' and 'mode' of change are also important concepts within this typology. By 'unit' Van de Ven and Poole refer to the distinction between a change process happening within a single entity or the 'relationship' between a number of entities that are

interacting with each other through ecological or institutional processes. This concept is very interesting because while Van de Ven and Poole assert that dialectical and evolutionary processes operate on multiple entities and that life cycle and teleological processes operate in single entities, they do acknowledge that dialectical processes can act on one entity, when the entity is in a dialectical relationship with its environment. The 'mode' of change refers to the way in which the 'motors' channel the development of the change process. Mode can be either prescribed (life cycle, evolutionary) or constructive (teleological, dialectical). By differentiating two 'modes' Van de Ven and Poole also make it clear that prescribed change tends to produce first order change or change within the existing organisational template. The 'constructive' mode tends to move the organisation towards second order change or 'template change'.

Van de Ven and Poole insist that the most important aspect of change theory is the underlying mechanism or 'motor' of change, which dictates how the process itself develops. All theories of change, they say, are the result of one or more motors of change on an entity or entity's development. Motors may come into play at different times and impact upon different parts of the organisation and the identification of these motors and the interaction between them is the key to understanding change processes. Van de Ven and Poole insist that all theories of change can be found to have their origins in these motors, or within the interaction of two or more motors identified. For example, strategic change operates with the teleological motor as the primary mechanism of change. As Austin and Bartunek state '*underlying most strategic change theories is the understanding that planned change triggered by goal orientated managers can trigger change in both an organisation and its environment*' (Austin and Bartunek 2001:10). Alternatively studies of change momentum have generally relied on the evolutionary motor as the driving force. The exception to this is theories of punctuated equilibrium which rely on an interaction of the evolutionary and teleological motor to produce the incremental, punctuated by revolutionary, change process. For Van de Ven and Poole the most important aspect of research on change is the identification of the specific motor or the interaction of a number of motors of change within the subject studied. In order to do this effectively they suggest a research approach which involves the collection of rich data and an analysis of it for specific motors (template matching), while maintaining sensitivity to the context of organisational development.

2.3.2 The Pace and Type of Change: Alternative Perspectives

One of the key issues within the change debate and one which arises in the above typology is that of pace and spacing of change, sometimes referred to as continuous and episodic change (Weick 1999), first and second order change (Bartunek 1994) and radical and incremental change (Porras & Silvers 1991) . For some theorists all change is incremental and ongoing adjustments are the basis for organisational change (Orlikowski 1996). For Weick and Quinn much of this debate depends on perspective; from close up all change looks incremental - from far away shifts seem episodic (Weick & Quinn 1999). These distinctions between 'incremental' and 'radical' change extend throughout the literature and are used to identify temporal variations in change processes – something that Van de Ven and Poole would regard as the uneven interaction of different change motors on an entities development. Weick and Quinn comment that the phrase 'episodic change' is used '*to group together organisational changes that tend to be infrequent, discontinuous and intentional*' (1999:365). The presumption is that episodic change occurs during periods of divergence when organisations are moving away from their equilibrium conditions (Weick 1999). This view that episodic change is linked to 'environmental fit' has a teleological dimension which draws upon the need for individuals within an organisation to 'take action' to bring it back into line with its external situation. This type of change occurs in distinct periods and follows Lewin's traditional unfreeze – movement – refreeze paradigm (Lewin 1951). It may involve a change in the cognitive processes of organisation members and the creation of a strong alternative schema (Bartunek & Moch 1994) or in the structure or processes of organisations (Tushman 1985). The periods of organisational life that lie between stages of episodic change have been defined by some theorists as 'epochs of convergence'(Nadler 1995) during which the interdependences within the parts of an organisation or system deepen. Convergence is disrupted by periods of divergence with deep change as the result. Such a view corresponds to a particularly salient theoretical construction that appears in Van de Ven and Poole's work as the interaction of the teleological and evolutionary motor. The theory of punctuated equilibrium arises from the work of palaeontologists Gould and Eldridge (1972) who in their work on fossil records put forward an alternative evolutionary perspective to the traditional, incremental Darwinian approach. Their view is that evolution did not occur as an even, incremental process. Rather periods of species stability were 'punctuated' by short bursts of radical change resulting in significant changes wrought in relatively short (by the standards of

palaeontology) timescales. In applying this theory to the development of organisations many theorists have found resonance with the idea of an organisation 'losing fit' with its environment and then having to change radically to 'achieve' that fit again. An organisation loses fit in the first place because of its tightened interdependences that are the result of the process of convergence that precedes divergence. Gersick, in her analysis of the punctuated equilibrium model identifies the existence of a '*a highly durable underlying order or deep structure*' which actively prevents change during periods of convergence and then '*disassembles, reconfigures and enforces whole scale transformations*' during revolutionary punctuations (Gersick 1991:14). One of the interesting points of Gersick's work is her assertion that essentially conflicting views of organisational adaptability (such as those put forward by resource dependency theorists or those adopting a population ecology approach) may be equally applicable to organisations at different times, depending on where they are in terms of transition or equilibrium. The 'deep structure' which is so important to Gersick's analysis consists of the fundamental choices made by a system or organisation; the parts into which it has organised and the activities which go on within those parts. The crucial characteristic of this deep structure is its ability to generate a strong 'inertial' force that prevents change. For a revolutionary change to occur the old system must be dismantled and a new one arise in its place. This concept of inertia is key to why organisations do not change in accordance with, and at the same speed as, their environment (Pfeffer 1997). Indeed Lewin in his seminal work on organisational change cites inertia as a key determinant in why organisations must go through change processes. Lewin's thesis, that equilibrium was the main impediment to change, sees the removal of inertia (the unfreezing) as a key to such change (Lewin 1951). This is also reflected in Tushman's and Romanelli's work on convergence and reorientation (1985).

Population ecology is one approach which emphasises environmental selection (the evolutionary motor) as the primary mechanism for changes in organisational populations (Hannan & Freeman 1989). Within the population ecology model the role of structural inertia is also important. Hannan and Freeman (1984) suggest that core and peripheral organisational structures respond and relate to change differently. Core structures (like formal authority) tend to have a close relationship with organisational longevity, which makes discontinuous change difficult because of its effect on organisational identity and goals. Peripheral structures (such as marketing

mechanisms) are less aligned to organisational identity, less likely to have developed over long periods of time and therefore easier to change. However, contradictory findings exist on the relationship between discontinuous environmental change and organisational change and also on the probability of organisational failure occurring when core change takes place. While Hannan and Freeman (1984) assert in their theory of structural inertia that there is a relationship between discontinuous environmental change and organisational change and that this relationship also results in organisational failure as a more likely occurrence of organisational change. However, Kelly and Ambugey (1991) in their study of the US airline industry contradict these inertia theory predictions and maintain that discontinuous environmental change was not associated with an increased probability of organisational change and that additionally, organisational change was not related to organisational survival. Interesting, Kelly and Ambugey (1991) conclude that there is a need to define an organisation's history of change, especially in relation to variables like organisational learning, management values related to change and implementation capabilities.

While arguments for radical or second order change are powerful, an alternative vision of a change process is that of an organisation making small, incremental changes that add up to major alterations in their developmental patterns. A common linkage made within the literature is that change that is continuous is often also emergent (whereas change which is radical is more often planned). The idea that strategy formulation as an emergent process has been put forward by Mintzberg, Ahlstrand & Lampel, as a way to illustrate how continuous change can be a developmental and adaptive process (Mintzberg, Ahlstrand & Lampel 1998). As Weick and Quinn comment ' *The distinctive quality of continuous change is the idea that small continuous adjustments, created simultaneously across units, can cumulate and create substantial change*' (Weick & Quinn 1999: 275). In this paradigm inertia takes the form of tendencies to normalise through periods of fast mini-change episodes (Vaughan 1996). Continuity and scale are key to this debate and again, whether radical or continuous change is perceived is often determined by perspective. The development of organisational learning strategies is key to those promoting incremental or continuous change for, if change is to arise from within the organisation, then capacity building internally is key (Senge 2000). The appropriate use of organisational memory is also a consideration for those interested in the 'learning organisation'. As Karl Weick states:

'*If an organisation is to learn anything, then the distribution of its memory, the accuracy of that memory and the conditions under which that memory is treated as a constraint become crucial characteristics of organising*' (Weick 1979: 206).

Some would argue that continuous emergent change is a much more realistic proposition for organisations which are complex, adaptive and made up of the kind of semi-structure which facilitates ongoing adjustment (Brown 1997). Perspectives which concentrate on 'edge of chaos' theory relate well how organisations can function with loosely defined structures and parameters which allow for frequent innovation and yet retain organisational integrity (Mc Daniel 1997; Brown & Eisenhardt 1997). Burgelman (1991) makes the distinction between 'induced' and 'autonomous' processes within an organisational change setting. He defines induced processes as ones that exist inside the current strategy of the organisation. Autonomous processes are those which exist outside this strategy and are additional to the ongoing development of the organisation. These 'episodic' events interact with normal strategic planning and it is the exchange of the two that drives organisational change. Stacey (1995) attempts to present change processes as part of a complex adaptive system that can be understood best as a operating in non-linear ways and that are capable of stability and instability simultaneously.

2.4 THEORIES OF CHANGING

Dunphy (1996) has stated that five distinct properties tend to be found in any inclusive theory of changing. These properties include: a basic metaphor of the nature of the organisation; an analytical framework to understand the organisational change process; an ideal change model that assesses both a direction for change and; values to be used in assessing the success of the change intervention; an intervention theory that specifies actions to be taken and a definition of the role of change agent. Beer and Nohria (2000) also define a conceptual framework for change processes but their analysis concentrates on 'theories of changing' rather than the more theoretical underpinnings of change itself. In their work 'Breaking the Code of Change' they collect together a number of divergent perspectives on change and changing within organisational frameworks and deduce from this collection two primary perspectives on changing and a way to move those perspectives forward and integrate their application. Beer and Nohria (2000) begin their analysis of the purpose and means of organisational change with the attractive assertion that the '*code of change has not yet been broken*' (Beer & Nohria 2000).

They acknowledge that there is no one way to understand change but rather that there is a need to develop a conceptual framework to place theories and practices of change into perspective. In defining specific approaches to change as well as the why and how of change processes, they identify different perspectives on change and one which is less grounded in the theoretical concerns of the antecedents of organisational development and more in a concern for how this development works in practice and how change can be delivered successfully. The basic premise of Beer and Nohria's argument is that 'theories of changing' can be assigned a place in one of two groups. These two change 'archetypes' are labelled Theory E (economic value driven change) and Theory O – (human capacity driven change) with a conceptual framework concerned with the tension which lies between them. In an effort to link these two detached theories, Beer and Nohria advocate 'holding the tension simultaneously' and sequentially applying both theories – leading with E following with O. As they state: "*A synthesis of E and O theories requires simultaneous and equal emphasis on optimising shareholder value and development of organisational capacity*" (Beer & Nohria, 2000: 26). Therefore economic capacity and organisational capability must both be increased. A sequencing strategy is adopted to integrate both perspectives in the most advantageous way, with E preceding O in terms of implementation. This is the contribution of Beer and Nohria's to the actual application of change management theories and techniques within an organisational situation. Interesting, Dumphy and Stace (1992) have also identified a four stage 'continuum' of change that comprises: fine tuning; incremental adjustment; modular transformation and; corporate transformation. Kanter et al (1992) define instead a 'broad stroke' approach (rapid overall change) or a 'long march' approach (incremental change over a long period of time) to the implementation of organisational change processes. John Kotter's eight step process for implementing successful transformations is probably the best known practical approach to the reality of creating and sustaining change within organisations (Kotter 1996). Kotter's assertion that organisational leaders should seek to create a sense of urgency for change processes to take hold is significant and also reflected in the work of Pettigrew et al (1992).

2.5 NARROWING THE FOCUS: STRATEGIC CHANGE AND CHANGING

In their work looking at approaches to the study of change Rajagopalan and Spreitzer (1997) make a distinction between the 'process school' of strategic change and the 'content school'. The

process approach looks closely at the antecedents of the change process and regards time as the fundamental unit of analysis within a study of strategic change. The 'content' school adopts a fundamentally different approach and one which models itself on a rational perspective where change is a sequential, planned search for optimal solutions to defined problems, based on previously defined objectives (Ansoff 1965; Ginsburg 1988). The authors comment that these two schools of thought have arisen almost independently and leave a number of important questions unanswered in terms of the strategic change processes. They attempt to bring these theories together under three theoretical lenses; rational, learning and cognitive.

Pettigrew (1987) goes further and argues that both the strategic management and population ecology models were too determinist in their view of strategic adaptation and argues for a broader approach which takes into consideration the cognitive, strategic and power sharing processes among executives. Using Stephen Pepper's (1942) contextualism as a philosophical model (Pepper 1942), Pettigrew identified outer and inner organisational contexts to explain among other things, the differential achievement of change objectives (Pettigrew 1990). Another crucial issue within Pettigrew's process focused perspective on strategic change is his concern for the interactions that block or facilitate organisational adaptation and the need to explore these processes in a time sensitive way. He puts forward a model of strategic redirection that is overlaid by these three dimensions of cognitive perspective, strategic priorities and power reallocation. He also seeks to convey the 'embeddedness' of the organisation in its political, social and historical context (Pettigrew, Ferlie & McKee 1992). Such concerns tie in with Greening and Gray's (Greening & Gray 1994) comment that the polarisation of perspectives on organisational change have recently given way to this 'interaction of choice and context' when looking at organisational change processes. Pettigrew is quick to make the point that in real life policy formulation and implementation are interactive and muddled, and researchers should resist the temptation to seek to resolve such tensions. Dawson too, shares this concern for an accurate reflection of organisational change processes (Dawson 2003a). Most importantly however, is the centrality of 'time' as a measure of analysis within the work of Pettigrew and other processualists. From another perspective, Pollit has also recently reflected on the neglected nature of the passage of time as a vital, pervasive and neglected dimension within the wider public policy arena (Pollit 2008). Richard Laughlin (1991) has also argued for the need to build alternative processual models of organisational transition and transformation in response to

environmental disturbance. His four models of organisational change (rebuttal; reorientation; colonization and; evolution) are derived from existing perspectives and also draw on Habermas' critical theory (Laughlin 1991). By making the analogy with the public sector change sought by the UK government at the time his paper was written (and pertinent to the RUC / PSNI case) he makes the point that economic pressure alone will not trigger second order (or as he terms it ' a colonisation' change) necessarily. Indeed it is more likely to cause a first order 'reorientation' as his Church of England case study shows. This concentration on the external environment as a driver of strategic change does not however, fully account for the complex forces for change that exist within many organisations.

Recently Pettigrew has gone further and identified three inter-related lenses or perspectives (that of the historian, the social anthropologist and the political analyst) that represent the simultaneous analysis of context, process and content which go further in unravelling this complexity (Pettigrew, in Cummings and Wilson, 2003). In attempting to 'catch reality in flight' Pettigrew adopts a stance which is consistent with his earlier work and that reinforces the temporal inter-connectness of the strategic change process. He recognises that strategy formulation and implementation are fundamentally connected processes and the importance of leaders as gatekeepers and enablers / thwarters of change. By arguing for longitudinal, processual methods he highlights the importance of comparison, contrast, continuity as well as an awareness of change over time. In a discussion of 'process' itself he uses a definition, which resonates with the methodological framework he outlines: *'process is a sequence of individual and collective events, actions and activities unfolding overtime in context'* (Pettigrew, in Cummings & Wilson, 2003: 309). Crucially for the RUC / PSNI case study his analysis (as fits the conceptual lenses he advocates) includes a concern for power and an understanding that little can be done without a consideration of it within the change process: *'One can only fight power with power, hence politics and political behaviour and its outcomes become a key factor in the change process'* (Pettigrew, in Cummings & Wilson: 312).

Another factor in the study of strategic change which has been identified by Bergh and Fairbank (2002) is the need to effectively measure and test strategic change in a reliable way. They identify three factors; reliability assumptions of change variables, correlations between the change variable and its initial measurement and the selection of unbiased measurement

alternatives, as key methodological requirements. Pettigrew also assesses the interrelated factors that can signal the success or failure of a change initiative. He asserts that definitions of success can include ratings of the quality, quantity and pace of change or trade off's among those three. He also perceives success to be only really measurable against self proclaimed targets and recognises that who is doing the assessing is also of vital importance. As he states '*Most change processes do not attract universal acclaim. There is likely to be a mixed bag of supporters, doubters, and opponents, and individuals may move between groups over time*' (Pettigrew, in Beer & Nohria, 2000:250). These factors may be important when measuring the significance of the organisational change process undergone by the RUC in its journey to become the PSNI.

2.6 CHANGE IN LARGE COMPLEX ORGANISATIONS

While a great deal of work has been done looking at the antecedents, implications and results of organisational change processes in the private sector, much less has been done on the public sector and on change which is closely associated with political transition. Newman (2000) in her study of organisational transformation during institutional upheaval, documents a process of organisational change that she regards as quantifiably different from that defined in normal politically stable contexts. Using institutional change and the fall of communism in central and Eastern Europe as her focus she suggests an inverted U shaped relationship between institution level change and transformative organisational change. While her definitions make her research difficult to relate to the RUC/PSNI (her conceptualisation of institutional upheaval is one of rapid and pervasive change in the norms and values that underlie and legitimate economic activity and goes well beyond the level of institutional change in Northern Ireland during the transformative process under study), nevertheless she does make a persuasive argument that when institutional change is too pervasive and extreme it can make it extremely difficult for managers to find appropriate 'organising templates' around which to coalesce (Lawrence & Dyer 1983). Another example of work done on strategic change in a large complex system is that of Zajac and Kraatz's study of change in the US higher education industry (1993). This work is useful because it uses longitudinal data spanning two decades to determine in what way restructuring has been successfully used as an adaptive response. While it adopts a 'diametric forces model' (in keeping with the environmental dialectic identified by Van de Ven and Poole) Zajac and Kraatz conclude, in contradiction to ecological theory, that restructuring is a

'*predictable, common and performance enhancing response to changing environmental conditions*'(Zajac & Kraatz 1993:84). Interestingly, they also make the point that while it might be easy to assume that organisations in non-profit sectors do not face the same pressures for restructuring (and indeed strategic change) as those in for-profit industries do, in fact it appears that changes in environmental circumstances encountered by non-profit sectors create pressures for change, similar or greater than those experienced in for-profit industries. Zajac and Kraatz are critical of much of the existing research which places too much emphasis on ecological or institutional perspectives and instead they have emphasised the need for structure – environment co-alignment. The longitudinal nature of their study and the variables they use to measure strategic change (modes of restructuring, specific predictors of restructuring, organisational performance) also allow them to develop a time perspective in the area they studied.

This concern with longitudinal analysis also appears in Pettigrew, Ferlie, and McKee's work on the strategic change process undergone by the National Health Service in the UK in the late 1980's and early 1990's (Pettigrew, Ferlie & McKee 1992). By examining key processes of strategic change which were evident in the NHS at this time Pettigrew et al have again used time as a fundamental unit of analysis with which to track managerial innovation, limiting their focus to high change districts, identify motors of, and barriers to, strategic change and exploring the skills associated with change management. One of the particularly interesting issues within this work has been the identification of what Pettigrew et al call 'local variability' in the achievement of successful change, and more specifically what constituted 'receptive' and 'non-receptive' contexts to change throughout the case material. Using a case study methodology that is comparative, processual and longitudinal the authors have ensured that the wider environment in which the change occurred has been included within the analysis. Indeed an understanding of this wider environment is regarded as crucial to the success of the research itself. Pettigrew et al assert that the management of change is likely to be contextually very sensitive and that within large, pluralist, organisations there may be as many 'general managements as general managers'. In a final assessment the authors identify seven key factors in the successful implementation of strategic change in this environment. These were: the quality and coherence of policy; the availability of key people leading change; long term environmental pressure; a supportive organisational culture; effective managerial clinical relations; cooperative inter-organisational

networks and simplicity and clarity of goals and priorities. While their analysis is very specific to the research project in question many of the issues raised are generalisable to similar contexts. By defining the NHS as a 'large and complex organisation, (with an) extraordinarily segmented and incoherent series of interlocking systems and groups divided in every conceivable axis; political and managerial, professional and professional; regional; district and unit levels of management; geography and care group', the authors begin to look at the many processes which are occurring and pin-point specific issues which facilitate or hold back change. The external political environment is also important (the urge for managerialism itself emerging from the Thatcherite economic environment, dominating that historical period). In short Pettigrew et al present a comprehensive analysis of organisational change in a large complex public sector organisation during a period of political change and resulting in organisational turbulence and uneven receptivity to the change process itself. This issue of receptivity has gained significant interest since (Ferlie, Hartley & Martin 2003; Newton, Graham et al 2003).

Brown and Waterhouse (2003) also comment on the shift in ways of operating that has characterised the change process undergone by the Australian public sector. The shift to a 'New Public Management' ethos and a concentration on economically based structures, processes and values has resulted in a public sector which looks more and more like its private sector counterpart. While the authors pinpoint this as an example of the kind of institutional isomorphic behaviour defined by DiMaggio and Powell (1983) they acknowledge that such a move has a number of risks. Their basic premise is that change management in the public sector is not something that can be done along the same theoretical lines as the private sector. Rather, effective change management approaches must take into consideration specific cultural aspects of public sector systems. This thesis is supported by the work of Coram and Burnes (2001) in their analysis of the organisational change process that privatised the UK Property Service Agency. In acknowledging that the challenges faced in a public sector change process are different to a private sector process (particularly in terms of public accountability, demonstrating value for money, meeting increasing expectations regarding service level and quality of both the general public and politicians), the authors look at the privatisation process and seek to deduce from this example lessons on how the public sector can manage change better. They conclude that an approach to change within the public sector must include an understanding of the

structural and the cultural aspects of change. This sequencing relationship of structure and culture reflects Beer and Nohria's (2000) 'Theory E' and 'Theory O' approach discussed earlier. A focus on the public sector as a body which has recently undergone massive amounts of organisational change is also reflected in the research of Worrall, Cooper and Campbell-Jamison (1998). While their analysis concentrates specifically on the impact of organisational change on the work experiences and perceptions of public sector managers, also reflects the general difficulties in managing change processes in organisations which are large, complex and closely tied to each other within a broader system. Developed from a five year research programme the work seeks to contribute to the debate on the impact of radical and persistent organisational change on managers' perceptions, well-being and career / home-work decisions. Using a survey based research strategy, Worral et al are concerned less with the procedural or processual aspects of organisational change and more on the behavioural, perceptual aspects of such change. This research suggests that there are significant problems with the way public sector organisations are being managed and with the impact and multiplicity of the changes they are expected to absorb. Hazlett and Hill (2000) in their study of organisational change for service quality in the Northern Ireland public sector encounter a similar concern for employee morale and the real effectiveness of change strategies. Their research, as would be expected is 'embedded' in the particular political situation of Northern Ireland and they acknowledge that the issue of how change is managed is of particular importance '*at this critical time in our political history*' (Hazlett & Hill 2000: 5). Using a research strategy of in-depth, semi-structured interviews with individuals who have specific responsibility for continuous improvement / business excellence issues within public sector bodies in Northern Ireland, Hazlett and Hill are keen to convey the 'process' of change within public sector bodies in a way which effectively pinpoints the success and failures of such strategies. Again this 'process' approach seems to be the most effective when uncovering a layered and contexted change event. Concluding that many change initiatives are not taken seriously by managers and that organisational learning is not take seriously within the public sector structure, Hazlett and Hill paint a picture of an organisational culture which communicates ineffectively and lacks direction and focus when it comes to change initiatives. The particular qualities of the NI public sector as an environment which has developed from and adapted to serious internecine conflict is also reflected in the work of Ebyen, Morrow and Wilson (2003).

Thematically, empirical research on change sees a series of issues arise repeatedly in relation to the implementation of change processes. One of that appears consistently is the issue of strategic leadership and its impact within change initiatives. Transformational (and sometimes charismatic) leadership has been identified as a significant, but not sufficient variable in the successful implementation of change programmes (Nadler & Tushman 1989). The role of top teams and the type and impact of power exhibited by them is also significant in terms of the conceptualisation of organisations as 'open systems' (Hambrick 1981). The role of power and organisational politics also arises as a key determinant in how change processes play out (Buchanan & Badham 1999). The assertion that 'change is a contact sport' (Gill 2003) is a clear indication of the difficulties that are faced by all associated with complex and contentious change processes.

2.7 ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE IN A POLICING CONTEXT

James Hart (1996) in his analysis of the management of change in police organisations suggests that theories of change management are far from complete and that the phenomenon of change management is poorly explained in relation to police organisations. Hart contests that in order to describe the process of change in police organisations, it is necessary to consider not only the human reactions to change but also the mechanistic organisational functions and processes that bring about those effects (Hart 1996). By defining a number of key principles of change management that are particularly significant to the implementation of change in policing systems, Hart seeks to make the change management literature more relevant to policing organisations. His key principles are: communication, management support, leadership, change targets, coercive and participatory change (initial coercive change followed by participative approaches). Much of the management research on organisational or strategic change within police services has been specifically concerned with the introduction of community policing into what was previously a top-down militarised environment. In their work on policing in an Israeli context Weisburd, Shalev and Amir (2002) look carefully at how the Israeli police managed the introduction of a community policing structure over a period of three years. The community policing ethos which was envisioned by the Israeli Government at the beginning of this period would have meant a total reformation of police structure, philosophy and action. While the study by Weisbund, Shalev and Amir shows that this total reformulation of policing was not achieved

it does provide an interesting analysis of attempted organisational change process within a policing organisation, operating in a divided society. Lack of committed leadership, political buy-in, weak internal structures and the wider context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict all contributed to the failure of the initiative. By using a methodological framework that included an extended time period of study and survey, interview and observation methods, the authors identified three key factors in the projects failure to meet its goals. These were: the speed of implementation of the programme, the resistance of the traditional military style organisational culture within the Israeli police to the demands of the community policing model, and a lack of organisational commitment generally to community policing within the organisation. The study was careful to select four sufficiently different stations (or cases) that reflected the geographic and social contexts of police work within Israel. One of the most interesting observations of this study was the discovery by the researchers that the initiative for the development of community policing itself came about because of senior commander's experience on Harvard International Policing Programmes rather than from the bottom up (emergent) design of other, more successful community policing programmes in other jurisdictions. This is important for although it is not identified as such by the authors it does seem to illustrate an example of institutional pressures being felt by Israeli policing at a high level and resulting in the instigation of policies which did not necessarily take into account the organisational reality on the ground. While Weisbund, Shalev and Amir concentrate on the difficulties encountered during the implementation strategy adopted by the Israeli police, they do not do is seek to link wider political debates in Israeli or the worsening security situation internally to the study. In omitting this conceptual lens they misses the broad framework of change analysis argued for by Pettigrew and others. In conclusion Weisbund, Shalev and Amir acknowledged that, from the outset, the goals of the program were so varied that success was always going to be very difficult to achieve. When the police themselves were confused and uncommitted, and the political realities of work were impacting upon the change process there was very little opportunity for commitment to be grown. In addition, resources were spread thinly, the program was expanded too quickly and a overall lack of political commitment ensured that it stalled before it could really take hold. However the greatest concern of the authors was the fact that the new community policing model and the organisational change process it relied upon did not take into consideration the military policing organisational culture. As the authors assert:

'Any change, like community policing, which seeks to grant greater autonomy and authority however down the organisational hierarchy is likely to face strong resistance within police agencies (like the Israeli police) which have strong traditions linked to the military and that continue to show a strong commitment to military style of control. In programmes that seek to change organisational structure and police behaviour, the police must define new mechanisms of supervision and control that reinforce such changes' (Weisbund, Shalev & Amir 2002:105).

Another piece of work that looks at difficult implementation of community policing processes within traditional policing systems is that presented by Maguire, Shin, Zhao and Hassell (2003). Looking specifically at the change in structure that accompanied the introduction of community policing in many US police organisations, the research attempts the compile evidence for structural change in these circumstances. Using Mintzberg's definition of organisational structure: '*the division of labour into various tasks to be performed, and the co-ordination of these tasks to accomplish the activity*' (Mintzberg 1979: 2) they have used longitudinal data collection methods to conclude that some structural change in American police organisations did occur. This change was mostly allied to the decentralisation of these organisation. The 'flattening' of police hierarchy's, which is so much a feature of community policing advocacy, was found not to have occurred with the same frequency. Such research has considerable implications for the study of the change process within the RUC / PSNI. With community policing forming the central axis of much of the reform (Patten) proposals, findings which suggest that other police agencies have had difficulty with such measures are important because they suggest that police organisations represent a particular change context, one which is maybe not unique but displays characteristics which are unusual from a public sector change perspective. For example, determined hierarchies, command and control based functions and the well documented role of a police 'in group' organisational culture all suggest that police organisations in general hold certain characteristics that impact upon the inception and trajectory of organisational change processes (Hart 1996; Weisbund, Shalev & Amir 2002).

One of the interesting and emerging issues within policing at present is the process by which police organisations (as the 'lynchpin' of the democratic process) develop and change within societies undergoing political upheaval and internecine conflict. The considerable work underway within these developing contexts (Iraq, Palestine, Afghanistan, Bosnia, South Africa etc) to reform and rebuild the policing and military infrastructure is in general carried out by

members of western police forces, who are themselves aware of the challenges facing modern police forces even in normalised environments. Some work has been done on policing within these 'transitional' contexts, but most of it comes from a criminology perspective, with a strong emphasis on the primacy of human rights (Levin, Ngubeni et al. 1994; Jarman 2000). There is also a new awareness of the need to take into consideration local and regional sensitivities particularly in training police to deal with fraught situations in complex cultural contexts (Murphy 2005).

2.8 THE AIM OF THIS RESEARCH

The aim of this research is to tell the story of organisational change undergone by the RUC and to explain that process in the context of the surrounding environment. That story is complicated, contextual, highly embedded in events externally and also on the behaviour of key individuals within the organisation. The arena of change which encompassed the RUC / PSNI in the period 1999 – 2003 stretched well beyond the organisation itself and included comprehensive, controversial changes to the whole structure of Northern Ireland society through the mechanisms of the peace process and the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement. The process of change begun by the RUC was not confined or limited to that organisation; rather it was tied in complex, difficult and deeply contextual ways to what was happening in the rest of Northern Ireland. Change in policing corresponded to a general review of criminal justice and the establishment of a number of other organisations, offices and structures which impacted upon the change, and were in turn impacted upon by it. Such structures include the newly established Police Ombudsman's Office, the Human Rights Commission and the Office of the Police Oversight Commissioner (a time limited post specifically established to oversee the implementation of substantial sections of the Patten Report). Perhaps the establishment of the Northern Ireland Policing Board was the most radical move, with cross community representation and a remit which allows the Board to call the PSNI to account in defined circumstances. All this has occurred in a volatile political environment, under the shadow of the shaky and uncertain political structure that is the Stormont Assembly. It is also important to recognise that the Police Service is not the only organisation in Northern Ireland that has been subject to such radical change. Bodies such as the Northern Ireland Prison Service went through a similar process of structural upheaval, which has been

different, but possibility even more traumatic organisationally. Such 'institutional' factors have had their effect on the PSNI's change process. So this research will link those internal processes to the external processes and contexts that made change within the RUC so necessary and so difficult.

After a review of the literature looking at the content and process of organisational change it seems sensible to conclude that this research should adopt a predominantly 'process' approach'. However the need to look at developments through a number of conceptual lenses (Rajagopalan & Spreitzer 1997; Pettigrew 2003) also seems important. In keeping with Pettigrew et al's assertion that identifying the varying causes of change is about assessing: *"alternative accounts ... of process, quests for efficiency and power, the role of exceptional people and extreme circumstances, the untidiness of chance, unintended consequences and counterproductive actions"* (Pettigrew et al, 1992:8) it would be counterproductive for this research just to look for a straightforward process of organisational change. Instead, it will adopt a research strategy that concentrates on the type of case study analysis vital to a 'process based approach'. At this point it may be useful to reflect further on the processual perspective.

2.9 A PROCESSUAL PERSPECTIVE

Many authors are seen to adopt elements of the process perspective in their analysis of organisational change process. Some however are intrinsically wedded to the approach and champion its use as the only real way to uncover the reality of change (Pettigrew and Whip, Pettigrew et al and Dawson, 2003). Of these committed processualists, Pettigrew is perhaps the most prolific and has recently written of his own personal academic journey which progressed from sociology, to organisational theory to strategy (Pettigrew in Cummings et al, 2003). He comments that this background has highlighted three particular characteristics for him; that the link between formulation and implementation of strategy is not straightforward or linear; that in human society and organisation the past '*projects the present towards the future*'; and that interpretations of the past and present are subject to 'filtering' through the potent sieve of power and of politics (Pettigrew, in Cummings & Wilson, 1993). By seeking to 'catch reality in flight', Pettigrew and his many co-authors have used a processual approach in contexts as diverse as ICI

and the NHS. Their conclusions are often complex and multi-layered but can be crudely reduced as a concern for *history*, *people* and *politics*.

Patrick Dawson (also a self identified evangelist for processual analysis) in his summary of the process approach echoes and builds on Pettigrew's work in his articulation of '*the way change unfolds overtime and in context*'. Both are highly critical of studies which present linear accounts of change as well as those that avoid difficult fieldwork issues but are keen to make theoretical contributions. Dawson's approach draws heavily on what he characterises as '*the rationalised accounts and stories of change agents*' (Dawson, 2003a: 3). Such accounts and the '*post hoc rationalisations*' which he believes often occur represent a significant form of political leverage in shaping decision making within change processes. Dawson's approach differs slightly from Pettigrew and his collaborators in that he concentrates on politics and context (in a similar way to Pettigrew) but also on what he calls the 'substance of change'. While he has attracted some criticism for the 'top level' focus of some of his work, Pettigrew has without a doubt been at the forefront of thinking and writing about change processes, both in the public and private sectors (Dawson, 2003a). While Dawson acknowledges the importance of Pettigrew's work he also reiterates criticism of Pettigrew and his co authors that their work yields little of relevance for practitioners (Dawson 2003b; Collins 1998; Buchanan & Boddy 1992). Dawson unsurprisingly perceives his own approach as more ground level and focused at the workplace rather than the activity of senior management. He defines four main dimensions to analysis: scale and scope; defining characteristics; timeframe of change; and perceived centrality to survival (Dawson 2003a).

It is self evident from any survey of processual case studies that authors who adopt and commend this perspective feel very strongly about the need to study change 'over time and in context'(Pettigrew 1992; Dawson 2003a; Clark 2003). This requirement is reiterated frequently through both theoretical and case orientated experiences (Dawson 2003b). However, if this is perhaps the most frequently cited intimation from processualists, it contrasts strongly with relatively little advice about the actual analytical process itself (Pettigrew 1990). This is reflected upon by both Pettigrew and Dawson who have made useful attempts to 'fill in the gaps' and guide the apprentice researcher (Pettigrew 1990; Dawson 2003a). The general presumption in

this regard is that those pursuing processual orientated case studies should be familiar with approaches to longitudinal research and adopt one of the rigorous qualitative data anaysis approaches recommended and distilled by scholars such as Miles and Huberman (1994).

2.10 WHAT A STUDY OF THE RUC / PSNI SHOULD ADD TO AN UNDERSTANDING OF CHANGE

The change process undergone in the RUC / PSNI is unusual for a number of reasons: it is deeply tied to political upheaval in its external environment; it is widespread and felt throughout the organisation and; it is monitored externally and on and on-going basis. While these factors are uncommon they are not unique. As we can see from the review above other police organisations have undergone a process of organisational change (often due to the introduction of community policing methodologies) with a degree of both success and failure. This research should add to our understanding of organisational change processes and empirical studies in a number of ways.

2.10.1 Identifying Motors of Change Empirically

Van de Ven and Poole's (1995) perspective on the underlying motors of change is a useful structure to keep in mind in terms of the process of organisational change within large, complex organisations. Many factors impacted upon the RUC / PSNI as an organisation before and during the change process. Many of these factors fulfil the requirements of the 'change motor' characteristics identified by Van de Ven and Poole. Looking at the process in terms of motors also fits with a processual perspective identifying momentum, rate, pace and trajectory of change. In seeking to identity them fully and uncover their complex interaction as the change process developed it is hoped that this empirical study will add a new dimension to this existing typology.

2.10.2 Revolutionary or Continuous and Emergent?

It will be important to determine which aspects of the change process were indeed 'discontinuous' and which were incremental and would have emerged anyway within the organisation as strategic priorities. The research will look at these issues and seek to unpick the 'messy' of 'induced' and 'autonomous' processes (Burgelman 1991).

2.10.3 Theories of Changing

While this research does not in itself seek to define or clarify appropriate approaches to the implementation of change programmes it is expected that an analysis of the process within the RUC / PSNI will lead to some new insights on the success or failure of the change management processes adopted by the organisation. This is particularly important in that it adds to the literature on the management of change within the public sector and in police organisations in particular.

2.10.4 A Processual Approach

By using a 'process' based approach it will add to the literature on the empirical study of change processes. It will also attempt to uncover as much of the totality of the events that occurred as possible, in keeping with a process perspective. By keeping in mind Pettigrew's (2003) maxim to '*catch reality in flight*' and Dawson's concern not to '*tidy away loose ends*' (Dawson 2003a) it will seek to explain and analyse the process in its embedded context.

2.10.5 Adding to the Literature on Public Sector Change

By looking at public sector change in the context of underlying political transition the research should add a new perspective to change processes within public sector organisations which are largely externally driven. While considerable work has been done on both the process of change in the public sector and the effect of that change, little work exists which places institutional change within a political as well as a change management context. Additionally, little work exists on change processes conducted under the kind of extreme political pressure that existed in the RUC case.

2.10.6 Adding to the Literature on Change within Police Organisations

Most of the work on change management in police organisations has concentrated on changing organisational culture or implementing community policing methodologies into traditional hierarchical organisational structures. This research will look at both these issues and also seek to place the change process within a wider historic, political and organisational context. Such a study should add considerably to knowledge of change management within policing structures.

2.11 CONCLUSION

This review of literature has attempted to put in context dominant ideas about the underlying features of organisational change as well as the change process itself. It has also tried to review approaches to the study of such change and formulate from them an appropriate direction for his research: that approach is processual. By reviewing pertinent aspects of the literature on public sector change and change within policing organisations it has attempted to set the scene for a study of the RUC / PSNI transition, and to pinpoint key areas of concern within such research.

3. CHAPTER THREE: BEGINNING TO TELL THE STORY: THE CONDITIONS FOR CONFLICT AND CHANGE

"Where to start is the problem, because nothing begins where it begins and nothing's over when it's over, and everything needs a preface, a postscript, a chart of simultaneous events.... Still, there are definitive moments, moments we use as references, because they break our sense of continuity, they change the direction of time. We look at these events and we can say that after them things were never the same again. They provide beginnings for us and endings too. Births and deaths, for instance, and marriages. And wars."

Margaret Attwood, The Robber Bride

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The change process embarked upon by the police in Northern Ireland was difficult and challenging. By taking a lead from Pettigrew and exploring organisational change from a processual perspective, this research hopes to present a holistic analysis of why change in the RUC happened, how the PSNI came into existence and how the organisation came to terms with this process. Some of the main challenges that the organisation faced were deeply rooted in the history, culture, politics and organisational identity of the RUC. It in turn was just as deeply embedded in the history politics and conflicting identities that made up Northern Ireland's divided society. And as within other divided societies, policing is a key issue of contention (Brewer 1996; Ellison 2007; Guelke 2004). Chapter five and six of this thesis are dedicated to unravelling the process of change and explaining the dynamics that drove that process. However, in order to get to that analysis and particularly given the nature of the organisations relationship to its environment, it seems sensible to set out here the basic background to this story of change. This Chapter does not pre-empt the engaged analysis of change that comes later, but provide a largely factual, retrospective account that serves to set the context and provide a framework within which to interpret events, decisions and outcomes. Beginning with an account of the background to why change was necessary, it details the antecedents of the 'Troubles' and the historic position of the police within that conflict. It then moves on to what we might call the foreground: when the police move to the forefront of the wider political peace process. This story begins with the first established police force on the island, and comes to an end, as this study does, after the stepping down of Sir Ronnie Flanagan as Chief Constable in 2002. In that way it

begins to define the narrative and moves us further towards an understanding of the impact and interactions that shaped the change process.

3.2 THE DEVELOPMENT OF A MODERN POLICE SERVICE: RIC TO RUC

The history of policing in Ireland is interesting for a number of reasons, not the least of which is that the establishment of a civilian police service in Ireland preceded the establishment of a police service anywhere else in these islands. The person responsible for this radical action was Sir Robert Peel, who became Chief Secretary of Ireland in 1812 and by 1814 had founded the Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC). Peel went on to become a respected and reforming UK Prime Minister and to establish similar policing services in Britain and in British colonies abroad. The RIC was taken as the organisational model for these police services and the terms 'Peelers' and 'Bobbies' both refer to his legacy (Ryder 2000).

The growing demand for Home Rule in Ireland, the Easter Rising of 1916 and the War of Independence all culminated in the 1920 Government of Ireland Act. This Act originally envisaged that the Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC) would simply be split into two forces to take into account the creation of the new devolved authorities, but ongoing violence, civil disturbance and difficult negotiations made it clear that the RIC would not survive even as two separate but interlinked organisations (Brewer & Magee 1991). The signing of the Ango-Irish Treaty almost a year later on the 6th of December 1921 established the Irish Free State as a self governing dominion of the British Empire, but left the northern six counties as part of the UK. Elections to the new Northern Parliament took place in May 1921 and Sir James Craig became the new Northern Prime Minister, presiding over a parliament dominated by a Unionist majority. The RIC was disbanded on the 31st of March 1922 in the Republic but while responsibility for law and order had been transferred from the British parliament to the Northern one on 21st of December 1921, disbandment of the RIC was delayed in the North to 31st of May 1922 to ensure a smooth transition to a new police force. This delay was the responsibility of the Northern Ireland Government and specifically the notoriously anti-Catholic Minister for Home Affairs, Sir Dawson Bates, who in January 1922 appointed a committee to advise him on the establishment of a new northern police force (Ryder 2000). The committee reported back in March of that year.

Its main recommendations were that the new Force should be slightly bigger that the old RIC (in terms of how the RIC operated in the six northern counties) and that it make up should be at least one third Catholic. The remainder would be made up of 1000 Protestants who were members of the old RIC and the rest from the Ulster Special Constabulary's (set up from the ranks of the Ulster Volunteer Force in 1920 to help combat civil unrest in the North). These Constabulary's were know as the A, B and C Specials and were entirely Protestant in their make up. Legislation to this effect was rushed through the Northern Ireland Parliament at Stormont, and in June 1922 the Royal Ulster Constabulary came into existence, organised principally along the same structures as the old Royal Irish Constabulary (Brewer, Hume et al 1996).

The issue of the composition of the new Force caused the most political controversy. Forward thinking as the committee recommendations had been in terms of Catholic makeup, such stipulations were as much the result of financial pressures on the new government as a desire for a representative police force. The disbandment of the RIC was accompanied by the agreement by the British Government of generous pension arrangements, the responsibility for which lay with the devolved administrations. By reemploying members of the RIC into a new police service, pension responsibilities were diminished and pressure eased on scare resources. However, this design was in the circumstances, purely academic. As Brewer et al point out:
"*In the event, political pressures on the Unionist Government, the attitudes of Catholics towards the new State, and relations between Protestants and Catholics within the new police force ensured that the Catholic quota was never filled*" (Brewer, Hume et al. 1996: 49)

Pressure on the Unionist Government also resulted in the lifting of the long established ban on members of the police joining the Orange Order, and when the Sir Robert Peel Orange Lodge was established in 1923 Catholic membership was at its peak of 21.5%. Catholic membership of the Force stabilised at 17% in the late 1920'sbut by the onset of 'the Troubles' in the late 1960's it had dropped again to a little over 10% (Brewer 1991). Brewer goes on to comment that the political pattern of 'dominant-subordinate' relationships which was developing in Northern Ireland turned the Force into 'the armed wing of unionism'. This point is particularly relevant because it illustrates the strength of the bond between the political ruling ideology (unionism) and the police as an agent of that ideological position. In addition, legislation enacted in 1922

before the RUC's establishment the (Civil Authorities or Special Powers Act), gave sweeping emergency powers to the unionist Minister for Home Affairs, including those of arbitrary arrest and search. The Special Powers Act, as it became known, was renewed annually until 1928, when it became law for a five year period. In 1933 the legislation came permanently into force, and its repeal became one of the key demands of the Civil Rights movement in the 1960's.

3.3 ATTEMPTS AT POLICE REFORM - CAMERON, SCARMAN AND HUNT

The perceived position of the RUC as 'defenders' of Protestant 'hegemony' was regarded as an issue by both the British Government appointed Cameron Commission in March 1969 (Ryder 2000) and also reflected in the Scarman Tribunal of the same year. Set up to examine the onset of what was to become known as 'the Troubles', the Cameron Commission described graphically in its Report of September 1969 the 'breakdown of discipline', 'acts of misconduct' involving 'assault and battery', malicious damage to property' and 'the use of provocative sectarian and political slogans' by police (Brewer 1991). Brewer asserts:

"*the blow to the standing and status of both the RUC and the USC as the result of criticism of their handling of public disorder was enormous. Consequently, reform of policing formed one of the first objectives of intervention by the British government in the situation*" (Brewer 1991: 50).

Lord Scarman, in contrast pinpointed lack of resources and numbers as a key problems for the RUC. In 1969 the British Home Secretary, James Callahan, sent in British army troops to restore order. He also established the Hunt Commission, under the oversight of Lord Hunt, Robert Mark and Sir James Robertson. The Hunt Commission was given the role of advising the British Government on the organisation of policing in Northern Ireland.

3.3.1 The Hunt Report and the Separation of Policing and Security

The Hunt Committee published its controversial report within six weeks of beginning work, and with a backdrop of growing civil unrest in Northern Ireland. It basic premise was the need to separate out the twin roles of policing and security policy. It recommended the disbanding of the B Specials (the only remaining component of the original special constabularies), the creation of a part time reserve force, the disarming of the RUC, the establishment of a Police Authority to

provide a buffer between the police and the unionist government, the repeal of much of the Special Powers Act and the introduction of a police complaints system (Brewer 1991). Its aim was to civilianise policing along the lines of the rest of the UK. The Committee's main proposals were accepted against strong opposition but the civilianisation strategy was continually undermined by a steady deterioration in the security situation and the RUC was rearmed in 1971 after a number of police fatalities in shooting incidents. The introduction of internment (administrative detention) in 1971 reduced still further the acceptability of the police in the eyes of the minority community, as bad intelligence resulted in the widespread round-up of suspects. A scandal implicating Special Branch and the British Army in the officially authorised use of interrogation techniques which included the physical maltreatment of internees, added to the growing polarisation of the communities (Ryder 2000).

3.4 DIRECT RULE

The imposition of direct rule in 1972 was the British Government's response to a security situation which seemed to be spiralling out of control. The power-sharing Executive which had been established earlier in1972 collapsed after five months and a further attempt in the form of the constitutional convention of 1975 also failed. The 1975-76 Bourne Ministerial Working Party on NI police and security paved the way for a new doctrine of 'police primacy' (Ryder 2000). This resulted in the expansion and re-equipping of the RUC, its partial remilitarisation, the end to detention without trial and the phasing out of senior category status for those convicted of terrorist offences(Brewer & Magee 1991). In addition to the basic RUC structure, additional units were put in place to combat the now serious and growing threats from republican and loyalist paramilitaries. Particularly important and controversial were Headquarters' based 'Mobile Support Units' (HQMSU's). These Units worked undercover and were established in the early 1980's along side Special Branch's special surveillance unit (know as E4A). Their establishment and training was facilitated by the British Army's Special Air Service (SAS). Divisional Mobile Support Units (DSU's) were also put in place to deal with riots, demonstrations and paramilitary funerals (Ripley & Chapman 1993). As Brewer attests:

"*This militarisation of policing was the logical outcome of the pursuit of a policy of police primacy in the face of a continuing terrorist offensive that had blighted the hopes of a return to normality. It also provides the clearest evidence of the failure of civilianisation, the original aim of the Hunt Committee*" (Brewer 1991:59).

3.5 THE ESCALATION OF VIOLENCE

The early 1970's are regarded as the most bloody period in the history of the Northern Ireland 'Troubles'. The split in Sinn Fein and the IRA in January 1970 which resulted in the establishment of the Provisional movement, also heralded a new era in violence, disorder and the further politicisation of people and policing in NI. April of that year saw the first major clashes between nationalists and the British Army in Ballymurphy, a republican community in west Belfast. This was followed by the first sustained engagement of the Provisional IRA itself in the nationalist enclave community of the Short Stand[1]. On the island too, conflict fermented with the trial and acquittal in the Republic of Ireland of TDs' Neil Blaney and Charles Haughey on gun smuggling charges. The IRA bomb campaign which continued throughout that sumner coincided with the withdrawal of the SDLP from the Stormont Assembly and the introduction of internment without trial in August. It also saw the establishment of the loyalist UDA. The deaths of fourteen marchers at a civil rights rally in Derry on the 30th January 1972, shot by the British Parachute Regiment, cemented both the resolve in the nationalist community and also the perception of the RUC as defenders of the unionist establishment and partners with the Army. Over the next few years' intense political activity was interspersed with violence and confrontation. As the death toll mounted, political initiatives like a short IRA ceasefire and the Sunningdale agreement faltered in the increasingly fragmented and bitter discord. The degree of social dissonance, violence and bitterness which typifies this period in Northern Ireland's history is difficult to underestimate. The murders of ten Protestant workmen in Kingsmill in 1976 saw one of the worst sectarian atrocities of the 'Troubles'. The deaths of two children, hit by a pursued gunman's getaway car and the horror in its aftermath lead to the establishment of the Women's Peace Movement by Mairead Corrigan and Betty Maguire – a grouping later to be known as the 'Peace People'. Mairead Corrigan had witnessed the pursuit of the vehicle by the British Army and the subsequent deaths of the driver, the children and injury of their mother. Betty Maguire was the aunt of the children killed. Her sister, their mother, committed suicide sometime later.

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[1] While the term Provisional IRA is the historically correct term for the provisional movement, in general PIRA is know by a number of other terms most normally 'IRA' but also the 'Provo's'. In this document they will referred to, as is the norm, as the IRA.

Stories like those of the Kingsmill victims or the Maquire children were to play out again and again over the next thirty years. The Cost of the Troubles Survey (COTT) calculated that by 3 December 1997, 3,585 people had been killed in Northern Ireland since 1969 (The Cost of The Troubles Survey 1999). Within the RUC, 302 officers were murdered up to 1999 and over 8,500 injured as a result of terrorist activity. Interpol figures published in the International Criminal Police Review in 1983 showed that NI was the most dangerous place in the world to be a policeman. It was twice as dangerous as in El Salvador, where the risk factor was next highest (Ryder 2000). The 'war' which was ongoing had an effect on the behaviour, structure and organisational approach of the RUC, just as it did on the IRA and the more diffuse loyalist paramilitary groupings. The traditional military structure adopted by the IRA was a prime target for the RUC and the introduction of non-jury 'Diplock' courts meant that the counter-insurgency operations put in place by the RUC, in conjunction with the army, hamstrung the IRA. In 1976 for example, 2,000 suspects, the majority charged with IRA related incidents were convicted through the non-jury courts (Ellison & Smith 2000). The shift in IRA tactics away from a traditional and visible 'military' structure, towards a terrorist 'cell' structure' and the introduction of training in anti-interrogation techniques stifled the success of the RUC to some extent. At this point, political questions, rather than military ones came to the fore, in particular about the direction and execution of security policy and the role of the RUC in that process (Ellison & Smith 2000). Ellison and Smyth argue;

"It is quite clear, both from the public statements of senior RUC officers, and the findings of any number of commentators, that the RUC enthusiastically embraced its counter-insurgency role, and indeed fought numerous 'turf battles' with the British army to achieve primacy in counter-insurgency operations". (Ellison & Smith 2000: 98)

However, interrogation 'tactics' and allegations arising from mistreatment of suspects began to surface and were taken seriously outside the narrow confines of republican communities and Sinn Fein. Indeed, the use of emergency anti-terrorist legislation as a routine means of policing nationalist areas lead to increasing polarisation which even the leadership of Sinn Fein and the IRA underestimated. The febrile atmosphere of the first set of hunger strikes in 1979-80 brought this resentment and ill feeling to the fore. The deaths of IRA ten men, on hunger strike in 1981 created massive unrest in nationalist areas and tested the RUC and the doctrine of 'police primacy' to its limit (Ellison & Smith 2000; O'Malley 1990). Something like 30,000 plastic

bullets were fired during this period, leading to the death of eight people, three of them children. Allison and Smyth maintain:

"The role of the RUC during the hunger strikes convinced many Catholics that the force could never change or be trusted" (Ellison & Smith 2000: 95).

Policing itself, during the 'Troubles' was characterised by a high measure of secrecy; security and an obvious military approach (Mulcachy 2006). Members of the RUC had to take extreme personal security measures simply to go abut their daily lives and each one was subject to constant threat. Chris Ryder, a Northern Irish journalist and himself the spouse of a member of the RUC, recounts in great detail the personal security concerns that were a necessary consequences of police membership (Ryder 2000). For those from a Catholic background membership of the RUC was extremely low, with only 7.7% of members Catholic in 1992 (ICPNI 1999). There is no doubt that the real threat of republican violence deterred Catholics from joining the Force, but more significantly, the degree of animosity for the police within the Catholic community was such that the idea of participating in 'policing' within such an organisation was simply not on the agenda for the vast majority of Catholics who may otherwise have seen policing as a potential career. The Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP), regarded as the moderate voice of nationalism was scathing in its denunciation of the RUC, in particular the role of 'Special Branch', and the alleged 'shoot to kill' policy. Seamus Mallon the Deputy Leader of the SDLP once denounced the RUC as '*97% Protestant and 100% unionist*' (Smith & Moore 1996). Templegrove Action Research, a community based research project in Derry made reference to his view in its submission to the Police Authority consultation in 1996:

"*Whilst not all Protestants are Unionist and not all Catholics are Nationalist, there has been a complex political polarisation of two communities into two political camps, which is simplistically but most often described as being along religious lines. Seamus Mallon, MP (SDLP), amongst others has pointed out that there are fewer impediments stopping Catholics from joining the RUC than there are preventing nationalists from being recruited. This is because of a perception of the RUC as a 100% unionist police force"* (Smith & Moore 1996)

Among the Protestant community the RUC were obviously perceived very differently. The size of the Force (13,500 at its height) and the relatively small population of NI meant their were few Protestant families who did not have some link to the organisation and therefore some personal experience of threat faced in policing the Troubles.

3.6 ALL CHANGE: A FUNDAMENTAL REVIEW OF POLICING

The republican and loyalist ceasefires in 1994 impacted on all sections of Northern Ireland society, and none more so than the police. The headline in the Belfast Telegraph on the 31st of August 1994 - '*ITS OVER*' must have heralded a sigh of disbelief and reprieve from members of the RUC and their families (loyalist paramilitaries called their own ceasefire soon after). For communities that had been through over twenty years of political violence, polarisation and alienation from the state and each other, it was the beginning of a long and painful journey. While the ceasefires themselves proved initially to be a false start[2], the stability and widespread sense of relief that followed that first summer is described evocatively by in the words of a police superintendent speaking in 1994:

"The summer of the IRA ceasefire, the weather was spectacular, and I think that did more to make people appreciate the value of peace than anything else. I think that just came at a great time. It was almost divine intervention and I think people forgot about politics, and about the war. Obviously, victim's wives and families couldn't, but (for) the rest of us it was wonderful. I think peace is now so precious to us all, we want it, and I think it will come" (Mulcachy 2006:110).

The RUC recognised at this time that things were changing and in 1996 instigated its own 'Fundamental Review'. This was not the first attempt the RUC had develop community engagement strategies. In 1993 Mediation NI was asked by the RUC to design and introduce a programme aimed at enhancing the sensitivity of police recruits towards the task of policing a divided society. By 1996 they had established a community awareness programme in Foundation Training but withdrew because they found themselves at odds with the RUC over their work as mediators in the emerging parades conflict. In the same period the police were establishing links with the media and well known Catholic journalists and commentators in an effort to move forward. 'Future Ways' a University of Ulster based think tank (using an organisational learning and community relations methodology) was also beginning to work in conjunction with Mediation Network and the RUC. All this was in parallel to sustained and forceful pressure from the nationalist body politic for change. Simultaneously, the international policing community

[2] The IRA ceasefire initially broke down and was reinstated some time later.

were embracing community policing methodologies, in a way that had a distinct impact on how policing began to be delivered in other societies (Whisenand 2001; Skogan 1995).

In 1995, the then Acting Deputy Chief Constable, Ronnie Flanagan was directed by the Chief Constable Hugh Annesley to conduct a 'Fundamental Review' of the organisation in the light of the ceasefires and the significant changes peacetime would necessarily exert on the organisation. The main rationale of the Review was to design a policing approach appropriate to a new and peaceful environment and in going about its task, the Review identified three specific security scenarios and worked within them to define appropriate responses. However, while the Review made 189 recommendations for change, it stayed firmly distanced from the symbolic issues of name, badge and flag, and even more so the concrete issues of recruitment and reform of 'Special Branch'(RUC 1996). Flanagan's appointment as Chief Constable in 1996 was a high profile endorsement of him as an organisational leader, and more importantly a recognition that his formidable media skills were in demand at the highest level in the organisation.

3.7 POLITICAL MOVEMENT

Intense political negotiations ran alongside the ceasefires, culminating eventually in the Belfast or Good Friday Agreement of the 10th April 1998. The Agreement was reached after years of stalled, halting, divisive talks, but unlike the summer of the ceasefires, the weather was unseasonably cold and frosty. On the early morning when agreement was finally reached (the talks Chair Senator George Mitchell has insisted in the end that all parties would continue without a break until agreement was found) the participants emerged from Castle Buildings in Stormont to find the landscape changed, and an unexpected blanket of snow shimmering on the frozen ground.

However, the Agreement's vague language on the issue of decommissioning of weapons remained one potential future area of dispute, and while the Ulster Unionist Party, in the format of their Ulster Unionist Council voted in favour of the Belfast Agreement by 72 percent to 28 percent, three UUP MPs attended an anti-Agreement rally in Belfast. Other unionist affiliated organisations such as the Orange Order refused to endorse the Agreement, amid a 'United Unionist" campaign in direct opposition. Despite this campaign and bitter acrimony on all sides,

on the 22nd of May, dual referenda on the Agreement and the alteration of the Irish constitution were passed in Northern Ireland and in the Republic of Ireland simultaneously. In Northern Ireland, 71% voted in favour. 94% of those in the Republic of Ireland voted in support. The NI Assembly elections which followed showed unionists almost evenly split between pro-and anti-Agreement Assembly Members. At the first meeting of this Assembly David Trimble and Seamus Mallon were jointly elected as First Minister and Deputy First Minister. The optimism which accompanied this political progress, even in the face of deep division, was swiftly replaced with horror on the 15th of August that year, when 29 people were killed and 360 injured by a Real IRA car bomb in Omagh, Co. Tyrone. This was the single biggest loss of life in any atrocity during the Troubles. The dead included Spanish tourists, children on an exchange trip from Monaghan, an eighteen month old infant and a woman pregnant with twins. Her babies were due to be born the following week. The bomb and the subsequent investigation into it were to lead to a serious dispute and important ramifications for the RUC leadership.

3.8 THE INDEPENDENT COMMISSION ON POLICING FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

Policing was itself regarded as too divisive an issue to be explicitly included in negotiation during the 'Talks' process. The Agreement instead provided for the establishment of an Independent Commission to look specifically at police reform and to make recommendations to the UK Government on the nature of that reform.

The terms of reference for the Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland (generally known as the Patten Commission) were set out in the Belfast Agreement. They were defined in this way:

"Taking account of the principles on policing as set out in the agreement, the Commission will inquire into policing in Northern Ireland and, on the basis of its findings, bring forward proposals for future policing structures and arrangements, including means of encouraging widespread community support for those arrangements. Its proposals on policing should be designed to ensure that policing arrangements, including composition, recruitment, training, culture, ethos and symbols, are such that in a new approach Northern Ireland has a police service that can enjoy widespread support from, and is seen as an integral part of, the community as a whole. Its proposals should include recommendations covering any issues such

as re-training, job placement and educational and professional development required in the transition to policing in a peaceful society" (ICPNI 1999:123).

The Commission was chaired by the Right Honourable Chris Patten, CH, formally Governor of Hong Kong and a Cabinet Minister. It also included; Dr Maurice Hayes, a Member of the Irish Senate and previously Northern Ireland Ombudsman; Dr Gerald Lynch, President of John Jay College of Criminal Justice, New York; Kathleen O'Toole, a career police officer, previously Massachusetts Secretary for Public Safety, Professor Clifford Shearing, Professor of Criminology and Sociology at the University of Toronto. Also engaged was Sir John Smith, former Deputy Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police; Mr Peter Smith QC, a barrister practising in Northern Ireland and; Mrs Lucy Woods, former Chief Executive of British Telecom in Northern Ireland and BT Ireland. Liaison with the RUC itself was facilitated by Superintendent Sheamus Hamill (ICPNI 1999).

3.9 PATTEN REPORT AND RESPONSE

The Commission reported in September 1999 and made 175 recommendations, the most controversial of which was a change of name, badge and uniform. Patten had been very clear in his view that a change in the RUC needed to be deep rooted and transparent:

"The "significant change" in policing should not be a cluster of unconnected adjustments in policy that can be bolted or soldered onto the organisation that already exists. The changes that we propose are extensive and they fit together like the pieces in a jigsaw puzzle. We believe that we have met the argument of the former Standing Advisory Commission on Human Rights that "holistic change of a fundamental nature is required" (ICPNI 1999:5).

Patten's main recommendations were; the replacement of the Royal Ulster Constabulary by the Police Service of Northern Ireland; a new Policing Board and District Policing Partnership Boards to ensure accountability; creation of a Police Ombudsman and a Complaints Tribunal; removal of most visible symbols of Britishness from the police service; a 50-50 recruitment policy for Catholics and 'other'; a new code of ethics and oath of office, including a strong emphasis on human rights; an emphasis on community policing and normalisation; proposals for training, community liaison, cooperation with other police services, and recruitment from outside Northern Ireland; and the repeal by the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) of its rule 21, which

prohibited members of the police or British army in Northern Ireland from being members of the Association (ICPNI 1999).

We can see above that the Commission advised the removal of the existing Police Authority and the establishment of a new Policing Board and a series of District Policing Partnerships. These were to form part of the external administrative structure of the new policing environment along with the already established Police Ombudsman's office which had been instigated under the earlier Hayes Report. Interestingly, it also called for the establishment of an oversight body to ensure that its recommendations were enforced rigorously. Its recommendation in regard to the GAA is obviously outside the remit of policing and justice but illustrates the visibly contextual nature of policing and the problems that surrounded it.

The British Government's general acceptance of Patten's Report to the fury of unionists in NI lit the torch paper on the pace of change. In response, the RUC leadership accepted the Reports' recommendations and in September 1999 appointed a Change Manager in the form of Assistant Chief (ACC) Constable Tim Lewis to bring together a change team. This Team was put together between September and December of that year.

The change team within the RUC designed a programme that had eight specific focuses. These were; Shared Values, under the leadership of ACC Sam Kincaid. Style, under the direction of ACC Duncan McCausland. Staff, under senior civilian Director of Human Resources, Joe Stewart. Interlinked was the next theme 'Skills' also under the direction of Joe Stewart. Structure came next, under the guidance of the Programme Manager ACC Stephen White. Two systems 'Systems' themes followed relating to – 'Information' under Mr Miller and 'Finance' under Mr David Best. These themes were derived from the well know 'McKinsey 7 S' management model (Rasiel & Friga 2001). Added to these seven themes was an additional subject matter and that was 'Communication, Marketing and Image', under the direction of ex-journalist, media advisor and newly appointed RUC Director of Communications, Mr Austin Hunter. Deputy Chief Constable Colin Cramphorn also had responsibility for a number of key projects including the police college, trend information on police complaints, and the Force's relationship with An Garda Siochana, the police service in the Republic of Ireland.

In addition to the 175 Patten Recommendations the Team was also tasked with making sense of an additional 759 existing recommendations from various Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) reports, the RUC's own Fundamental Review, the MacPherson report the Northern Ireland Audit Commission, and the Northern Ireland Criminal Justice Review. When brought together, after duplications in the various reports were taken account of, the total recommendations amounted to 550, varyingly substantive directives for change. A tripartite working group made up of representatives of the Northern Ireland Office, the RUC and Police Authority was also established to guide the process.

In terms of management support Andrew Kakabase, Professor of International Managenent Development, Cranfield University took up a mentoring role, providing 'strategic guidance for the Team as they moved forward with the change programme. Prof Colin Eden (Strathclyde) provided logistical advice.

The police defined the change as occurring in three phases. The first was a structural review to research and consult internally on the realignment of police boundaries with local governnent boundaries as recommended in Patten. The second was focused on creating a geographical structure of 29 police district commands, coterminous with 25 council boundaries (4 in Belfast), and the third phase related to developing organisational functions, processes and staffing levels for the new twenty-nine police district commands and a review of Headquarters.

May 2000 saw the draft Police Bill published, to a furore of criticism from nationalists and intense political talks to revise it under threat of a continued nationalist boycott. A similar situation ensued with the publication by the British Government of the draft Patten Implementation Plan. This Plan was withdrawn the same day by the Government under a barage of nationalist opposition. Voluntary severance was also beginning to bite at this point with the first batch of RUC officers in January of 2001. This intensified pressure to recruit which was again delayed because of the refusal of the SDLP, Sinn Fein or the Catholic Church to endorse applications from the Catholic community. There were a number of reasons for this. The first was that the SDLP principally, did not feel that the British Government had gone far enough.

Pressure put on the Catholic Church by the SDLP principally keep them from supporting Catholic applicants. In essence, this was a situation of brinkmanship between the British Government, the RUC and the SDLP. The first recruitment drive in February 2001 was not supported by the SDLP or the wider nationalist community, despite pressure from the RUC which was facing real operational resource issues. But this process represented a point of political leverage for moderate nationalism to achieve further changes in the Implementation Plan. Sinn Fein and republicans remained steadfastly opposed.

The launch of a new District Command Structure and Headquarters review in April of 2001 also saw the controversial departments of Crime and Special Branch brought under one Assistant Chief Constable and the new policing plan for 2001-2002 published. In August the Government also published the widely consulted on revised implementation plan which saw, at last, the SDLP indicate that they would now accept an invitation to join the Policing Board. This was a momentous point in the process and signalled for the first time that nationalists as a community were prepared to play a role in policing governance and endorse Catholic applicants. This phase also saw the 'passing out' parade of the last batch of RUC recruits. The first wave of new recruits started their training in October 2001. Midnight on the 3rd of November 2001 saw the adoption of a new name for the organisation - the '*Police Service of Northern Ireland*', a new badge and flag as well as the appointment of a human rights lawyer to work with the police internally, as Patten had requested. During this period political progress had been seriously stalled, over the issue of IRA arms de-commissioning. In addition to the political instability all around it, the newly formed PSNI became embroiled in the midst of a bitter argument with the Office of the Police Ombudsman over the investigation of the Omagh bombing. Nuala O'Loan, the Police Ombudsman, had concluded that the RUC had ignored previous warnings about a bomb and had failed to act on crucial intelligence. Ronnie Flanagan, who as Chief Constable took ultimate responsibility strongly denied the allegation and went as far as to say that he would 'publicly commit suicide' if her Report was proved to be correct. Flanagan himself left office in March 2002, still denying any wrong doing by officers under his command.

3.10 CONCLUSION

The intensely political processes which lead to the radical change process in the RUC started well before the name change in November 2001. But political developments, important as they were, did not in themselves define the change process. History and the impact of events and social structures had contributed to the building of an organisation which was perceived to be partisan in its makeup, function and origins. People at all levels, had pushed for change, just as others had resisted. The change process was enormous in its scale and design. Not only did it need to structurally transform a rigid, hierarchal organisation to a more streamlined modern police service, but it needed to translate that change into support, engagement and acceptance from the people, in particular the Catholic population, of Northern Ireland. The next Chapter looks at the research methodology used to explore this change process. The process itself and the issues touched on above, are dealt with in detail in Chapter Six and Seven.

4.0 CHAPTER FOUR: THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND ITS OPERATIONALISATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This Chapter will outline the research approach, strategy and methods adopted for this study. It will relate the methodological framework adopted, to the enacted research process and describe how the theoretically chosen methodology operated in practice. This narrative will include a discussion of the ethical issues that became apparent as the study progressed, difficulties of access that arose initially and the attendant problems of research within a 'sensitive' context. It will also introduce the chosen analytical strategy and relate it to the research methodology.

4.2. THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research approach adopted was chosen to facilitate the exploration of the project's research questions. These questions and the issues they relate to were initially defined very generally at the beginning of the study: it was clear that the work was interested in the process of organisational change within the police in Northern Ireland and the outcomes of that process. As a result of the literature review and the discussions around access with 'gatekeepers', questions were gradually refined and amended. This process, was very important to the operationalisation of the research methodology and to the outcome of this study, and will be described in detail later in this chapter.

The primary research questions were as follows;

A. *How did the Police in Northern Ireland go about conducting a process of organisational change?*

and

B. *Was the change strategy adopted appropriate?*

4.3. THE RESEARCH APPROACH AND ANALYTICAL STRATEGY

4.3.1 The Research Approach

The research approach adopted was process based and longitudinal, utilizing a 'single explanatory case study' method. In its focus it followed the 'processual' approach outined by Pettigrew (Pettigrew 1990, 1997) in that it was primarily selected as a route to capturing the complexity of organizational change in a situation which has changed over time, and on many levels. However, it differed from the 'classic' model in that it did not attempt to look comparatively at a number of cases; rather it stuck to one large general case. There is a straightforward reason for the deviation and it involves access constraints imposed by the organisation itself.

At an early stage of the research process when the design of the methodology was still being defined it was proposed to the PSNI that the 'comparative' aspect of the 'processual' approach could be best satisfied by the elucidation of a number of small cases within the large general case - an embedded approach (Yin 2003). In an ideal research environment this would have been the preferred research strategy and four small geographically and structurally separate case environments were preliminarily identified. Unfortunately, even though overall access had been previously agreed, the PSNI did not feel able to allow the researcher to supplement the wider case with a number of small internal cases. Reasons given for this were constraints on availability of personnel on the ground to take part in interviews, and the already onerous oversight responsibilities on the PSNI. There may also have been a reluctance to let a researcher loose at the 'sharp end' of change, and a concern about the corresponding loss of control on behalf of the organisation. The difficult process of negotiation and agreement on the research boundaries will be discussed in some detail later. These restrictions meant that in order to continue the researcher needed to take the kind of pragmatic decisions which often occur within sensitive research contexts and are described vividly in relation to the RUC by sociologist John Brewer (Brewer 1993).

At this point, it became important to look at the organisation again, on the basis of what was available. As a large and data rich case, there was real potential for a single in-depth analysis. Within the organisation, senior figures were happy to discuss the process, share reflecions and had a positive approach to the research generally. The resources available (in particular those of

time and the necessity of a 'sole investigator') would also realistically constrain what was possible.

It was clear from both a review of the literature and the researcher's existing knowledge of the organization and a series of 'pilot' interviews that a number of issues in particular were worth exploration. These were formally identified within the data gathering stage as: internal and external communication; recruitment and training; introduction of community policing methods; leadership and; change incentives. What was interesting to explore was the interaction of these variables with external factors such as political developments, the role of internal and external change agents, the impact of external monitoring and oversight bodies and the wider environmental influences of international policing best practice. The main data collection methods used were recorded and transcribed semi-structured interviews with key individuals, the collection of additional primary and secondary source material where possible, historic timelines and a research diary.

4.3.2 The Analytical Strategy

The analytical strategy adopted was chosen because of the complexity of the case and the enormous influence of context on the outcomes. By seeking to explore and explain the process of change from a processual perspective, the research approaches the organisation as an integral part of its environment and at a particular point in its organisational history (Pettigrew 2003, 2000, 1997; Dawson 2003a&b). By using evidence collected from interviews, organisational documents, publications, newspaper and media reports it builds up a picture of the change process and in doing so it considers, rejects and accepts a number of 'rival' explanations for aspects of the change process and its outcomes. This 'rival explanations' aspect conforms to one of the approaches to analysis outlined by Yin (Yin 2003).

4.4. THE CASE STUDY METHODOLOGY

4.4.1 The Use of a Case Study Methodology

As has been stated above, a single explanatory case study methodology was adopted. In general, a case study is identified as a 'methodological approach which incorporates a number of data

gathering measures' (Berg 1998). In his seminal consideration of case study method Yin (Yin 2003) defines the methodology as:

"An empirical enquiry that...investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" (Yin 1993: 13)

In regarding case studies as one of several approaches to doing social science research Yin cites their greatest strength as the ability to facilitate an effective consideration of the causal links between events, in particular those over which the researcher has no control. He comments further:

"In general, case studies are the preferred strategy when 'how' and 'why' questions are posed, when the investigator has little control over events, and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real life context". (Yin 2003: 1)

This methodological framework also allows a greater understanding of how an organisation or environment functions, through the collection of enough data by research methods that explore alternative data sources to build up as accurate a picture as possible. Berg adds:

"Case study methods involve systematically gathering enough information about a particular person, social setting, event or group to permit the researcher to effectively understand how it operates or functions. It is not actually a data-gathering technique in itself, but a methodological approach that incorporates a number of data gathering measures" (Berg 1998:25)

As research tools, case studies can be categorised in a number of ways. They can be *exploratory* and seek to define the questions and hypothesis of a future study, *descriptive* and illustrate a complete phenomenon it its context, or *explanatory* and present a 'cause and effect' analysis of how and why events happened (Yin 1993). Additionally they can also be *intrinsic* (when the aim is to better understand a particular case or occurrence), *instrumental*, to provide insight into an issue or refine further a theoretical explanation or *collective*, in an attempt to better theorise from a collection of cases (Stake 1994). In light of these models this case study presents an 'explanatory' and 'intrinsic' approach.

4.4.2 The Selection of the Explanatory Case Study Approach

While many case studies fulfil a number of the elements outlined above, in this circumstance the 'explanatory' or 'causal' case study has been selected for a number of reasons. Firstly, this study is primarily a complete piece of work in itself and not a precursor to another piece of research (although it is anticipated that a number of further research projects could emerge from it). Therefore it stands alone as an independent piece of work and would not fit the primary requirement of an exploratory study. Secondly, the research seeks to go beyond a simple descriptive analysis of the change process within the police in Northern Ireland. While such an analysis would be of interest and value, enough data exists to take the analysis further and to draw conclusions on the 'how' and 'why' aspects of the process. Thirdly, the diversity of sources from which to draw data and the differing perspectives of the research participants make it possible to bring together many differing explanations and views on the process. This is an immensely valuable resource and allows for 'rival' or alternate explanations to be teased out, expanded and assessed. All these factors make an 'explanatory' case study most appropriate.

4.4.3 Building Theory?

Case studies can also serve to 'build theory' through a continuous comparison of data and theory, beginning at the point of data collection (Eisenhardt 1989). This inductive approach relies on an initial definition of the research question and 'construct identification' to provide focus. It also benefits from a 'clean slate' theoretically to ensure that the researcher is not overly influenced by existing or embryonic theoretical models. While it is not the intention in this case to build theory, nevertheless an awareness that this case is on the 'extreme' end of the spectrum of large scale organisational change allows for an open mind during data collection and analysis. In relating existing theory to the case study results it is hoped to illustrate new perspectives on existing theoretical approaches to organisational change.

4.4.4 The Use of a Single Case

It has already been stated that the use of a single case is not the optimum research strategy within 'processual' research on organisational change (Pettigrew 1990; Pettigrew 1997; Butler 2003). The reasons for the more usual adoption of a comparative approach to such research are many

and valid. They include; the enhanced generalisability and deeper explanatory potential of comparative work (Miles and Huberman 1994), a distancing from what Firestone and Herriot (Firestone and Herriot 1983) define as 'radical particularism' and an enhanced ability to single out and identify specific conditions of change (Glasner and Strauss 1967). However, in some circumstances a rationale does exist for the analysis of a 'single case'. Yin (Yin 2003) defines five circumstances in which a single case can be a useful and worthwhile strategy; if the case represents the critical case in testing a well formulated theory (Graham Allison's study of the Cuban missile crisis, for example(Allison and Zelikow 1999)); when it represents an extreme or unique case; if it is a representative or critical case; when it is revelatory case, or something which has been previously inaccessible; or if it is an especially longitudinal case. These considerations aside, he still cautions the use of a single case because of the ever changing nature of the case study methodology:

"the potential vulnerability of the single case design is that a case may later turn out not to be the case it was thought to be at the onset. Single case designs therefore require careful investigation of the potential case to minimise the chances of misrepresentation and to maximise the access needed to collect the case study evidence". (Yin 2003)

Despite the obvious limitations of a single large case the restrictions placed on the study did not make a comparative study feasible. Such restrictions include boundaries imposed on access and resource limitations. Additionally, it was felt by the researcher that the case seemed to fall into a number of the categories Yin defines for single case research. For example, within a public sector context it is an extreme example of radical organisation change, in a short space of time, with unusually strong environmental factors impacting on it. It is also revelatory in that it presents data collected and analysed on a process which would otherwise not have been studied or recorded. Additionally, after careful consideration and preliminary research it was the judgement of the researcher that the case would not turn out to be an 'empty vessel' as cautioned against by Yin (2003). Instead all factors (the political and social context, the history of the organisation, and the wider organisational environment) all pointed towards the case study representing a useful and insightful analysis of an organisation 'in flight' (Pettigrew 2003).

The next section will discuss the choice of conducting a single case study in more detail.

4.4.5 The Benefits to this Study of One Large Case

The position of the police in Northern Ireland is a unique one, and correspondingly the process of organisational change undergone by the organisation under scrutiny was equally unprecedented. This piece of research did not set out primarily to build new theory or to make broad generalisations on the process of organisational change within the public sector or more specifically, within police organisations. Rather it intended to look as closely as possible at a process of change within one large organisational setting where contextual issues were crucial and circumstances were virtually unique. From this it hoped to illuminate this case and add to the existing literature on policing, public sector change and organisational change generally. Given time and access restraints and the large amount of data available, looking at the single case as one large change process was perceived as the most viable strategy. It also allowed for a 'holistic' analysis of the process: that is, the ability to evaluate the process in its entirety and most importantly, within its context (Yin 1993). In addition, it tied in with the chosen analytical strategy – to examine the process through a number of conceptual lenses, (historical, anthropological and political) and explore alternate explanations and suggestions through those lenses to build as complete a picture as possible of a complex change. Focusing on one large general case also allowed the researcher to keep a focus on ongoing events that may impact on the process and to continue to collect data from a wide range of sources.

4.5 RESEARCH ETHICS AND SENSITIVE RESEARCH CONTEXTS

The issues of research ethics in this case are intrinsically bound to those that arise because of the sensitive research context and the challenges of access. Therefore any discussion of them in relation to the case study must take into consideration both of these elements. However in general, concerns about research ethics revolve around issues of harm, consent, privacy and the confidentiality of data (Berg 1998). Saunders et al (2000) defines ethics in the context of research as:

"*..the appropriateness of your behaviour in relation to the rights of those who become the subject of your work or are affected by it*". (Saunders et al 2000:130)

By their nature ethical considerations are mediated by subjective judgement and this personal process has been the subject of a great deal of academic discussion and debate. Indeed, there is

general agreement within the literature that consideration of the possible ethical issues within the research project should form part of the initial research proposal and that this consideration should inform the research strategy and research methods used (Saunders, Lewis et al. 2000). Obviously the appropriateness of a researcher's behaviour is affected by the social norms which the researcher is expected to adopt and these in turn are impacted on by the environment in which the research is conducted (Wells 1994; Zikmund 1997). In the context of a divided society which is severely impacted by sectarian actions and attitudes, norms of behaviour conform to different criteria than would be expected. In Northern Ireland social cues such as language, name, school, and address often indicate (or allow people to infer) religious affiliation and often from that political position. At its worst this can lead to sectarian attitudes and discrimination[3]. In other circumstances this simply invokes a sensitivity on behalf of the individuals concerned to avoid certain topics of conversation, and an awareness of the other persons' perceived identity and affiliations (Gebler 1991; Morrow 1997). There is no doubt that the existence of the conflict in Northern Ireland and issues that arose from it had a bearing on the research, although not necessarily a negative one. This will be explored further below.

4.5.1 First Stages

After the initial research proposal stage, the next point at which ethical concerns arise is in the first point of access. It is obviously inappropriate to put pressure on an organisation to gain access (Saunders, Lewis et al 2000; Robson 1993) but the reality of the study in question would have made it very difficult to do this in any case. However, by being aware that even when access was granted, admittance still needed to be 'renegotiated' at different levels. This required the researcher to be aware of the ethical concerns of individuals and not just an 'amorphous' organisation (Buchanan, Boddy et al. 1988). Indeed this renegotiation was a major consideration with the PSNI.

4.5.2 Participant Consent

Obviously in an organisation like the police with a 'command and control' ethos, freely given participant consent is an issue. In any case, participation in any research project is not a

[3] Sectarianism is defined by Brewer as
'*a social marker through which conflict is articulated rather than as a source of conflict in its own right.... Sectarianism operates whenever religion is invoked to draw boundaries and to represent or reduce patterns of inequality and social conflict*' (Brewer 1991:101).

straightforward matter and the scope and boundary of such consent must be defined (Saunders, Lewis et al. 2000). The need to clarify the nature of consent is always present so that informed rather than implied consent is understood. How this was achieved in relation to the case study will be clarified below.

4.5.3 Confidentiality, Anonymity and Privacy

The issues of confidentiality, anonymity and privacy are intertwined within the research process and particularly in relation to this project. Respecting the privacy of participants within the project is one of the key concerns noted by Saunders et al and this issue extends to individuals right not to participate, as well as not to be harassed or induced to participate more than they would normally wish. It also applies to the requirement for the researcher to abide by the nature of the consent given and not abuse this consent by extending it unethically and without the informed knowledge and approval of the participant (Saunders, Lewis et al. 2000). By respecting the concerns of the participant and by being aware of those concerns the right to privacy is extended further (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe et al. 1991). At this point it overlaps with that of confidentiality and the need for information to be kept securely and safely. It also requires that the views of one participant would not be advertently or inadvertently be disclosed to another. Participant anonymity comes into play here, as previous assurances of privacy and anonymity need to be maintained and upheld.

4.5.4 Bias and Objectivity

It is profoundly important that the researcher does not bring a bias with them in the collection and analysis of data in the research project. In practice this means that data should not be collected subjectively, but instead accurately and fully (Saunders, Lewis et al. 2000). Inherent bias that the researcher may bring to the research should be identified and guarded against and most important is the need for the researcher to reflect upon the possibilities of bias both in the collection of data and its analysis (Hoggett, Jeffers et al. 1994). Indeed Hoggett comments: *' a reflexive researcher must contain the capacity to continually question his or her most automatic assumptions and specifically those bound up with the researchers own social position'*(Hoggett et al 1994: 68). While it is inevitable that values and bias intrude in the research project in some way, as clear a view on it as possible is vital and this recognition is itself useful 'data' within the

research (Olesen 2000). Hammersley (2000) provides a typology for bias and concludes that the accusation of bias should be restricted to 'culpable systemic error' (Hammersley 2000:165) and notes:

"...research will inevitably be affected by the personal and social characteristics of the researcher, and that this can be positive value as well as a source of systematic error, it does not require is to give up the guiding principle of objectivity" (Hammersley 2000:165)

4.5.5 Use Made of the Research by Others

The very nature of the organisation under scrutiny and its place within the social, organisational and political fabric of Northern Ireland mean that the research, when made public will most probably receive a degree of attention. Some of this attention will inevitably be from those who seek to use it for their own purposes. Saunders et al refer to this possibility in theory and conclude that the possible use of the research by others needs to be carefully considered as do the attendant consequences (Saunders, Lewis et al. 2000).

4.6. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND THEIR APPLICATION WITHIN THE CASE STUDY

The section above discusses theoretical ethical concerns within research generally, with a particular emphasis on those issues which are prominent within this research project. Given the sensitive nature of the research (discussed in detail below) and the obvious ethical problems that would be encountered during the process an understanding of research ethics was very important from the preparation of the first research proposal.

This next section looks at how the ethical issues encountered were approached, as the research stages were reached. It begins with the research design and concludes with some concerns about the further use of the research when it is made public.

4.6.1 Ethics in the Research Design Stage

One of the most challenging ethical concerns within the research design stage was that of ensuring access was facilitated without putting inappropriate pressure on the organisation, or on individuals to participate. Obviously the process of attaining access turned out to be more

difficult than initially anticipated, but a steady and transparent approach was successful in the end. A more serious concern was the identification of researcher bias within the process and the need for any potential bias to be self- identified and mechanisms put in place to prevent it hampering the research effort.

The review above identified the inherent difficulties of conducting research and the likelihood of some bias creeping into the research process. The important consideration and protective mechanism within these circumstances was a degree of 'reflexive' thinking on behalf of the researcher which continually questions attitudes to the research and its participants. Within this project the researcher partook in a great deal of reflexive thinking and sought to identify and clarify the type of bias she may be vulnerable to. An understanding of this bias is itself interwoven with the contextual difficulties of Northern Ireland. Addressing such 'reflexivity' was essential to the research methodology (Bryman, 2004; Brewer, 2000; Fay, 1975). Bryman's defines reflexivity as:

"*A term used in research methodology to refer to a reflectiveness among social researchers about the implications for the knowledge of the social world they generate of their methods, values, biases, decisions and mere presence in the very situations they investigate.*" (Bryman 2004: 543)

The knowledge of the social world this study aims to generate is an enhanced understanding of how the change process in the RUC occurred and the factors that impacted upon it. Therefore it was at the forefront of the researcher's mind that the descriptions, analysis and conclusions were accurate and consistent.

4.6.2 Bias, Subjectivity and Suspicion in a Divided Society

Northern Ireland is defined within the academic literature as a deeply divided society where communal loyalty and political division are generally identified through religious affiliation (Morrow 1997). Nationalists and Republicans are generally of a Roman Catholic denomination and Unionists and Loyalists are generally of a Protestant denomination. The PSNI as an organisation is largely Protestant (although this is changing through 50 – 50 recruitment), and the

researcher within this context is Roman Catholic. Coming from this community she has been aware of a great deal of hostility towards the police and specifically against the RUC as an institution. However, she has not personally had a negative experience involving the police, and came to the research genuinely interested in the process of change. Even in these circumstances it was important for the researcher to keep at the forefront of her mind at all times her potential for bias and for falling on communal stereotypes.

From the perspective of those who were the subject of the research it is a reasonable assumption to suggest that most of them were members of the Protestant community. Within Northern Ireland it is common for people to determine the community background, and therefore the likely political perspectives of those with whom they engage, rapidly and accurately. This is generally regarded as a protective mechanism to keep people safe within the conflict. For example, names, schools, accents, hometown, the use of some words and not others, and the degree of information voluntarily presented about oneself, or the degree to which information is withheld all act as clues to communal affiliation. From the researcher's name, most respondents would have accurately identified her Roman Catholic background (with all of the political, social and communal connotations of that). It is a safe assumption that the access tussles early on in the research process (not to mention the lengthy security check) would have raised the researchers profile and would have lead her to be identified as a moderate nationalist, rather than a republican. During the data gathering process, the researcher was completely open about her knowledge of, and connections with, moderate nationalist politicians and community organisations. Being transparent about such connections had a number of interesting effects. Firstly, it created a situation of honesty within encounters and allowed people to talk much more freely, simply because they felt they understood the researcher's background, and she understood theirs. While they may have felt more comfortable with someone of a unionist background and orientation, it is safe to say that they would have either refused to take part or have been immensely less forthcoming to someone from republican community background, for obvious reasons. Secondly, respondents appeared reassured that the interviewer understood the nuances of what were at times, complex political, as well as organisational process. This allowed them to talk in detail without having to explain background or contextual issues. Such 'tacit knowledge' (Dawson 2003a) on behalf of the researcher was very valuable. Thirdly, because at that stage in

the change process the focus was still largely on getting moderate nationalists to buy into the change, there may actually have been an advantage to being perceived as a moderate nationalist at that point. Certainly, it did not negatively impact on individual participation or access when data collection started.

4.6.3 Ethics in Data Collection

A number of issues arose within the data collection process that required ethical consideration. The first one was the issue of consent which was addressed at a number of levels. At the first stage consent was sought and granted by the organisation. Then when the data collection process was in preparation, the PSNI appointed Liaison Officer raised serious concerns about the basis of the research and time constraints on organisational staff. The idea of a series of embedded cases was rejected outright. At this point access was renegotiated and the research Liaison Officer provided an initial list of interviewee's. This was supplemented as the research progressed and each interviewee was approached about the work, briefed as to its aims, and issues of anonymity, confidentiality and privacy discussed. All interviewee's were assured that their participation in the research would be kept confidential, where reasonably possible (for some participants rank or uniqueness of position meant that identification was inevitable and this was discussed before the interview commenced). Comments would be used anonymously (again except where it was unrealistic to do this in practice) and privacy would be respected. All this contributed to a position of 'informed consent'. In addition, all interviews were taped with the permission of the interviewee and all interviewee's were offered the opportunity to review the tape transcript and remove or clarify any comments they were unhappy with. Where people declined to participate in the project (as one out of thirty two did), their wishes were respected.

One other issue which arose within the fieldwork process was that of 'inappropriate disclosure' during the interview process. Inappropriate disclosure occurs when an interviewee volunteers information 'in the heat of the moment' which in other circumstances they would not divulge. This may be of a personal or sensitive nature. Given the strong emotional and political circumstances of the change process and the history of the organisation in general it was not surprising that some instances of inappropriate disclosure did occur. The researcher chose to deal

with these with privacy as the over-riding principle and they were not included within the interview transcripts or in the research diary.

4.6.4 Ethics in the Analysis

Two major ethical issues arose during the analysis of data. The first of these was a concern that the objectivity of the researcher was maintained and that the analysis was an accurate reflection of the data collected (Zikmund 1997). While making sense of the large amount of both primary and secondary source material was difficult, maintaining a critical distance in terms of the analysis was assisted by the range of interviewees who took part in the research, and in particular by the inclusion of both internal and external people within the interview sample. The historic experience of the RUC is one which is both politically contested and emotional fraught and having a range of internal and external perspectives allowed the data to 'speak' for itself, without being overly reliant on one perspective. The second issue was the ever present concern for the anonymity of interviewees. The clear commitments given to interviewees during data collection where challenging to keep in practice. However, the fact that the two most senior individuals internally and externally who were interviewed (Sir Ronnie Flanagan, Former Chief Constable and Tom Constantine, Former Head of the Oversight Commission) were happy to be interviewed 'on the record' and are identified within the text in this manner. As their experience was almost unique it would have been incredibly difficult to talk at length about their roles and their perspectives without identifying them. So in this respect, by allowing identification that task was much easier. Another significant individual in the process declined to participate in any way within the research. That was Assistant Chief Constable Tim Lewis. Even though Mr Lewis was not interviewed his name and role cropped up regularly within interviews with others and in documentation produced through the change process. The researcher made contact again with Mr Lewis to inform him that his role looked increasingly central to the process, and that many people had given perspectives on this role. He was asked, in the light of this, would he reconsider, to ensure that his own perspective was not missed or obscured. He again declined. At this point the decision was taken to carry out the analysis acknowledging his lack of participation and relying on the perception of others in the analysis of his role.

4.6.5 Use of the Research by Others

One of the most obvious reasons for the difficulties that arose during access negotiations was a clear understanding by the organisation that the research would at some stage be made public and that its results could be used for purposes other than those originally defined within the research proposal. Previous work on the organisation has been highly controversial (Ellison 1997) and regarded as damaging, and other work has attracted a great deal of publicity even though its content may be regarded as fairly innocuous (Brewer & Magee 1991). However, as a public organisation which states its commitment to honesty, transparency and openness it is simply not possible for the PSNI to adopt a 'no research' strategy, however much some might prefer this in practice. The protracted access negotiations and the strident confidentiality agreement signed by the researcher seemed sufficient to reassure the organisation that it would not be unfairly treated, and offered it a measure of protection. However, the reality of the PSNI and its position in the community means that interest in its process of change is strong. Obviously the researcher has no power to prevent use of the research once it is in the public domain in the future and no way to prevent its misinterpretation other than arguing for it to be seen in its entirety.

4.7 OPERATING IN A SENSITIVE RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT

One of the key characteristics of carrying out research within police services generally and the police in Northern Ireland in particular is that they are generally regarded as being 'sensitive' research environments. This means that they present particular challenges of culture, access and ethics to the researcher (Holdaway 1983; Fox & Lundman 1994). This question of sensitivity is often misunderstood as one of research 'ethics' and not dealt with in the comprehensive way which would be useful for researchers. Brewer (Brewer 1993) in a commentary on research in sensitive locations makes this point:

"Textbooks on research methods rarely mention the problems that arise when undertaking research on controversial topics or conducting it in sensitive locations. When the question of sensitivity is considered, it is usually approach from the perspective of ethics". (Brewer 1993: 125)

Brewers own work as a sociologist who carried out a significant piece of ethnographic research on the RUC at the height of the 'Troubles', makes his insights particularly relevant to this

research. Indeed, his anxiety that the issue of sensitivity is more likely to be addressed in isolated reports of the specific studies in which they have occurred, rather than in a more general and helpful way within the literature on research methods and methodologies, is an important one. In relation to the police in Northern Ireland, Brewer ties the issue of sensitivity (as well as curiosity about the organisation) closely to the context in which it operates:

"The interest that the RUC has as a police force derives entirely from the political and social context in which it operates. The RUC has been forced to adopt a high political profile in its attempts to contain Northern Ireland's social and political divisions, resulting in controversial but also professional expertise in security policing...but this context is both a spur and a hindrance to the researcher. Policing in NI is an emotive topic in a sensitive environment, but this sensitivity has implications for the research, especially its design and location, and the validity and reliability of its results". (Brewer 1993: 126)

He concludes that in general research in such an environment becomes a 'messy enterprise' which results in a series of pragmatic compromises and political decisions on behalf of the researcher. Such decisions often stray from ideal research practice but are necessary in order to carry out the research at all. In all Brewer identifies five particular problems that arose for him and his colleagues in studying the RUC. These were problems of *technique, methodology, ethics, social context,* and *personal security* (Brewer 1993). In addition to these was another, less quantifiable but more pressing issue:

"Anyone planning research on the RUC has first to confront that major contextual problem that the research will end up in the public and not just the academic domain". (Brewer 1993: 128)

Brewer is not the only researcher to make this point in relation to the RUC. In his study of official discourse and organisational memory Mulcahy (Mulcachy 2000) relates his experience of research within the organisation and that of his contemporaneous researchers. One of these academics (Graham Ellison) had a particularly unfortunate experience when segments of his research on the attitudes of RUC officers were reported in the *Irish News*, the nationalist daily newspaper in Northern Ireland. In response to the report, the police denied that parts of the research had been carried out at all, and attacked Ellison's academic competence. Considerable national and international political controversy followed (Ellison 1997; Mulcachy 2000).

One of the issues most prominent in the controversy that surrounded the publication of Ellison's work was the issue of disclosure of research questions and research aims and objectives to the

organisation. It became very clear to those seeking to research the RUC that questions needed to be phrased in a way the organisation would find none-threatening. While Ellison, seems to have adopted a less than candid strategy in relation to this issue (Ellison 1997), Brewer confronts it in a much more 'political' way:

"On the assumption that the Chief Constable considered some topics to be too sensitive, the researchers needed to be careful in terms of how they designed and presented the research" (Brewer 1993:131).

By acknowledging that the phrasing of the research question was an issue and that organisational 'sensitivity' was heightened because of the environmental context, Brewer comes up with a question that seeks to explore the 'ordinary' aspects of policing in Northern Ireland (and steers clear of more controversial or explosive issues). By focusing on 'routine' policing, and by maintaining this strategy Brewer and his research associate are able to carry out their research strategy and publish their findings. It is only here where the strategy becomes unstuck: even with the care and attention given to the sensitive nature of the environment both researchers have been refused permission to do future research within the organisation (Brewer 1993). It seems that at the end Brewer simply decided that, sensitive or not, some of the issues that arose within his research deserved attention and the RUC disagreed. This in itself underlines the real nature of sensitive research: it is context specific and that 'sensitivity' is defined by the person (or organisation) under scrutiny. Brewer concludes:

"Consequently, textbooks can be of very little use, so that at the planning stage researchers themselves need to give serious attention not only to what they believe to be controversial and sensitive but also to what their respondents, potential gatekeepers, and the community at large might consider to be sensitive about the research. (Brewer 1993:143)

4.7.1 Sensitivity in this Study

In this study considerable thought was given to the sensitive nature of the research. The researcher's past experience as a community relations professional working with divided communities in Northern Ireland made her acutely aware of the difficulties inherent in establishing the research project and the inherent wariness of many within the police to research and researchers[4]. However, this background also provided 'ways in' to the organisation and a

[4] In the context of Northern Ireland 'community relations' is taken to mean proactive anti-sectarian work across what is regarded as a 'divided community'.

degree of external credibility (for more detail on this see the discussion on research access and its operationalisation below). While many of the organisational changes to be explored had already taken place or were still underway at the time of the research process, the change itself was still a very public and rather controversial issue - the main data collection phase for the research was January 2004 – January 2005. Such external controversy arose from two angles; the police's ongoing struggle for acceptance and legitimacy within the nationalist community; and the antagonism that existed within the unionist community to a change in the status quo. In the first, the Police had made some progress and after considerable negotiation, the nationalist Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) had signalled their support of the new structures and agreed to take up their seats on the new Policing Board. However, their republican rivals, Sinn Fein, did not take up their seats on the same Board until 2007.

The second perspective is no less controversial if diametrically opposed in attitude to the first. Within the unionist and loyalist community in Northern Ireland there was extreme concern and anger about the 'reconstructing' of the RUC as a new organisation with a new name, new logo, new uniform and new recruiting policy. Indeed the prospect of 50/50 recruiting was seen as abhorrent by many sections of the unionist community and is still under legal challenge in 2008. The perception that the RUC was being 'done away with' was argued again and again by many individuals and organisations. The unionist community in general strongly resisted attempts at change – such resistance was articulated by their political representatives.

Internally too, there were concerns about what research would throw up at such a sensitive time in the development of the PSNI. The prospect of research confirming change had or had not occurred was not a welcome one. Indeed, some organisational gatekeepers were hostile to the research on principle believing that '*we have too much research done on us – there is no need for it*'[5]. Some others simply did not want to be held responsible for an organisational embarrassment, should the research become public and reflect badly on the organisation. In this context, it is not difficult to understand why the organisation might be rather 'touchy' about attempts to delve too deeply into their change process. However, the prevailing political and organisational climate

[5] Interviewee 15

and the fact that 'openness and transparency' were key objectives in the change strategy itself, allowed for serious access problems to be overcome.

The next section will detail those discussions and give some insight to the strategies used to unblock the research process.

4.8. ISSUES OF ACCESS

4.8.1 The Academic Context

One of the ways in which the 'sensitive' nature of research within the police in Northern Ireland becomes most obvious is in the granting of research access to external researchers. While many people have conducted research successfully and without problems, many others have encountered real challenges in terms of the aims, objectives, construction and ability to carry out their research strategy in a meaningful way. Obviously as an organisation in the public eye with a high profile press and media department the police are keen to manage, as far as possible, how they are portrayed publicly. Miller (1994) in his ironically entitled work '*Don't Mention the War: Northern Ireland, Propaganda and the Media*', comments:

"Throughout the conflict the RUC has sought to control the information available to researchers, whether through the provision of tours to visiting journalists, un-attributable briefings, or through its press office". (Miller 1994: 71)

As a consequence of this traditional reluctance to grant research access the most significant research project to date has been the one that addressed the force's 'normal' policing role (Brewer and Magee 1991)[6]. As has been stated above, Brewer and his colleague took great care to phrase their research questions and design their research strategy to achieve precisely the effect of good access. Mulcahy (Mulcachy 2000) achieved good access up until the point at which his research project was affected by the controversy surrounding Graham Ellison's research (Ellison 1997) and no repeat access has been achieved. Mulcahy had this to say of the situation that confronted him in the light of the Ellison storm:

[6] See section above on 'sensitivity' as an issue in research .

"Following the controversy this generated, the RUC amended their procedures for providing research access. In a meeting I had with members of the RUC after Ellison's article had been made public, I was 'invited' – the alternative, which I opted for, was being refused permission to conduct any further interviews – to sign a contract giving the RUC ownership of the data, copyright over the data, and a veto over any public dissemination of the research findings, whether through the media or any other outlet. One of the officers present said that the force was 'disappointed' at the way some researchers had 'let us down', and that the reason for the change in procedures was to prevent any official embarrassment from researchers 'running away off to the newspapers' with their findings". (Mulcachy 2000: 72).

Ayers (Ayers 1997) achieved good access in her feminist study of the arming of police women but has made no attempt to publish findings or update research. Indeed, her research in the manner of Brewer's, stayed well clear of controversial issues. Other academics have done informal work with the organisation and used that work to inform their own research interests (Jarman 2000). This appears to be often the most successful strategy for organisational acceptance. It does not however work when the aim is to carry out a large focused research project solely on the organisation. For this objective to be realised, the more traditional approach of applying for and being granted official access needed to be employed.

4.8.2 Access for this Study

An awareness of the difficulties of others and the sensitive nature of the Police's organisational context made achieving access a slow and careful process. Initially the researcher spent some time meeting informally with existing police contacts and gauging feeling within the organisational leadership (at Assistant Chief Constable level) towards the possibility of this research project. As indications were positive the researcher began to formulate possible research questions and define a research strategy. This initial positive feedback was probably a mixture of individual interest in the process and a political awareness of the need to appear open and transparent. This process went well and an official request was made for research access to carry out this study in March 2003[7]. In early April 2003 the researcher received correspondence from the PSNI stating that they were considering the request for access and, while it was under their consideration, they required the completion of a security questionnaire into the researcher's personal circumstances and a signed confidentiality agreement which outlined, in the strongest possible terms the consequences of 'inappropriate' disclosure of information. At this point the

[7] See Appendix 1

questionnaire was completed and the confidentiality agreement signed with an additional appendix attached detailing the scope of the research, the range, depth and estimate of numbers of interviews required and caveats as to the use of the material. These stated that the research was conducted as part of an academic process, that it would conform to normal academic requirements and that academic supervisors and final examiners would have access of drafts and the final work. It also stated in the normal course of events the research would result in published academic articles, conference papers, research seminars etc. This additional appendix was to prove very useful as the research project progressed. Without additional correspondence or contact from the PSNI the research proposal with its appendix, was officially approved on the 1st of May 2003.

4.8.3 'Retrenchment from the Front'

From this point onwards the research progressed and some time was spent conducting background research and building up a history of the organisation. This also included trawling existing literature on change and on policing to sharpen research questions further and look for theoretical or empirical gaps which the research may be able to add to. During this period of time contact with the organisation was maintained, but not directly with the research Liaison Officer. The researcher returned to the organisation ready to begin the process of 'conducting' the research in January 2004 and was almost immediately confronted with a more sceptical and less positive stance on behalf of the organisation. This change of attitude (also experienced by Brewer (1993) and referred to by him as '*retrenchment from the front*') was a direct indication of one level of management's attempts to control and influence the research design and practice at that late point in the process. After a period of considerable renegotiation with the appointed Liaison Officer and the intervention of a senior independent and respected individual outside the organisation, both the Liaison Officer and the researcher were satisfied that the research could be undertaken in a way which would maintain its academic credibility without leaving the organisation vulnerable to unfair criticism. The intervention of interested and respected individuals is not uncommon in brokering such access issues, as Barley illustrates in recalling his access challenges (Barley 1990). The previously agreed research specification and its appendix were immensely valuable in this process of arbitration. There is no doubt that had the organisation not previously agreed in writing to the research and its specification, the process of

achieving research access would have been much more difficult and indeed the research itself, may have faltered at this stage. As it was, the original intended research strategy (of one large case, supplemented by four small internal localised studies to facilitate an 'embedded' analysis) had to be abandoned. Few concrete reasons were given as to why these embedded cases were out of the question. It appeared to the researcher that the PSNI felt a danger in allowing the research to be exposed to policing 'at the coal face', and what this might mean publicly in terms of the change process. However, the major data gathering method (individual, recorded and transcribed, semi-structured interviews) was approved as was the general direction of the study and its aims and objectives. Interesting, after much discussion one further point of compromise was made. The research questions had originally been drafted and agreed as:

Was the task of change management embarked upon by the RUC successful?
What were the critical factors in the success or otherwise of that change?

Instead they now read:

How did the Police in Northern Ireland go about conducting a process of organisational change?

Was the change strategy adopted appropriate?

The researcher felt that these questions would provide enough opportunity to explore aspects of the process in depth and retain some of the 'flexibility' which had been sacrificed with the original research questions. The PSNI were agreeable.

While this change was relatively subtle (the emphasis moved from 'success' to 'appropriateness') the change was enough to give the organisation confidence that it would not be 'unfairly judged' through the research process or by others who may have looked to the research as a way of damaging the process or the individuals involved in it. In all, the process of negotiating and renegotiating access within the organisation did at least assist in developing an

understanding of the organisational environment (May 2001) which further assisted the analysis in Chapter's Six and Seven. In this it was a useful, if fraught experience.

4.9 COLLECTING EVIDENCE: METHODS AND THEIR SELECTION

Stake (Stake 1995), and Yin (Yin 1993) identified at least six sources of evidence in case study research. These include; documents, archival records; interviews; direct observation; participant-observation; and physical artifacts. They also emphasize the importance of collecting evidence from multiple sources that converge on the same set of facts or findings. Indeed Yin defines the use of multiple sources of evidence along beside the use of a case study database and a chain of evidence as one of his three principles of data collection.

The next section will discuss these research methods in relation to the project and look at how they operated within the research process.

4.9.1 The Selection of Research Methods

In the same way that it was necessary to choose a research approach and case study methodology for this work, it is also necessary to decide upon the research methods which would be most appropriate to gather the best data. From the beginning this research was anticipated as multi-method, and qualitative and as such a number of methods particularly suited to qualitative work were chosen. This multi-methods approach is one which is favoured by Yin (2003) and of which Berg (1998: 4) favourably comments: '*each separate research method reveals slightly different facets of the same symbolic reality. Every method is a different line of sight towards the same point...*'.Multi-method approaches also allow for the triangulation of data and greater reliability and validity of that data (discussed in Section 4.10).

In practice research methods can include everything from surveys to structured and semi-structured interviews, participant observation to documentary evidence. The qualitative nature of this research, the complexity of the phenomenon being investigated and issues of confidentiality apparent, suggested the use of a semi-structured interview method as the main data collection

tool. In addition to this, primary documentary material was also collected as well as secondary source material, archival records and the use of direct observation on the organisation.

4.9.2 Interviews as a Research Method

An interview has been defined by Kahn and Cannell (1957) as a purposeful discussion between two or more people, and is a useful tool in gathering reliable information that facilitates an exploration of research objectives. A number of interview types exist from the most formalised and structured to the most informal and unstructured with variants at points in between(Saunders, Lewis et al. 2000). Structured interviews generally use questionnaires based on a standardised set of questions (Healey 1991). Semi or non-structured interviews however use non-standardised questions or no questions at all to explore a set of issues or themes or one area in depth. For this study a semi-structure format seemed the most appropriate with a set of questions which could be supplemented by follow on questions to allow a discussion of points and themes. The format of semi-structured interviews was the most appropriate to the 'explanatory' research approached adopted and allowed the interviewer to explore the relationship between variables with interviewee's while systematically covering relevant themes. The use of a number of informal, in-depth interviews prior to the main data collection phase was also used within this study. These 'guided conversations' (Yin 2003) elicited the bulk of primary source material within the study.

There exists a vast literature from a number of academic disciplines on the format, structure and manner of conducting interviews. In the main, they work from the premise that the interview is a process by which a line of enquiry can be progressed while remaining unbiased in the form in which questions are asked and answers received (Yin 2003). The semi-open structure of case study interviews means that respondents can be asked about facts as well as their opinions and encouraged to suggest other people and issues which may relate to the study in question. The use of a Case Study Protocol is particularly useful in an interview based research design to clarify and focus the approach before interviews (see Research Protocol in Appendix 2).

4.9.3 Collection of Documentary Source Material

Documentary source material is widespread and recognisably relevant in almost every organisational case study. A number of issues exist in terms of its usability however, the most

pertinent being the accuracy and potential bias that may be present within documents. Yin (2003) defines the care needed when using documentary materials thus:

"You need to remember that every document was written for some specific purpose and some specific audience other than those of the case study being done...the case study investigator is a vicarious observer, and the documentary evidence reflects a communication among other parties attempting to achieve some other objective" (Yin 2003: 87)

In general though, documentary material is useful to corroborate and augment evidence from other sources as long as the researcher is careful and cautious about its accuracy and aware of the audience for whom it was written (Yin 2003; Dawson 2003a). It is also useful in defining other information which may be relevant such as the circulation of organisational information and when it tends to contradict other data it can be a useful 'checking' mechanism which underlines data validity. By its nature it can be primary or secondary data. If it takes the form of archival records, it is particularly important to ascertain the circumstances in which it was constructed, as this has the potential to impact greatly on its usefulness and veracity (Yin 2003).

4.9.4 Direct Observation

Visits to the case 'study' site are, in effect, opportunities for direct observation of the case and its situation. A number of methods can be used to make this observation more useful for the study, including observational protocols and additional information collected is often useful in providing data about the topic being studied. Access restrictions meant that little direct observation was carried out, apart from when entering or leaving police stations. Occasionally these experiences did give the researcher an insight into how 'outsiders' were perceived within this environment. For example, on a number of occasions police officers at security desks expressed surprise that I was an academic from a 'southern' university. On one occasion I was delayed at security for twenty five minutes while the officers assured me that the (senior) figure I was there to interview was not in the building. Only after I called him on his mobile phone and confirmed that he was both there and waiting to see me, was I eventually given a pass. On that occasion the senior RUC figure personally came to collect from security and, after that, dealings with security went much more smoothly.

4.10 TRIANGULATION

One of the principle reasons for a multi-method approach is to ensure that different lines of enquiry allow the researcher to get a clearer, richer picture of a situation, than one perspective would give. As Berg (1998) states:

"By combining several lines of sight, researchers obtain a better, more substantive picture of reality: a richer, more complete array of symbols and theoretical concepts; and a means of verifying many of these elements". (Berg 1998: 4-5)

These 'converging lines of enquiry' (Yin 2003) allow for much more convincing conclusions to be drawn than if one line of enquiry was followed. Four types of triangulation have been identified by Patten (1987). They are; data, investigators, theory, and methods. Within this study it is triangulation of data and methods which are particularly relevant, although the analytical approach will provide triangulation of theory to a certain extent.

4.11 VALIDITY, GENERALISABILITY AND RELIABILITY IN RESEARCH DESIGN

Validity, generalisability and reliability intersect in terms of the research process and all relate to the quality of the data and research process. Yin (2003) in his review of this subject cites Kidder and Judd's (1986) definition of four criteria for judging the quality of research design (construct validity, internal validity, external validity and reliability). Yin (2003) then goes on to explore these criteria within the case study framework developing strategies for ensuring quality while retaining a case study approach. To ensure construct validity (the establishment of correct operational measures for the constructs studies) he advises the use of multiple sources of evidence, the establishment of a chain of events and the review of draft case study write ups by key informants. For internal validity where the aim is to establish a 'causal' relationship between some conditions and others, he recommends pattern matching, explanation building, rival explanatory propositions and logic models. For external validity (generalisability) he advocates the use of theory in single case situations and replication logic in multiple cases (Yin 2003: 54). Schofield (2004) also deals with the issue of generalisability in case study research and conceptualises it as a 'fit' between the situation studied and the others to which one might be

interested in applying the concepts and conclusions of a study. She goes further to suggest that generalisability is about studying *what is*, *what may be* and *what could be*. Within the research attempt were made to validate constructs using multiple sources of evidence and review by major informants. Internally, were possible rival explanatory propositions are established and patterns within the data sourced and identified. Conclusions are reached about possible areas of generalisability.

4.12 CASE STUDY DATA COLLECTION: THE PROCESS

The next section will review the research process and link theoretical issues discussed above to the reality of the research process. It will illustrate the compromises reached and decisions taken in relation to the research and justify these where necessary. It also seeks to present more of the 'story' of the fieldwork collection as a process which further illustrates ongoing change within the organisation itself.

4.12.1 Pilot

The questions posed to interviewee's were aimed at eliciting information about complex and different issues, at a time of real flux within the organisation. It was important that the questions covered all of the necessary issues without taking up too much of the interviewee's time. In order to strike this balance appropriately, the first three interviews were used as a check to ensure that the necessary issues were covered and the interview length appropriate. It was decided that the questions did indeed cover the most pressing issues, but as a result of this pilot the order in which the questions were posed changed slightly so that the interview itself 'flowed' better and priority issues were dealt with first (in case time ran out or the interview was interrupted.

4.12.2 The Selection of Individual Interview Respondents

A preliminary interviewee list was formulated during informal talks with organisation members prior to the 'official' start of the fieldwork process. This list was then used as a reference point when the PSNI appointed research Liaison Officer suggested a number of people to interview initially and continued to be a reference point as the research progressed. This initial list provided a checking mechanism to ensure that the collection of data and the 'sweep' of

interviewees was adequate and that major issues (and individuals) were not missed. In terms of the story of change this was vital as different people and different perspectives added diverse elements. While it was made clear by the research Liaison Officer that the organisation was participating in the research process, it was also clear that pressures of time and other commitments meant that people would be unavailable at times for interview. The Liaison Officer also commented that she saw it as her role to 'protect' the time of people within the organisation from unproductive intrusions to their time and that a 'case' would need to be made to go beyond the limited list she had initially suggested. In terms of the development of the interview group, the distinction between 'respondent' and 'informant[8]' was clear, and is discussed briefly below.

Therefore the number of people available for interview was also an issue of contention and negotiation within the process. The PSNI is a heavily monitored body reporting regularly to a number of authorities and many members of staff have responsibility for completing the reports to oversight bodies in addition to their other duties. Pressure of time was a big concern for the Liaison Officer: an argument counteracted by the danger of getting an incomplete or inaccurate picture of the process. Eventually it was agreed that twenty people from inside the organisation would be made available for interview from a negotiated list, but that the researcher could come back to the organisation and 'argue the case' for additional specific individuals. Additionally, people currently outside the process, in particular the former Chief Constable Sir Ronnie Flanagan, were also approached.

4.12.3 Respondent or 'Informant'

While the word 'informant' is used routinely within research methods to describe someone who plays a particularly useful role in developing the research and aiding its progress, it remains an incredibly loaded political term in Northern Ireland because of its security connotations. In common terms, an informant is someone who passes information to the security forces. Therefore it is important to be clear that the use of the term here simply refers to someone who assisted the research process. A number of key individuals were particularly useful in this respect, due to their particular standing in or outside the organisation, their interest in the subject

[8] In this instance the term 'informant' is used to describe the role of an interview 'respondent' who is particularly helpful at suggesting evidence, routes to access evidence and other individuals who may be of relevance to the study.

manner or their concerns about specific aspects of the change process. Care was taken not to become particularly reliant on any one individual and to cross check all information to ensure validity, where possible.

4.12.4 The Interviewee Demographic

Ultimately, thirty one interviews were conducted. Sixteen of those were PSNI members or had previously been members. One of them was the former Chief Constable Ronnie Flanagan. Of the other fifteen, five were or had been at Assistant Chief Constable level or civilian equivalent. Five were at Chief Superintendent level. Three were at Superintendent level, and two at Chief Inspector. All worked within or had worked within the organisation during and after the change process. Six had worked directly within the change team over a period of five years and the rest had engaged with the change through their own area of work (CID, DCU Commander etc) at the time. It's important to note that the PSNI often moves officers rapidly around the organisation, particularly if they are ambitious and seeking promotion. Therefore most of these individuals would have experienced the impact of change in different locations at different points in time, over the period of the study.

Four more interviewee's were presently or previously members of various police oversight bodies, like the Policing Board or the Oversight Commission. One of these was Tom Constantine, the former Head of the Police Oversight Commission. Another four were academics who had also acted as advisors to the police through the change process is their various areas of expertise. Two more were external consultants who had been engaged to facilitate recruitment and public relations support. The rest were journalists, politically active external participants, or community relations professionals who had engaged in the process at various stages with the clear objective of creating change[9].

4.12.5 The Interview Schedule

Interviews were conducted along a timescale largely dictated by the interviewees. The main interview period began in March 2004 and stretched to June 2005, although Sir Ronnie Flanagan

[9] A list of interviews illustrated by rank / role is contained in Appendix 15

was interviewed outside that timescale for reasons of availability. In general interviews were conducted in no particular order, with the exception of Sir Ronnie Flanagan who was approached at the end of the process. This was a deliberate move on behalf of the researcher who, in believing that only one meeting with him was probable, was anxious to cover all issues and avoid the necessity of going back to ask for a second meeting.

4.12.6 Interview Style

The interview style adopted was professional and focused on the conversation between the interviewer and the respondent. Given the divided nature of Northern Ireland society and the interviewer's obvious identity as a member of the Catholic and perceived nationalist community, the interviewer went to some length to reassure interviewees of the 'management' focus of the study and emphasised that while the study was deeply contextual, it was not, of its essence, political. All interviewers were reassured about confidentiality, the privacy of information and the systems put in place to keep data safe.

4.12.7 Interview Questions : Their Formulation, and Relationship to Research Aims

The interview questions were specifically designed to elicit as much information as possible and focused on the research aims. The relationship between the aims of the research and the interview questions is illustrated in Appendix 3. They attempted to cover an extended time period, define organisational, environmental and policy pressures and identify the varied causes of change, the role of people and that of chance within the process.

4.12.8 Use of a Case Study Protocol

Yin (1994) recommends the use of case-study protocol that would include an overview of the project (project objectives and case study issues) ; 'field' procedures (credentials and access to sites); questions (specific questions that the investigator must keep in mind during data collection); guide for the report (outline, format for the narrative) (Yin, 1994: 64). As this protocol was principally for the use of the sole researcher it relates specifically to the concerns of the researcher during the fieldwork process. A copy of the Protocol developed is in Appendix 2. In practice the protocol was used as a prompt for the researcher before interviewers so all

relevant material was available and the specific requirements of each interview setting were catered for.

4.12.9 Recording of Data

It was negotiated at an early stage in the research process that all interviews would be recorded, where possible, and with the consent of the interviewee. While this was an initial point of contention the arguments for recording outweighed those against and the Liaison Officer agreed that if individual interviewees consented, interviews could be recorded. A commitment was made that individuals would have access to interview transcripts if requested and would be able to 'strike comments from the record' at this point if they felt this was necessary. A number of interviewees did request transcripts and some points were indeed deleted at their request. Others made additional clarifying remarks which were amended to the end of transcribed interviews.

4.12.10 Collection of Documentary Source Material

Important primary documentary source material was volunteered by interviewees and the research Liaison Officer. At other times information was referred to within interviews and the researcher actively went looking for that material, either through the Liaison Officer or more widely through other sources. One example of this was the frequency of references to large and small scale political events within the interview data across a range of participants. This necessitated a trawl through back issues of regional newspapers to pinpoint the circumstances and environmental pressures which were apparent at various stages in the process but which were external to the organisation. This was done through electronic searches on newspaper websites and a suitable search engine (in this case lexus-nexus).

4.12.11 The Use of Historic Timelines

One of the important factors within the research was that the change process had occurred over an extended period of time. By specifically asking for the timeframe in which an event occurred during the interview process and making a note of this, it was possible to analysis the chronology of events by putting time scales together a various points in the interview process. This allowed

the investigator to pinpoint inconsistencies, to clarify these at the earliest opportunity and to become aware of different perceptions of the process of change within the organisation. An example of the timeline used appears in Appendix 6

4.12.12 The Use of a Research Diary

The use of semi-structured interviews was an intense and data rich collection method and one which sparked new questions and insights during and after each interview. By using a research diary as recommended by Yin (2003) and ensuring entries were made as insights and questions arose, it was possible to keep a record of thoughts which would may otherwise have become lost within the ever increasing array of information. In particular the research diary was of real use in the analytical process following data collection.

4.13 THE METHODOLOGY OF ANALYSIS

While guidance on the method of content analysis for processual research is fairly forthcoming within the literature (Miles & Huberman 1994: Dawson 2003b), the consideration of manual or software content analysis is less clearly guided. In essence both approaches allow the researcher to identify important and significant issues, patterns and linkages within, what are often, very large bodies of data. For this research a manual approach was chosen, for a number of reasons. The first was the familiarity of the researcher with manual forms of content analysis, and a difficulty pinpointing a software package that would deliver the same fluidity of analysis. This may simply have been a reflection of the researchers limited experience with such packages. Fundamentally, it was the judgement of the researcher that while the size and scope of the project itself would seem to militate against a manual approach, the reality of handling, sifting and dissecting the data allowed for a greater sense of familiarity and flexibility than a software package may have brought.

4.14 CONCLUSION

This Chapter sets out the methodological framework of the research and explains how that framework was decided upon. It also reviews the data collection stage and discusses how and why ideal approaches were sometimes compromised to facilitate the research process and

justifying those decisions when they were taken. The collection of data for the research was an interesting and rewarding experience. The nature of the case study combined with a degree of wariness by some elements within the organisation made it challenging at times. In general, the experience has been in character with that of many researchers exploring this and similar organisations and the comments of Brewer (1993) while dated, still resonant in this study:

"Our study of the RUC confirms that tenacity, toughness, and single-mindedness are important when undertaking sensitive research – so does the possession of a certain balance and pragmatism that helps researchers avoid overreaction to specific problems at the time; the travails can be worth it in the end" (Brewer 1993:142)

5. CHAPTER FIVE THE ANALYTICAL PROCESS AND ITS OUTCOMES

"The task is more eclectic .....to identify the varied causes of change, to assess against the evidence alternative accounts such as rational, incremental, political and cultural views of process, quests for efficiency and power, the role of exceptional people and extreme circumstance, the untidiness of chance, unintended consequences and counterproductive actions" (Pettigrew, Ferlie et al 1992: 1)

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This short Chapter looks at the methods adopted by processualists in general to illuminate a path through the difficult task of research analysis. It also spends some time distilling useful advice from the many authors who have put forward helpful guidelines for conducting this type of analysis. However, rather than simply reiterating the advice and describing its application in this study of policing change, the Chapter also briefly outlines the *actual* analytical process for this research, the difficulties encountered in the analysis of large volumes of data, and the eventual zigzaggingly frustrating construction of the case narrative that appears in Chapter Six. In this, it attempts to juxtapose the theory of processual analysis with the realised application of this theory and to draw some conclusions about the difficulties and compromises that such a journey brings.

5.2 THE NATURE AND MANAGEMENT OF QUALITATIVE DATA

There is no doubt that the volume of 'data' generated by qualitative analysis can be huge, overwhelming and difficult to analysis effectively. The 'text' laden nature of such data can make it unwieldy and lead to confusion and difficulty developing coherent and justifiable links between actions and their causes within organisational environments (Miles & Huberman 1994). The sheer volume of data that confronts the researcher can also be overwhelming, as the data collected often reflects early research uncertainty which leads to all data appearing significant (Miles & Huberman 1994). The difficulties that arise in the analysis of qualitative material can be mitigated to some extent by careful data management from the beginning of the data collection phase. 'Keeping track' of data in a way that allows for its sorting, labelling and retrieval is a theme that recurs often in the extensive advice on this shifting interface between the fieldwork and analysis research phases (Miles and Huberman 1994; Dawson 2003).

Acknowledging that the system for sorting data can and does evolve, is an important recognition of the developmental and dynamic nature of the process.

Even with these drawback of volume, qualitative data is extremely rich in what Miles and Huberman (1994) refer to as *local groundedness* – in that it is naturally close to, and focused on, the particular nature of the research situation under scrutiny. Its inherent flexibility and the often extended period of data collection that accompanies it, allows for confidence in its reliability, and also that it might give us a real insight into a complex research context. In this it aids understanding of *meaning* and also the role that context plays in shaping events and their interpretations (Van Manen 1977). Displaying qualitative data also presents challenges, particularly if we want to provide additional or 'shorthand' versions of the long contextual narratives that face readers and sometimes mitigates against maximum audience 'take up' of such studies (Dawson 2003a). Efforts at data display (such as tables, diagrams and the like) allow an opportunity to convey data in another way which is less text-focused than the general narrative, and allows readers to extract valid and important information and insights from it. Data display is also another step in the analytical process, and as such allows us to convey more fluidly than with text salient patterns that have emerged from the analytical process (Miles & Huberman 1994).

5.3 HOW SHOULD THE PROCESS OF ANALYSIS BE CONDUCTED?

Relatively little advice is forthcoming from processualists themselves about the actual analytical process (Pettigrew 1990). This is reflected upon by both Pettigrew and Dawson who have made useful attempts to 'fill in the gaps' and guide the 'apprentice researcher' (Pettigrew 1990, Dawson 2003a). The general presumption in this regard is that those pursuing processual orientated case studies should be familiar with approaches to longitudinal research and adopt one of the rigorous qualitative data analysis approaches recommended and distilled by scholars such as Miles and Huberman (1994). Dawson refers to the actual analytical process as the 'long vigil' and comments wryly that '*this is also the period in which researchers may question their sanity in embarking on such a study in the first place*' (Dawson 2003a: 114). Avoiding '*asphyxiation by*

data' as advised by Pettigrew (1990) seems like a good idea from any perspective. Dawson (2003a) reflects:

"*In essence, a processual analysis involves breaking down data into various constituent components, then locating data under one of a number of different categories and sub categories, before building connections across the research material as a whole*" (Dawson 2003a:114)

Of particular resonance is his description of data '*cracked*' open, labelled and then reconstructed (rather like an egg or genetic code). By pulling apart the whole. Dawson seeks to convey the process of creating something else from it, defining different textured meanings that relate to the original but are qualitatively different from the raw disjointed beginnings.

The difficulties of getting going on the process of analysis and coming out with something coherent at the end can be alleviated somewhat by the types of data reduction techniques advocated by Miles and Huberman (1994) among others and referred to by Dawson and Pettigrew. Such techniques generally involve coding, teasing out themes, defining clusters and are rightly regarded as an integral part of the analytical (and thinking) process. The necessarily *selective* process of data collection (selective in terms of what we collect, but also what we choose to observe and also what we choose to remember (Miles & Huberman 1994) is further complicated by the deeply contextual nature of language as a medium of communication. Deciding on and assigning codes to data (a type of analysis in itself) includes determining descriptive, interpretative and pattern (explanatory) codes which are extracted from an embedded analysis. Of course, as research progresses, information which initially may have seemed straightforward can begin to take on another interpretation so codes may need to be revised and revisited as research progresses and understanding comes (Glaser & Strauss 1967). Inductive coding (devising codes line by line through data and then rationalising them down) is perhaps the most straightforward way of approaching the process, and is advocated and most usefully illustrated by Straus (1987). Other coding methods of course are apparent – 'a priori' coding (codes established prior to any analysis in relation to theory), as well as a number of helpfully explained 'midway' approaches (Lofland 1971; Bogdan & Biklen 1992). One point which is continually relevant is that of the changing nature and emphasis on codes:

"...some codes do not work: others decay. No field material fits them, or the way they slice up the phenomenon is not the way the phenomenon appears empirically....other codes flourish,

sometimes too much so. Too many segments get the same code, thus creating the familiar problem of bulk. This problem calls for breaking down codes into sub-codes....." (Miles & Huberman 1992: 61)

The need to define codes is clear, as is the need for codes to be clearly and coherently structured. During the actual process of coding data, active reflection and 'mindfulness' are advised, in order to inspire ideas, reflections and meaning as the process builds. This hold especially true for trying to identify patterns or links within the data (Miles & Huberman 1994). Done manually or with the aid of a software package, the process is generally regarded to be long and difficult (Dawson 2003a). One point which seems especially relevant to processual research is made by Dawson in his concern that researchers should consciously avoid the tendency to try to '*tidy away or ignore loose ends...sidestep problems....chronicle an 'accurate' account of change*' (Dawson 2003a: 115). By retaining what Pettigrew refers to as the '*messiness*' of organisational reality a much richer and more complex version emerges.

Where the coding stops is another point of interest. While some (Lincoln & Guba 1985) suggest that running out of new codes is itself an indication of a 'saturation point', Miles and Huberman (1992) advise sensibly on the 'layered' nature of understanding that comes with research analysis. Waiting for saturation can be a never ending process and the judgement of when to stop is a decision which needs to be made with many more practical factors in mind.

5.4 HOW SHOULD THE STORY BE TOLD?

Just as processualists talk little about the method of analysis, they make few recommendations on how to construct the 'story' of the change process. Again, we look to those focused on analytical processes for advice. As we have seen above, dealing with qualitative data (essentially words) can be difficult. The essence of this difficulty is the sheer volume of words that qualitative data generates and the difficulty of keeping track of salient information 'bites' as the analytical process evolves. Another issue is the difficulty of conveying the story in any way but the traditional (although rich and vibrant) narrative form. For this problem Miles and Huberman (1994) suggest a series of data display models which allow information to be relayed without the receiver having to trawl through pages and pages of analysis. Context charts, time ordered displays and event listings (among others) all serve to convey the essential dynamic of the

process in a way that both avoids a narrative and brings a extra dimension to understanding. Displays can describe as well as explain, and what they lack in richness and depth they make up for in shortcuts to the fundamental conclusions of the research. Again, display's are themselves a form of analysis and aid the thinking process which underlines the analytical journey (Lofland & Lofland 1984).

The most obvious way to present a processual story though is through a dynamic narrative form – to '*weave an argument that constantly moves from the general to the particular*' and to link together new insights with existing empirical and theoretical findings within the wider literature (Pettigrew 1997). Writing the case as an 'analytical chronology' allows for pattern identification and also possibly for comparative analysis (a current concern for processualists like Pettigrew and Fenton 2000). Dawson, however cautions against an approach which sacrifices the depth of multiple voices and different interpretations of change for an attempt at comparative analysis. Instead, he argues for '*open contextual descriptions for the dynamic process by which change unfolds*' (Dawson 2003a: 114). Of course, in the end such a narrative is simply a research report and much advice exists on the structuring of such reports. Unsurprisingly, this advice concentrates first on producing reports which are appropriate and useful for the report's audience, and the most suitable vehicle for such information (Yin 1993). The selective and interpretative nature of such reports is commented upon by Zeller (1991) as is the choice of potential formats. Most of all is the emphasis on writing as an intrinsically analytical process in itself and one which through 'a *careful description of the setting, people and events....also (has) an analytical interpretative purpose*' (Miles & Huberman 1994: 301).

5.5 HOW WAS THE PROCESS OF ANALYSIS CONDUCTED AND MANAGED?

Embarking upon the analysis of the RUC case was a process long in gestation. In terms of the general time scale of the research itself the actual analysis was confined to a clear extended window of time towards the end of the project. But in reality the actual analytical process began almost as soon as the research itself was initiated. Aside from the normal 'thinking' process which accompanies research generally, one of the reasons was the deeply contextual nature of the study itself. While early preparatory work was being carried out on the background of the case, closely related events were playing out in a contemporaneous way all around the

researcher. This constant focus on 'what would happen next' made the process of analysis one that was closely tied to an initially external view of the 'drama' and then to access to essentially internal perspectives on the external and public spectacle. Another thing that prepared the way somewhat for the analytical process was the use of a research diary (referred to more extensively in Chapter Four). This began well before the fieldwork proper and provided a record of public or semi-public events which were occurring (and were reported sometimes widely, sometimes barely) but were regarded by the researcher as having a possible bearing on the future fieldwork and data gathering process. The hugely contextual nature of the research made this record even more useful, if more difficult to sift for relevance. It also provided links to secondary source material which would no doubt have been almost impossible to obtain years later from scratch, during the actively data gathering and analytical phases. This 'passive' analysis (gathering, sorting, noting and filing away information of relevance) fits well with the type of inductive analytical process described above.

Obviously, as the research progressed and data collection took place this inductive process of analysis continued. A 'possible code' book came into existence, to record potential codes and the insights which emerged from them. Early codes were unfocused except that they related to internal and external frameworks and related to broad concerns such as the role of stakeholders, acknowledgements of the political activity of organisational leaders, significance of timing, corporate memory, transfer of policing models, resources, and the impact of individuals on the process. These early possible codes are illustrated in Appendix 7. As the analytical process developed so did the coding framework. First a formal set of primary codes were established, in terms of the internal process, the external process and the perceived interaction between theses two processes. These were used to bring some order to the, by now, extremely large amount of source material collected: a common feature of processual research. At this point the research material consisted of thirty one transcribed interviews, some amounting to over ten thousand words as well as an extensive research diary, organisational documentation and extensive secondary source material. These primary codes (Internal, External, Internal-External) were then sub divided into additional codes, further clarifying perspectives, links and process dynamics (see Appendix 8, 9 & 10). A clear chronology of intra-organisational events was constructed and compared, then merged with a chronology of events external to the organisation to determine

further links and interactions between context and process (illustrated in Appendix 11). When the researcher felt that understanding was a clear as possible, the process moved on to creating the narrative.

5.6 HOW THE NARRATIVE OF CHANGE WAS CONSTRUCTED

While it is obviously useful to look at how other writers have approached the business of analysing and conveying a complex change process, there comes a point at which decisions need to be made as to how this specific change process would be explored and explained. Determining how to construct this narrative was extremely difficult. Even with the breaking down of data and extensive coding it was challenging to see a way to convey the richness of the organisational experience in a way that conveyed the, at times, dramatic events which occurred through the period, but also the intricacies of a complex and extended change event. At this point the complex coding of the analytical phase gave way to a return to the actual story of the change itself. With a renewed look at the hybrid internal / external chronology it became apparent that the most illuminating way to approach the research findings was to go back and identify clear *phases* within the RUC's change trajectory. Four phases were identified: I) the 'pre-story'; II) the 'defining' period; III) 'implementation'; IV) 'settling down'. Within each of these phases, *motifs* of change were pinpointed. This is where the previous coding process began to be useful again. Many of the primary and extended codes related closely to motifs and therefore could be used as a way of gathering and making sense of data within phases and motifs. However, where coding became particular useful was in relation to Chapter Seven, where the analysis moves beyond the chronological narrative and towards a more considered understanding of transcendent themes that emerge within the case and are of significance within strategy process research generally. By facilitating connections between what were at times disparate pieces of data, the coding process focused and clarified. At times however it became apparent that some codes which dealt with motifs of significance lacked the volume of data which would enable them to fully engage with the narrative. Others struggled under the weight of too many attachments and seemed to remain cumbersome, even when split and exposed further. Still more continued to change and evolve even at the very late stages of the writing process. Ultimately four *themes* came to dominant the discussion. These were; the ever present question of organisational *leadership* at multiple levels; the availability of *resources* in all of their forms; the role of *external agents* throughout the

process and; the *pace of the change* and *sequence* in which it was implemented. Deciding that these four themes were crucial to the analysis was a difficult and iterative process. Certainly, the great deal of data collected on each of them made them stand out as significant from an early stage. Ultimately though, when the narrative in Chapter Six was distilled and the literature around change revised, these four themes emerged as the crucial points on which an explanation of the RUC's change process rested. Processual researchers make the point that each piece of research conducted is intrinsically linked to the process in which it is conceived and executed and the tacit knowledge of the researcher (Dawson 2003a; Barley 1990). It is clear then that another researcher from another perspective may have arrived at different conclusions, but repeated analysis and reflection on the data led this researcher to believe that these themes were central to the narrative and to an understanding of the change.

5.7 A NOTE ON 'TIME'

The treatment of time is one of the key and recurring themes in Pettigrew's research and in that of processual researchers generally (1997)[10]. Pollit too, has more recently underlined the significance of the passage of time to the implementation of public policy (Pollit 2008). The selection of a 'timeframe' to study has raised considerable debate among processual researchers. There is little doubt that the timeframe under analysis will significantly affect the results at the end of the study, but the historical perspective should at least temper any tendency to overlook significant issues of continuity and background within the analytical process. The timeframe chosen though does act as a frame for the changes that are seen and how those changes are explained. One of the most interesting perspectives on this issue was that of the impact of the different temporal patterns that occurred simultaneously in the change process at different contextual levels. This might mean cycles (political, economic, or personal) playing out in parallel and each impacting on the process in their own way (Lerner & Kauffman 1985; Abbott 1990). While it may be difficult to determine these impacts on a multi-level basis, awareness of the possibilities that surrounds them seems a very important analytical tool. Recognizing time as

[10] Pettigrew himself in an earlier piece of work refers to 'Truth as the daughter of time' (Pettigrew 1990)

a social construction, as well as a social reality allows us to be aware of how time and time cycles emerge and interconnect (Pettigrew 2003)[11].

Whilst it is possible to argue that the change is an ongoing process, for the purpose of this study the period under most analysis was the initial timeframe in which most of the change occurred and which was also correspondingly most controversial and tied to external environment factors. This period begins in 1996 within the RUC's own 'Fundamental Review' and for our purposes ceases with the departure of the then PSNI's first Chief Constable Sir Ronnie Flanagan in 2002 and the appointment of Hugh Orde as Chief Constable later that year. The timeframe is decided upon not because of the Chief Constable's departure (or initial appointment for that matter) but simply utilises this window as a 'neater' conceptualisation for the period under observation. Given the general messiness of processual research, finding a relatively tidy solution seemed too serendipitous to pass up. In terms of coincident time cycles, this period included a series of elections, the annually recurrent and fraught loyal order marching disturbances, and significant (decision making) party political conferences.

5.8 REFLECTIONS ON THE ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

Working with large quantities of qualitative data presents some clear difficulties. The amount of text involved, the difficulties in making connections between cause and effect, the need to simply keep track of data in a way that facilities it's analysis, is a challenging part of any research process. 'Cracking data open', labelling it and reformulating it into another structure (Dawson 2003a) is in itself a selective process and one which forces decisions on description, interpretation and explanation. Early assumptions need to be revised and revisited often, to ensure that themes and concerns are still appropriate (Miles & Huberman 1994). The need to guard against a 'tidying away of loose ends' is ever present, as is an awareness that analysis is interpretive and relies to some extent, on the judgement of the researcher (Dawson 2003a).

[11] Within this case study important socially constructed time cycles may centre around elections, government imposed deadlines, political party conferences, annual parades and protests, to name but a few.

Within this study, the process of analysis began consciously and unconsciously with the research itself. The contemporary nature of the RUC change process and its high public profile meant that valuable research data which may otherwise have been lost, could be pinpointed and collected at an early stage. The use of a research diary significantly assisted this process. The early coding process was unfocused and passive: reflecting prominent issues inside and outside the organisation. Gradually an awareness of the internal and external contexts was reached and the interaction between them which made later coding more alert to these circumstances. Sub-codes broke down the data further and the chronology of events helped to make sense of the sometimes symbiotic interaction between the organisation and its environment, and the temporal patterns within both. Even with this, the analysis was difficult and a narrative format seemed most appropriate. The use of phases and themes was assisted by the data coding, and allowed the 'story' of change to emerge and be explained. Coding also refocused attention on the main themes which transcended the narrative. *Leadership*, *resources*, *external agents* and *pace and sequencing* stood out as issues around which the change revolved.

Processual approaches represent a richly contextual way to convey organisational change. However, the difficulties outlined above mean that they can leave the researching drowning in data, even when the original material is broken down and refocused into codes and sub-codes. The experience of this project shows that the organisation of data at the earliest stages is vital to make sense of the analysis later on. Within this case the internal and external contexts were so significant that timelines focusing on both internal and external factors were extremely important. A research diary also allowed insights and issues to be recoded immediately, and retained. Perhaps the most significant requirement for this type of research is the availability of time within which to be immersed in the data and to absorb the connections and themes within it. The complexities of a processual approach are not to be underestimated.

6. CHAPTER SIX THE ECLECTIC TASK: PUTTING TOGETHER THE PIECES

"...it is not our aim simply to substitute rational linear theories with political process theories. The task is more eclectic ...to identify the varied cause of change, to assess against the evidence alternative accounts ...quests for efficiency and power, the role of exceptional people and extreme circumstances, the untidiness of chance, unintended consequences and counterproductive actions". Pettigrew et al (1992).

"Somewhere beyond the scorched gable end and the burnt out buses
There is a poet indulging
his wretched rage for order"

Rage for Order,

Derek Mahon (1992)

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Drawing together the 'story' of a large and complex change process is a daunting and difficult task. It is daunting and difficult not just because of a need to produce research that conforms to agreed standards, but also because of a sense of feeling duty bound to do the story justice and to repay in some way the considerable time and effort of those people who have contributed their accounts and expertise in the process of assembling the evidence. The first question posed by this research relates to the 'how' of organisational change. In asking:

How did the Police in Northern Ireland go about conducting a process of organisational change?

The research attempts to explore and explain the process of change undergone by the RUC, and identify important elements within it. This Chapter in particular sets out to answer that question.

Documenting this process of change is made more challenging still by the heightened emotion the change process generated and the political controversy it exacted and still exacts on those close to it. 'How' to go about this process has been considered in some depth in the last Chapter and the 'hybrid' analytical approach settled upon owes much to the work of Andrew Pettigrew, Patrick Dawson and others in their analysis of this 'eclectic task' (Pettigrew et al 1992). The

analytical approach outlined by them has informed the particular perspective of change adopted here. It is important to emphasis again that this is a 'perspective' and not a final or complete account of a change process. The research, like all research is limited in a number of ways: through constraints on access; through available time; through reluctance of some potential participants to take part; and of others to be as frank as they might have been. But more importantly, it is both constrained and hopefully illuminated in turn by the processual perspective adopted. This perspective seeks to explore the change through a lens which views the organisation as embedded within society. Others who might attempt to chronicle this change process might adopt a different method and a different perspective – they would no doubt have reached this point with different results. It is this diversity of approaches on which Dawson reflects, that makes processual research so interesting and multi-layered (Dawson 2003a). This Chapter draws significantly on the political, historical and social context within which the RUC operated. This context is outlined in more detail in Chapter Three. Building on those foundations, it will look directly at the process of strategic change within the RUC itself, and the interaction between that process and the events that shaped it.

6.2 THE EMERGENCE OF PHASES

While the basic narrative or 'chronology' (Pettigrew 1997) of change is outlined in Chapter Three, the real story has emerged as a series of interlocking and interconnected motifs which can be seen throughout the four main phases of change. These 'phases' are equal neither in length, importance or impact. While the phases give us a basic framework, the motifs appear frequently, some only within one phase, others developing a patterns throughout the whole process to bring together the essence of the change process. These motifs illustrate important aspects of the process: recurrent concerns which resonated loudly within the data and key considerations of those involved. Again, they are a particular 'reading' of the process, from the perspective of the individuals involved, as experienced through the researchers engagement with the organisation, and as underlined in the background data and organisational evidence which was gathered. This Chapter tells the story of change in a largely linear way, before returning to four recurrent themes in Chapter Seven[12].

[12] Themes, phases and their relationship to time are illustrated in Table 2 (page v)

6.3 FOUR PHASES

The first phase identified is the 'Pre-Story' – the preparation period when change was looming but not quite there, and there was a sense in the organisation and outside it that movement was afoot. This period is characterised by external pressure and internal manoeuvring, resulting in among other things, the RUC's internal 'Fundamental Review'. The major concerns that emerge in this period are; the initial impact of paramilitary ceasefires, the Fundamental Review process, the engagement of professional mediators and community relations facilitators, and the shifting views of the Northern Ireland Office and the Police Authority.

The second phase is period in which change begins to be defined. This is the time at which change became inevitable, where the political environment 'tips' and the organisation is plunged into a process they can no longer control. This period is characterised by the Patten Report, the creation of a 'structure' for change within the organisation, and widespread political and organisational discontent and resistance. Major issues at this point are; political change, Patten, consultation and political compromise.

The third substantive phase dealt with here is the 'Implementation Period' – the time when the change process began to 'bite' and real upheaval, rather than its anticipation, became the issue. The stage is characterised by structural modifications at an organisational level, widespread voluntary redundancies, recruitment and symbolic signalling. Issues here are straightforward and go to the heart of the process: planning for implementation, structural alteration, and re-imaging.

The fourth phase is the 'Settling Down' period. This is when some elements of change became 'normal' practice, when leadership altered at all levels and the organisation transition was solidly entrenched. This stage is not the end in a process, simply a point at which we can say that the 'change process' ceased to be a key factor within the operational reality of policing in NI. Dominant concerns are; a new Change Manager, a new Chief and settling of the process.

6.4 PHASE I: THE 'PRE-STORY': LOOMING CHANGE, EXTERNAL PRESSURE AND THE FUNDAMENTAL REVIEW

The Provisional IRA ceasefire declared in August 1994 was the culmination of much behind the scenes negotiation and political pressure from a coalition of forces. The loyalists ceasefires which were declared soon after, completed a scene which allowed for the nascent development of a new political and policing environment (Ryder 2000). Such a change had an immediate and important impact on policing institutions. Going from a situation of extreme political violence in general, personal threat of violence to individual officers, and an operational strategy which included the army as much as the police, to an environment where violence was greatly diminished, army deployment was gradually lessened and politics rather than paramilitarism seemed to have the upper hand, represented a sea change in NI policing. For others not directly involved in policing on the ground it was also an opportunity to push forward on different agendas. For the British Government, embodied by the Northern Ireland Office (NIO), the immediate concern was finding a way to reduce the £650 million police budget. For the nationalist community, it was a chance to make radical changes to policing and to argue, in the absence of violence, for different policing within all communities. For Unionists, given the makeup of the RUC (93% Protestant), it represented both a reprieve from violence but also a threat to the status quo. For the police themselves, it was a significant challenge but also the chance to begin to drop the barriers between them and the community they served and to begin to explore and acknowledge operationally the changes that were occurring in policing both in Britain and Ireland, and internationality.

6.4.1 The Ceasefires

At the time of the IRA and loyalist ceasefires, the RUC Chief Constable was Sir Hugh Annesley, and Ronnie Flanagan (who was to become a key figure in the change process) was Assistant Chief Constable -Belfast. As an organisation the RUC had been engaged in a violent and bitter struggle with republican and loyalist paramilitaries since the beginning of the 'Troubles'. This conflict was mirrored at a local level within Catholic Nationalist Republican (CNR) communities as well as soon Protestant Unionist and Loyalist (PUL) communities, with a consequence that police officers (most of whom were from a PUL background) tended to move out of their local

area, to more middle class 'anonymous' locations, providing a degree of protection (Brewer & Magee 1991). Given this relative 'separation' between the police and the community in general it is not surprising that there appeared to be no real debate within the RUC pre-ceasefires regarding change, and no real strategy to respond to such a radical change in operational circumstances. Indeed, members of the organisation at a personal level seem to have been initially surprised by the ceasefires. This is reflected by the interview respondents:

"*I suppose back in 1994 when the ceasefire came in there was very little discussion around change in the RUC so in September 1994 we had the ceasefire – that was when the IRA announced a ceasefire – now at stage I think most people were in a state of disbelief and certainly in policing then – we were starting, very very gingerly to scale down. We had huge, massive operations in place, it was military and police doing vehicle check points, guarding stations and then in September we had to start to look at that – but it was a very very gradual process*". Interviewee 21

The need for a gradual response to change was obvious – any reading of the situation would have made it obvious that a 'peace process' would have to surmount considerable challenges. The security requirements also meant that the RUC could not afford to 'take a chance' on the ceasefire holding, so a slow initial response was, from a security perspective, a sensible approach. However, from a political perspective, the continued ceasefire was heavily dependent on political goodwill. Such goodwill was in very short supply with no lessening of army patrol, police checkpoints and security operations. Therefore some response, in the form of lower visibility policing and particularly a reduction in army activity, was required if the ceasefires were to hold. In addition to this '*realpolitik*' of security, other factors were at work. Budgetary considerations and financial concerns were clearly in the minds of some who saw an opportunity to reduce spending on security. Other constituencies were also beginning to think about how the police needed to response to a new community environment. The Police Authority, who had little or no nationalist representation and no nationalist political party participation, began to think about its role in facilitated consultation – a significant step within the process (Ryder 2000). More importantly, the policing debate in relation to membership of the Police Authority and the public generally, began to be reported upon. As we shall see later in Section Two, there was still reluctance within the nationalist community to engage with the police, and this reluctance was also shared by parts of the community and voluntary sectors.

6.4.2 Instigating a Response

However 'gingerly' the organisation was moving forward, demands to begin a process of change in earnest were coming from many sectors. The most internally significant was pressure from the NIO to begin to rationalise the hugely expensive financial costs of policing a violently divided society. It is difficult to imagine that any treasury or ministry of finance would not immediately see an opportunity to significantly reduce the vast costs of policing NI that had escalated through the troubles. A key individual involved in the RUC's initial response was quick to comment on the significance of finance as a factor in this initial movement:

"*In those times it was defined purely in budget terms – the change was driven by the next round of budgetary negotiation with the Northern Ireland Office and the idea was that if we went in with a review of where we were ourselves and that would underpin the budget for April 96 and it wouldn't be a question of the Northern Ireland Office imposing a budget on us – we would be in there and we would have our own review done...again you asked me what was the driver – the main driver at that time was the budget*". Interviewee 21

The decision to conduct a review of the organisation in response to paramilitary ceasefires and financial pressure in 1994-95 was taken by the then Chief Constable Hugh Annesley. However, Ronnie Flanagan's appointment as acting Deputy Chief Constable position in that year was significant as the Review became his responsibility and was defined by him. Flanagan himself commented:

"*I was appointed as Acting Deputy Chief Constable with a brief to examine our approach to policing and make recommendations as to how our approach to policing should change, if we were truly to be in an increasingly moving security environment. Now that would have been in about February 1995. So in fairness to Hugh it was then left to me to define how I would approach this. And thus was born a concept of a fundamental review because I wanted it to be a fundamental review of every aspect of activity in which we were engaged*". (Interview with Ronnie Flanagan)

There is no doubt that the decision of Flanagan to initiate a comprehensive, rather than a confined Review was important factor for a number of reasons. Flanagan insists that he had been given a specific brief – to examine how a changed environment would affect the organisation and to explore the organisation's response. While it would have been possible to enter into a review in a cautious and limited way that reflected concerns internally and externally about the

viability of the peace process and the steadiness of the ceasefires, he appears to have consciously taken a different direction. In defining the process as a broadly based, heavily internally consulted upon opportunity for change, Flanagan began to put in place a framework which was to highlight the potential futures which faced himself and his colleagues. It also, gave him an opportunity to begin to define the change process – which in terms of future leadership was immensely valuable. The role gave the new Deputy Chief Constable an opportunity to begin to define where the organisation was going, and how it would get there and also an opportunity to begin to examine how best practice policing could be operated in NI. At this time community policing had become the methodology of choice (Feltes 2002)[13]. While community policing (at it is defined within the literature) was almost entirely absent from the operational reality of life in the RUC, there was an awareness of what it meant and could mean for policing in NI. For example, interview data suggests that the importance of moving towards a community policing ethos was clear to other senior officers as well as those in divisional command positions. One senior officer commented:

"I instinctively knew that what we needed was change and I would say I am not unique when I was a commandant in 1992 it was clear to me that we needed to be more community aware, so I introduced more community awareness training. likewise when I was a superintendent in 1996 in North Queen Street, in fact I'll show you my plan for 1996 which I found and which has two main objectives: one is to be more community Orientated, and the second is to be more intelligence led, so back in 1996 before the fundamental review was written police officers such as myself were already aware that we need to move down into more community based, more accountable route" Interview 4

Flanagan, who had previously been an instructor on the strategic command course at Bramshill, then a senior police training college, now known as National Police Improvement Agency (NPIA), was fully aware of this trend in policing generally.

6.4.3 Moving Forward

Flanagan contacted a Superintendent he respected and knew well to begin to get the review process together. That Superintendent (now a Chief Superintendent) commented about the lead up to the project:

"95 was a great summer and there was a lot of things happening in Northern Ireland – people were seeing this beautiful future up ahead and then in July of about 95, I was a superintendent

[13] See Chapter Two

in recruiting and I got a phone call from Ronnie Flanagan to say 'look we are going to have to set up a fundamental review here – we are coming under pressure in relation to our £650 million budget' because people could see that in July of 95 that you couldn't have got a bed and breakfast place in Northern Ireland – it was a great summer and they were coming up from the South in their busloads and it was great euphoria at that time". Interviewee 21

There two striking factors about this interview extract. The first is the acknowledgment that the social environment and people's expectations in NI were changing, as a direct consequence of the ceasefires. This 'feel good' factor of the ceasefires is significant – other authors who have looked at the RUC also make this point (Mulcachy 2006). The second significant factor is the reiteration of the importance of finance in the decision making process – and it's importance in moving that agenda along. While the ceasefires were in place, and the violence of the conflict had largely ceased, the 'additional' activities of paramilitaries in terms of organised criminality continued unimpeded. One Assistant Chief Constable commented on the difficulties of approaching change in such a volatile environment:

"*The ceasefires required us to sit down and examine what we did and how we did it, our spending and our overtime – a whole dose of things. It was a difficult problem for us because the ceasefires are only ceasefires in terms of the people who make them – there is no definition in a sense of they are military ceasefires from the point of view the people who are on ceasefire but they still carried out a lot of other crime and terrorist acts which meant it was very difficult for the Police just to judge*". Interviewee 5

6.4.4 Defining a New RUC or Attempting to Limit the Change?

The Review was conducted over nine months and was the product of in-depth internal consultation and research. Interestingly, external consultation seems to have been restricted to the Police Authority – a situation which, given the concerns in many communities and the pressure from the nationalist community in particular for change, is of note. The Police Authority (PANI), were off course carrying out their own regular analysis of public opinion in terms of policing. This may have been regarded as sufficient. It is also possible that the sensitive nature of change was in the forefront of thinking and planning, even then. The Fundamental Review developed in a tri-partite way, with representatives of the NIO, PANI and the RUC on the Review committee. The Report sets out clear operational objectives for change, from a particular

perspective that contained little challenge to RUC orthodoxy. The individual who managed the process commented:

". ...the communication was actually very good because we had the NIO and PANI.... so government was getting what was happening and I was getting what was happening and then internal and external – the external consultation around the fundamental review was zero. It was very much internal – but the internal consultation was unbelievably widespread – we had never in our history carried out so much, I think, research internally – it was phenomenal the amount of surveys and focus groups right throughout the province with all our officers – no one could criticize it – that is on record – I think most people would accept that – that it was unprecedented the level of internal research". Interviewee 21

While the 'Fundamental Review' has never been released publicly (a brief synopsis was published on 15th January 1997) a copy obtained for this research details three particular security scenarios, and the type of organisational and operational adjustment that would be necessary for each scenario. The document makes the point that such scenarios are not 'separate, watertight' compartments but rather three phases of a continuum (RUC 1996a).

Scenario 1 envisaged a high level of terrorist activity, bombings, shootings, intimidation, punishment beatings, racketeering and public disorder. Scenario 2 envisaged a situation where the level of terrorism is greatly reduced although terrorist organisations remain fully armed and trained, intimidation, punishment beatings racketeering and public disorder are continuing. There is still a high level of policing, and while the military are available for additional support they are much less publicly evident. Scenario 3 illustrated a different environment:

"*Terrorist organisations dismantled, ordinary criminal activity [is] ongoing, and improving community relations (is) leading to a lower potential for public disorder. [The result is] a high quality, effective police service through efficient use of resources*" (RUC 1996b:12).

The document is quick to point out the benefits of the ceasefires and a different security situation:

"*The ceasefires, in offering hope to the whole community, also offered an opportunity to the RUC to reflect on how things on how things might be and to try in a significant way to put some initial thoughts into practice. In response to the diminished terrorist threat, long arms and flak jackets were set aside, station security was greatly reduced and accessibility correspondingly enhanced*" (RUC 1996a: 11)

Interestingly, the Review clearly defines itself as being the first step to a new approach to policing, and while optimistic in its hopes of a new 'era', it cautions that movement towards a community policing model is entirely security dependant:

'it is clear that implementation of the review's recommendations can only take place when we are at the 'upper end' of Scenario 2 and the intelligence assessment indicates that we are definitely moving towards Scenario 3 with no risk of descending towards Scenario1'. (RUC 1996a:14)

One of the things that fed into the Fundamental Review process was a confidential environmental scan conducted by the RUC policy co-ordination unit. This paper, undated but apparently written shortly after the ceasefires, works from the assumption that, at some future point, all republican and loyalist violence would cease. It acknowledged:

'*Following a settlement, the security industry, which has grown enormously to cope with the Troubles, would slowly shrink, shedding thousands of jobs. The Royal Irish Regiment, the prison services, and the RUC itself, would face major reassessment of their roles*'. (Hindley, '*Environmental Scan*')

More interestingly, it focused particularly on the impact this would have on the RUC and the majority community in NI:

"*In the private sector, there would no longer be a need for the high level of security presently seen in both retail and commercial businesses. As the majority population is strongly over-represented in most of the security functions, the impact on this community would be particular hard*" (Hindley, Environmental Scan).

The existence of this document makes it clear that senior ranks of the organisation were fully aware and indeed focused on the consequences that radical alteration would make to individual officers, and for the organisation as a whole, if a significant change was to occur. The document goes on to comment:

"*As can be seen it would be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to substantially reduce the strength of the Force without severely weakening it, and creating major social problems for those, especially in the full time reserve who would lose their jobs. Apart from the disastrous consequences for each individual, to whom the country and the Force owe a great debt, the effect on the morale of the force cannot be overestimated*" (Hindley, Environmental Scan).

The Scan also referred to the peace talks embarked upon after the IRA and loyalist ceasefires and drew some conclusions about the benefits and difficulties that a positive outcome would have:

"*If the current peace talks are successful there will be many benefits both for the force and the country as a whole. However, in an organisation which has for 25 years devoted most of its energy to countering terrorism, the individuals within the organisation will inevitably have problems dealing with the many changes with which they will be faced. Doctor Courtney of the Occupational Health Unit is extremely concerned about the consequences of change following a cessation of violence. His intimate knowledge of the health of the force allows him to make assessments and conclusions on the consequences of this change. ....uncertainty causes stress...marital problems can be caused by husbands being at home more frequently...loss of earnings, that is overtime, causes dept...boredom caused by normal duties as opposed to the anti-terrorist role causes stress.. increase in sickness, drinking and martial breakdown because of the above*" (Hindley, Environmental Scan).

The reasons for the document's confidential status and sensitivity at the time of writing are clear from the extract above. While the consequences of 'peace' may have been far reaching for the RUC, the consequences of the conflict were much more serious for the population as a whole. While there is no doubt that the RUC needed to think through the implications of policing change, such a perspective would have led to harsh criticism, not least from victims groups. However, by having a clear idea of the type of problems that may occur further into a process, this initial work may well have helped the organisation cope better at a later stage.

The Fundamental Review document sets out clear operational objectives for change within each security scenario. What it avoids (and which no doubt it would have been heavily criticised for if it had been published) are issues which were controversial and difficult, such as symbolism, title and oversight in terms of any potential implementation of change. It also makes the assumption that the wider criminal justice environment would remain unchanged through a peace process.

The Fundamental Review was never published. Interview evidence for this research suggests that most within the organisation had a fairly good idea what it contained. There also appears to have been recognition at the upper levels of the organisation, that the Review was a positive development:

"*People would have had a good idea from conversations and consultations and we fully accepted. Everything in the Fundamental Review was accepted by the organisation because it*

was all about making us a better, more efficient organisation. Better organised, better shaped".
Interviewee 15

Of course, political developments continued to affect the process through the development of the Review and the breakdown in the IRA ceasefire in February 1996 with the bombing of Canary Wharf in London, the bombing of Thiephal Barracks in Lisburn and the murder of two policemen in Portadown had a significant lessening effect on the external pressure the RUC felt for change:

"Canary Wharf put a lot of people back, Theipal put a lot of people back – there was some other events that happened around that time but basically those were the two and the pressure for change externally towards the end of 96 and into 97 diminished quite significantly – there didn't seem to be the same pressures for change".
Interviewee 21

A new ceasefire was not to come into place until 20 July, 1997, following the election of the new Labour government. The election of 'New Labour' at this time, while it might seem on the surface to have very little impact on NI was in fact significant. Labour, unlike John Major's Conservatives did not have to rely on the parliamentary support of the Ulster Unionist Party, and were therefore much freer in terms of how they would respond to both the IRA and a peace process generally. Labour had also made it clear that Sinn Fein would be welcomed to parliamentary talks - but only if the ceasefire was restored. This restoration, which occurred in July 1997, saw the environment faced by the RUC altered again hastening the approach of change.

6.4.5 Police Authority Flux

Just as the RUC were undergoing a process of internal review, so their oversight body the Police Authority was also in the midst of political debate. Neither the SDLP or Sinn Fein sat on the Authority and after the Chair and Deputy Chair (David Cook and Chris Ryder) expressed their views on the need to change RUC policy on the flying of the Union flag from police stations and the oath to the Queen, a motion of no confidence in their ability led to their sacking by the Secretary of State in February 1996 (they had refused to resign). This controversy reflects acutely the rising debate around the need for policing change. After his dismissal, Ryder called

the Police Authority a 'performing poodle'. In July of that year a member of the Authority was spotted at an illegal loyalist road blockade, further cementing the reputation of the Authority as unionist and unwilling to change. During the Fundamental Review the Authority went out to seek the views of the public on policing: A consultation which was then the largest project of its kind in the UK. The result was the conclusion that the RUC should keep its name and add a suffix – Northern Ireland Police Service. This suggestion was derided by nationalists as being so insignificant as to be unworthy of comment. In an editorial in March 1996 the Belfast Telegraph observed:

'the sad fact is that policing is a political issue, in Northern Ireland's divided society, and that until there is some political consensus, it will remain a bone of contention, There must be few countries in the world where the main opposition party refuses to co-operate with the body representing the public interest in the police service and which has expelled a member for taking up an unpaid, dangerous position on it' (Belfast Telegraph, 26th March 1996).

6.4.6 Other Change Influences

While the Fundamental Review process was ongoing, other changes were occurring both inside and outside the organisation. While Flanagan operated through a small inner circle of trusted colleagues, others outside that inner circle were also aware that change was coming and that it was necessary. One Chief Superintendent (who left the organisation as an ACC), who became very engaged in the change process at the next stage, commented on the Fundamental Review;

"*Although one or two people might be sitting there working on that like Ronnie and Cecil were and eventually ended up with there 193 recommendations there were other people and I include myself in this, who didn't need to hear from a one year report or a one-year research programme. I instinctively knew that what we needed was change and I would say I am not unique when I was a commandant in 1992 it was clear to me that we needed to be more community aware... so back in 1996 before the Fundamental Review was written police officers such as myself were already aware that we need to move down into more community based, more accountable route more or clinical professional route, so it didn't take the fundamental review, it didn't take Patten, go we didn't take a HMIC report, it didn't take a new Chief Constable to tell me that, that was what was current thinking in 1996*". Interviewee 4

Such a view was shared by many people externally and engagement with individuals and organisations that could help the RUC build better community links was slowly beginning. Initially this started with individuals such as journalists and Irish cultural activists invited in to talk to RUC recruits (Interviewee 11), it progressed to organisations and individuals who were generally thought of as part of the community relations or mediation sector. 'Community Relations' in NI in essentially a series of conflict resolution methodologies that have developed into a recognisable organisational sector that work at community and organisational level to counteract sectarianism, mediate conflict and build better relations between antagonistic and hostile communities (Eyben, Morrow et al 1997, Future Ways 2001). This sector has received a great deal of funding and support for many years and is now an integral part of the voluntary sector in NI. Around 1993 some key individuals who were experienced community relations practitioners began an engagement which culminated in their being invited by the RUC *'to design and introduce a programme, within the Police training centre, aimed at enhancing the sensitivity of recruits towards the task of policing a divided society'* (McAllister 2004). This was a tentative beginning for 'Mediation NI' and by 1996 this programme was established within police training. At this point however, Mediation NI withdrew from their involvement with the police because they were also active in mediation processes around the emerging parades conflict (Drumcree and the Ormeau Road in particular) and involvement with the police represented a clear conflict of interest[14]. After this suspension, engagement began again in earnest in 1997, and this time involvement was not limited to awareness raising in terms of recruits but aiming to promote dialogue within senior ranks on anticipation of police reform:

"we believed that an important contribution to change would involve a critical engagement of 'capacity builders' within the RUC and, with agreement of the Chief Constable, we established a 'development group' of 15 middle rank and senior officers to engage with a working group from Mediation NI in a dialogue which was intended to last for three years". (McAllister 2004:7)

This programme became known as PODS – *'Policing our Divided Society'* and lasted through the key change period of 1997 – 2001. While Mediation NI was the vehicle and facilitator of the project, others were also involved, particularly those from the *Future Way's* Programme in the University of Ulster – a community relations focused unit that worked on developing change

[14] The difficulties of such engagement are discussed in more detail in Section 2: External change agents

through organisational learning methodologies. The programme engaged participants in discussion about '*hitherto taboo subjects*' (McAllister 2004) such as:

"personal disclosure of political and religious views; reflection on the contribution of the RUC to conflict in NI, the relationship between the RUC and the unionist, nationalist and republican traditions; unionist and protestant cultural dominance within the RUC, the concept of community policing and the potential contribution of the police to reconciliation" (McAllister 2004: 7)

6.4.7 Drawing the Phase Together

An external perspective on change in the RUC pinpoints the beginning of the process as the publication and acceptance of the Patten Report (1999). This is clearly illustrated in the interview data collected from interviewee's who were external to the organisation. However, those internal to the process defined its beginnings in a very different way. Internally, it is the RUC's own internal review which makes the first shift and acknowledgement that change was on the way, some three years before Patten reported. The Fundamental Review provided the organisation with an opportunity to formulate an 'RUC centric' view of the change that was limited to the organisations 'comfort zone' at that time. It also gave them an opportunity to raise issues with a number of different constituencies – most significantly the UK government, RUC officers, and external community representatives to begin to discuss what change might look like. As one senior civilian member of the Force commented:

"I think the fact that there had been a fundamental review meant that it gave the service a platform to 'sell' the Patten recommendations to the police service itself" Interviewee 12

However, the fact that the Review did not include any real recognition of how the organisation was perceived by the nationalist community meant that it was weakened as a piece of work. There are two possible reason's why it did not address such important and high profile issues at that point. The first is that those writing the document may have found it difficult to envisage such radical change occurring and may not have seen them as organisationally or politically acceptable. The second is that although they may have been aware of the possibility of change they took the decision to not engage on them at that point. Those engaged in its production were aware that any change process which emerged because of a peace deal would have to have political buy in. Without that buy in, the document provided a coherent logistical framework for some of what would need to be done. It neglected symbols, oversight and other consideration but

did include a comprehensive overview of other wider issues around police modernisation. What the Review also did was acknowledged internally that chance was happening, that they were ready and able to move forward, but that it would be difficult and that it would be resisted. The other important things it did was to raise consciousness of the change among RUC members for while no-one but the top team knew all the contents of the document, the in-depth internal consultation itself conveyed that '*change is coming*', and this promoted a period of gradually increasing internal dialogue, discussion and debate. This process readied the organisation for the second stage: The Good Friday Agreement, Patten and new beginnings.

Major Events : Phase I

1994 31st August	First IRA Ceasefire
13th October	Loyalist Ceasefires
1995-1996 July	Fundamental Review Drumcree dispute calls RUC into question
February 1996	IRA Ceasefire Ends Police Authority Flux
July 1997	New IRA Ceasefire 'PODs' Programme Starts Drumcree
April 1998	Belfast or Good Friday Agreement

TABLE 3 MAJOR EVENTS: PHASE I

6.5 PHASE II DEFINING THE CHANGE: INEVITABILITY, POLITICAL SHIFT AND PATTEN.

"...history never dies,
At any rate in Ireland, arson and murder are legacies
Like old rings hollow-eyed without their stones
Dumb talismans"

Valediction
Louis MacNeice

As we can see, Phase I is dominated by internal impact of effects such as the paramilitary ceasefires and demands to reduce police finance. Phase II, as we will see, was still closely connected to what was going on externally, but we can begin to see the coming together of an organisational response to change – a response which had been suspended by and was dependent on, political agreement. The issues that emerge in Phase II can be identified as; political progress, the defining of change parameters under Patten, and organisational strategising in response to these parameters.

6.5.1 Drumcree, Alienation and Negotiation

Discussions aimed at brokering a lasting peace agreement began in June 1996[15]. The 'Talks Process' quickly became mired on procedural issues and made little progress. In the continued absence of an IRA ceasefire, Sinn Féin (the political representatives of the IRA) were excluded. Around this time the issue of contentious marches and parades became a destabilising factor in life in Northern Ireland. The Dumcree protests reached their height in 1996, with illegal road closures, civil disturbance and what is generally regarded as a radicalising of both mainstream unionist and nationalist opinion. The police were put under considerable pressure during the parading disputes in terms of operational capability, but more significantly, in terms of personal and community vilification. While most police officers came from a Protestant (PUL) backgrounds, and the protests (especially illegal road closures) were PUL (loyalist) in origin, officers were taunted, recognised at close quarters and personally threatened in a way which was

[15] Participants to the talks included ten Northern Ireland political parties and the two governments (British and Irish) and an international Chair, American Senator George Mitchell

unusual in the history of the conflict (Ryder 2000). At one demonstration on the 29th April on the Ormeau Road[16] in Belfast, a Church of Ireland Minister, the Rev William Hoey, expressed frustration and anger that the RUC were preventing an Orange Order march down the road. What is striking about his words and the media report which followed was the particular anger and frustration that a police force perceived as part of the 'Protestant' community would behave in such a way. The words of the Minister in question were reported in the Belfast Telegraph the next day:

"If the RUC is continued to be perceived as those who side with the law breakers as against the law keepers, then I dread to think what will happen if the day comes when they succeed in causing the Protestant and loyalist people to rise up as one. I would say the police have no where to run and nowhere to hide. The crowd responded with cries of 'traitors, traitors" (Belfast Telegraph, 30th April 1996)

The multi-party talks, under a tired, minority Conservative British government made little progress through 1996. However, at this point it is clear that the future of policing was developing into a key political issue. A significant point of this early stage was the emergence of a Government 'White paper' on police reform that was heavily criticised by nationalists for the omission of proposals on symbolism. To underline the importance of the policing issue to political progress, Alex Maskey, Sinn Fein representative and spokesperson, commented in May of 1996 that '*the future of the RUC and policing in general is clearly linked to an overall political settlement*'(Belfast Telegraph 6th May, 1996). The response, by the then Direct Rule Minister for Security in NI, Sir John Wheeler, was particularly telling. Wheeler described as an '*act of greatest arrogance*' the idea that the name or symbols of the RUC could be altered in any way – an attitude which was illustrative of the views of many within the unionist community and on the right of the political spectrum[17] (Ryder 2000). Less publicly, a great deal of 'behind the scenes' signalling around policing, was occurring throughout this period, particularly towards the nationalist community. In 1996 an ex Permanent Secretary of the NI Civil Service Maurice Hayes (who was to join Patten's Commission), was given the responsibility to put forward

[16] 5 Catholics including a 15 year old boy had been shot dead by loyalist gunmen at Sean Graham's bookmakers shop on the Ormeau Road in 1992).

[17] The role of the Conservative Government in terms of brokering a peace settlement was somewhat compromised by their close relationship with unionism in general. Indeed the full title of the British Conservative Party is the 'Conservative and Unionist Party'.

proposals for a new police complaints systems. This Report was the precursor to the Police Ombudsman's Office. Hayes involvement is significant as he had been the most senior Catholic civil servant in NI, and was possibly in a position to broker discussions that were out of other's reach, as both a widely respected Catholic and part of the Stormont 'establishment'. To some extent this engagement by Hayes set the tone regarding future negotiation between the UK government and nationalists over policing. One senior nationalist in the SDLP commented on an encounter between Hayes and the then Deputy Leader of the SDLP, Seamus Mallon:

"*I remember a conversation at the British Irish Association when Mallon met Maurice Hayes, in relation to the proposals for a complaints system. If I can think back when that was, it would have been September and I presume it would have been September 1996, and that was a critical moment...We went in and Hayes wanted to see Mallon, to see what the SDLP bottom line was going to be. I think it was either in his bedroom at the British Irish or in the lounge, and the conversation was very very short. Hayes was probing Mallon to see if Mallon would accept a range of disciplinary matters being dealt with in-house as opposed to a completely all-singing all-dancing system and Mallon said 'no'. And, at that moment he sent a message that there was no negotiation on this, it was either the whole show or nothing. That was a critical moment because if you look at subsequent events the Police Ombudsman has been pivotal in bringing about and transforming policing. If Mallon hadn't said no to Hayes at that stage, Hayes would have 'come in' low or lower, because that is the nature of Hayes. If Mallon hadn't had that conversation at that critical moment...*".Interviewee 28

By defining this encounter as a 'critical moment' the negotiator acknowledges that an unequivocal signal was sent from moderate nationalism to the UK government in relation to what the SDLP would accept in relation to policing change. After the election of a strong Labour government under Tony Blair in May 1997, the peace talks were reenergised and Labour, with enormous speed, drew Sinn Féin into the political process. Within three months, Sinn Féin's conditions for entering talks had been met and a new IRA ceasefire was announced on 20 July 1997.

The way was now set for all-party talks. Northern Ireland's largest party, the Ulster Unionists, had serious concerns about entering into a process which included Sinn Féin, but calculated that since the British and Irish governments would engineer a settlement anyway, they should attempt to mould it from the inside. The second largest constitutional unionist party, the Democratic Unionist Party', angered at the lack of prior decommissioning by paramilitaries, withdrew from the talks. The ongoing discussions were separated into three strands, the first of which dealt with

issues internal to NI, the second which encompassed all Ireland relationships and the third which explored the relationship between Ireland and Britain. 'Policing' was placed within the first strand. It was clearly linked in the minds of many to the possibility of an overall settlement. The Talks between the political parties and the British and Irish Governments continued until Good Friday on the 10th April 1998. This comprehensive agreement contained a provision for the establishment of an Independent Commission to make proposals for the reform of policing in NI.

The overall Agreement was put to the people of Northern Ireland in a referendum on 22 May 1998, and was passed. While there was general agreement within Nationalist and Republican communities about the contents of the Agreement, support in Unionist communities was much less unified and after an angry and bitter campaign, a majority of Unionists did vote to support the Agreement. As we shall see, one of the significant points of contention was the issue of change and the RUC.

6.5.2 The Independent Commission on Policing

The period of multi-party talks that lead up to the Good Friday Agreement in 1998 was feverish and political charged. The future of policing was a key consideration within this process and there is no doubt that change was afoot. The beginnings of a public consideration of this process by the RUC itself were also becoming apparent. In an attempt to further distance the organisation from perceived religious and cultural bias towards the Protestant community, Flanagan, who became Chief Constable in 1997 publicly stated that he was against members of the RUC being members of the Loyal Orders (Belfast Telegraph, 23rd February 1998). In the lead up to the Agreement, political leaders also began to express views on the future of policing. In an attempt to shore up support for an agreement within the Protestant and Unionist community, Dr Mo Mowlan, who was the British Labour Secretary of State for NI, insisted that change in policing would be 'evolutionary, not revolutionary'(Belfast Telegraph, 2nd April 1998). In direct response to this, her predecessor, Sir Patrick Mayhew the last Conservative Secretary of State for NI commented angrily that any 'Commission' (plans for a commission were slowly leaking, or being leaking to push nationalists to agreement) would '*undermine the*

RUC' and that the police should be allowed to get on with progress on their own (Belfast Telegraph, 2nd April 1998).

The Good Friday Agreement of the 10th April 1998 however, set the agenda for how NI was to move forward with it policing. The degree of apprehension, distrust and concern within the RUC at this time cannot be underestimated. While Flanagan as the Chief Constable was well aware that change was coming, rank and file members were much less well prepared and rumours, ill feeling and a feeling of 'betrayal' are identified as emotions by some of those interviewed.

At a leadership level the organisation was quick to response to internal discontent. On the 15th of April 1998 the RUC established an information 'hotline' which allowed officers to seek information anonymously about the possible changes that were in train. Regular information 'bulletins' were also distributed throughout the organisation. Meanwhile, externally, political leaders were bringing the newly signed Agreement to their own parties for ratification and support. On the 16th of April, in direct response to concerns raised by David Trimble in relation to an independent commission on policing and fearing that Trimble would fail to get backing from his own party[18], the British Prime Minister Tony Blair stated unequivocally that there would be '*no RUC disbandment*' (Belfast Telegraph, 16th April, 1998). The Police Authority expressed their concern about an Independent Commission, drawing attention to the political origin of the Commission and the need to preserve police operational independence at all costs (Belfast Telegraph 22nd April, 1998). However, leadership of the RUC itself keep a cool head, and publicly at least talked up the possibilities of moving into a new era. For example, amid a swiftly moving political process Flanagan reflected on how his Force would look forward to a new changed environment and to the day when they would no longer carry guns (Belfast Telegraph 30th April, 1998).

The Patten Commission as it was to be known was formally established on the 3rd of June 1998, less than eight weeks after the Belfast Agreement was signed and less than two weeks after the Agreement was passed by referendum (in both Northern and the Republic of Ireland) on the 22nd

[18] specifically the UUP Council motion to support the Agreement scheduled to take place on the 18th of April

of May that year[19]. The Commission held its first meeting on the 11-12th of June and in total held some sixty days of plenary meetings (OOC 1999). In a press conference on the 12th of June the Chairman, Chris Patten called for views from members of the public and over the next three weeks advertisements were placed in NI main newspapers and in local libraries asking for members of the public to write to the Commission with their views on policing[20]. In addition to this, 130 letters were sent to political parties, Churches, NGO's and others know to have an interest in policing.

6.5.3 Submission and Consultation

Throughout the Patten consultation process, the Commission met publicly and privately with a broad range of individuals and groups. They also made a point of visiting '*every police subdivision, other police headquarters and meeting individual officers*' (ICPNI 1999). This consultation received the established response from political parties and those who had particular concerns about policing issues. In June, shortly after the beginning of the process the loyalist UDP (the political representatives of the loyalist paramilitary UDA and a party to the Belfast Agreement) made public their desire to keep the RUC name, symbols and oath to the Queen – a core unionist concern (Belfast Telegraph, 22nd June, 1998). Others were even more vociferous in their response. Robert McCartney, then MP for North Down and leader of the United Kingdom Unionist Party, state publicly and repeatedly that attempts at RUC reform could lead to a complete breakdown of public order (Belfast Telegraph, 24th September 1998). In October, the Patten Commission embarked on a series of open meetings in every District Council Area of NI, and another series of meetings were held with youth groups. In total, over 10,000 people attended these meetings and over 1,000 made verbal contributions. In all 2,500 written responses were received through the consultation process, a number of petitions were also received as well as standardised letters. The Commission also employed a number of consultants to conduct a focus group study involving eight focus groups selected from different traditions and backgrounds. Other consultants were commissioned to conduct a 'cultural audit' of the RUC

[19] See Chapter 3 for breakdown of members

[20] Like other aspects of a divided society, NI newspapers are generally split down political lines. For example, The Newsletter tends to reflect the views of mainstream unionism and the Irish News tends to reflect the views of mainstream nationalism. The Belfast Telegraph, up until recently an afternoon paper in generally regarded as liberal unionist in editorial policy but is generally regarded to have a cross community readership.

(with RUC permission) and in May / June 1999 a survey was conducted to explore public attitudes to policing (ICPNI 1999).

Despite a feverish public atmosphere and growing political stalemate, Patten himself commented as the Commission undertook its work that he felt 'rationally optimistic' (Belfast Telegraph, 5th November 1998). As the public meetings got underway, the degree of emotion and political tension that reform evoked became increasingly evident. Later in November the RUC itself was forced to respond to a 'leak' in the press that the routine arming of police officers would cease, forcing a reiteration of the 'security dependent' view on change, outlined in the Fundamental Review.

While the issue of arms had operational significance, the question of title and symbols evoked different responses. At one meeting in December the Commission was confronted by the widow of one of the RUC officers who was shot dead during the gap in the IRA ceasefire. She stated unequivocally:

'I put the words Royal Ulster Constabulary' on my husbands gravestone, because that is what he died for and I do not want to see that changed' (Belfast Telegraph, 5th December, 1998).

The Orange Order also demanded that the name RUC must remain (Belfast Telegraph 11th December 1998). As Patten commenced his consultations on policing and investigation of alternatives, the political situation stalled again. It was not until February of 1999 that structures of Government proposed by the First and Deputy First Ministers (David Trimble and Seamus Mallon, respectively) were endorsed amid arguments about paramilitary decommissioning. Policing and the RUC loomed large in the debate. It's interesting to note that around this time (Feb 11th 1999) a memorial window to the RUC was unveiled in Belfast City Hall. Such an action may suggest that many were already preparing for the organisation's title to be soon altered.

Another two subsequent deadlines for the devolution of power and the creation of a power-sharing executive were missed (April, June), with decommissioning again the sticking point. In a desperate effort to move the political process forward the British and Irish Governments again

approached Senator George Mitchell to carry out a review of the process. Among the terms of reference for this Review was the future of the RUC again tied intrinsically to the political future of NI. In the midst of this highly charged political environment, and as political process hurtled towards another crisis, Patten's Report was leaked to the Belfast Telegraph on the 25th of August, over a week before its official publication.

6.5.4 Report and Controversy

The flurry of activity that accompanied the Belfast Telegraph leak reverberated through the RUC as well as the political establishment. While the Report was not officially launched until the 9th September 1999, the accuracy of the Belfast Telegraph leak obviously raises the possibility that it was deliberately leaked in advance by Government, to test its impact on the public and political environment and to prepare people for the 'blow' when it came. Flanagan himself commented on the timing and the accuracy of the information published by the Belfast Telegraph:

"Well, Patten was published on an easily remembered date, the 9th of the 9th 1999 that's when he published it. There were and number of things that happened in the run-up to that. But earlier the Belfast Telegraph carried reports that Patten was indeed to recommend a change in the title and the Crest.....it deliberately leaked. As one of those things to test the temperature? Not sure about that. Certainly leaked, because it transpired to be very accurate. Was it deliberately leaked? I've seen so many people who get a bit of knowledge and they just like to leak it to give the impression that they are in the picture, I'm not a natural conspiracy theorist....." Interview with Ronnie Flanagan

The reaction from the Unionist community and unionist political leaders was immediate. David Trimble was unequivocal in his reaction to the Patten leak. His response: '*bin it now*' (Belfast Telegraph, August 26th 1999). The Police Federation categorised at as *'a sickening betrayal'* of wounded RUC officers and the Daily Telegraph (which was to run a campaign to keep the title) described it in an editorial as '*an armalite held to the head of the RUC*' (Belfast Telegraph, August 26th 1999).

Within the organisation there is no doubt that the leak was met with extreme concern, agitation and anger. To some extent the process of consultation and communication that had started with the Fundamental Review two years earlier had continued through the Patten Report process. As

part of this internal process and in readiness for Patten's publication, leadership within the RUC took a number of steps to prepare the organisation for what would happen next.

Officially on the 5th September 1999, the RUC formed the change team to implement Patten (PSNI 2004a). On the 6th of September 1999, Ronnie Flanagan wrote and circulated a letter to all members of the Force. Given the timing of this letter and the significance of the event for which it was written, it deserves to be considered in detail. An analysis of its contents reveal a carefully considered strategy of reassurance for an organisation that was facing major challenge and disruption.

Flanagan begins by setting the Patten commission within the context of the Good Friday Agreement – an agreement which in his words '*would not have been possible without your dedication, commitment, professionalism and sacrifice for others over so many years*' (Flanagan 1999). His use of the vernacular '*Patten Report*' and '*Good Friday Agreement*' rather than the strictly accurate 'Independent Commission on Policing and Belfast Agreement', shows an intimacy with his correspondents and also an awareness of the need to 'cut through' formality given the importance of the subject. He quotes for them the words of the Good Friday Agreement, in which participants committed themselves to policing structures and arrangements that '*must be capable of maintaining law and order, including responding effectively to crime and to any terrorist threat and to public order problems*' (Flanagan 1999). This is significant: it discards the significant amount of rumour and speculation that existed and surrounded the organisation which feared a police service run and staffed by among others, former paramilitaries, and members of Sinn Fein. By bringing the debate back to the Agreement, Flanagan was able to move on to his next point which again seeks to reinforce the established existing authority of the RUC, '*When the Patten Report is published this coming Thursday we will judge it coolly and professionally in that light. (You should know that arrangements have been made for you to have a personal copy on the day of publication.)*' (Flanagan 1999). This statement is again reinforcement not only of the authority of the organisation but his authority as Chief Constable. He is telling his organisation what they will do - not necessarily what conclusion they will reach, but the manner in which they will behave and analysis the Report. And in doing so he reinforces the collectivity in the Force. By the inference of '*we will*' – he may

as well be saying 'I will, as well as you, and in order to help you do this you will receive a copy, you won't get information second hand'. At this point, the letter seeks to reassure again and also to instruct in terms of the response which he expects:

"This report will undoubtedly mark a milestone, not only for policing in Northern Ireland, but perhaps also for the development of society here. It thus deserves to be considered in detail in its entirety before any conclusions are reached in this regard. There has of course been much widespread speculation, particularly in recent weeks, about the reports contents. I am acutely aware of the anguish some of this speculation has caused. Just as we go about our policing business however, in a professional dignified, rational manner, without dealing with speculation, so we will deal with this report when we have had the opportunity to see and study it. We will not rush to judgement. Neither will we be slow to articulate to government and to the public any concerns we have in relation to any of the report's recommendations" (Flanagan 1999).

At this point Flanagan moves into a consideration of his actions and attitudes as the organisation's leader. He mentions the role of the Staff Associations (police unions) and more specifically the views of '*our disabled colleagues*' and '*our widows*'. He then sets out three specific measures by which he will judge the report:

"- does it enhance our ability to deliver the highest quality policing service to all our citizens?

- does it encourage our citizens to play their part in working fully in partnership with us?

- does it have due regard for how you are to be treated – the men and women who have been, who are, and who must continue to be the bulwark between anarchy and order in society here?" (Flanagan 1999)

The emotional tone of the letter, the unified stance that it infers and the strategy for moving forward which it adopts, all illustrate that the organisation's leadership recognise the crisis that potentially faces them. But the letter also seeks to emphasis the slow pace of change, the need for '*legislation which of itself is a lengthy process*'. Most of all, Flanagan reinforces the security dimension '*implementation will have to be in the light of the prevailing security situation. No one, least of all government, can afford to reduce our ability to protect all our people against ongoing terrorist threat*". Flanagan goes on to recognise the reality of the change to come, but also to underline the responsibilities of others (we can safely assume he means nationalists and republicans') in playing their part in that change:

'There undoubtedly remains an outstanding opportunity to transform society here, as I have so often said, we in the RUC stand ready for significant change in that process. Policing of course is all about partnership between the police and those they exist to serve. Society too therefore, must stand similarly ready for significant change in how it plays its part'. (Flanagan 1999)

6.5.5 The Patten Report

The release of the Patten Report on the 9th September 1999 saw policing and the future of the RUC rise like a rocket to the top of the political agenda. The Report itself started from a premise of peace, reconciliation and the need to move forward together:

"As the Episcopal father of the poet Louis MacNeice once advised his diocese, 'It would be well to remember and to forget, to remember the good, the things that were chivalrous and considerate and merciful, and to forget the story of old feuds, old animosities, old triumphs, old humiliations ... Forget the things that are behind that you may be the better able to put all your strength into the tasks of today and tomorrow' So we have seen our approach as restorative, not retributive – restorative of the values of liberty, the rule of law and mutual respect, values that have sometimes been casualties of the years of violence. By means of a fresh start for policing, our aim is to help ensure that past tragedies are not repeated in the future". (ICPNI 1999:4)

It spent considerable time recounting views that had been articulated through the consultation process, and also detailing results of new research that had been conducted specifically to illuminate the future of policing. Results showed among other things that the Protestant working class were almost as alienated from the RUC as the Catholic, although they may take a different political view of the RUC as an institution and support it politically if not operationally.

The Commission acknowledged that:

"*In one political language they are the custodians of nationhood. In its rhetorical opposite they are the symbols of oppression. Policing therefore goes right to the heart of the sense of security and identity of both communities and, because of the differences between them, this seriously hampers the effectiveness of the police service in Northern Ireland*". (ICPNI 1999:2)

The Commission reported made 175 recommendations, the most controversial of which was a change of name, badge and uniform. Patten had been very clear in his invocation that a change in the RUC needed to be deep rooted and transparent:

"The "significant change" in policing should not be a cluster of unconnected adjustments in policy that can be bolted or soldered onto the organisation that already exists. The changes that we propose are extensive and they fit together like the pieces in a jigsaw puzzle. We believe that we have met the argument of the former Standing Advisory Commission on Human Rights that "holistic change of a fundamental nature is required". (ICPNI 1999:5)

It also advised the removal of the existing Police Authority and the establishment of a new Policing Board and a series of District Policing Partnerships. These were to form part of the external administrative structure of the new policing environment along with the already established Police Ombudsman's office which had been instigated under the earlier Hayes Report. It also called for the establishment of an oversight body to ensure that its recommendations were enforced rigorously

In his first public comments on the Patten report, (September the 11th) Flanagan made the point that the RUC would be prepared to '*endure pain only for great gain'* a reference to both the difficulties and the opportunities that the report presented politically and organisationally. He remarked on his hurt of the '*fleeting reference to unparalleled sacrifice*' made by the RUC through the 'Troubles'. But in recognising the underlying message of the Report as the need to create a critical mass of support for policing in the nationalist community, he drew attention to the ultimate aim: a fully supported police service. The starkness of this reality was pointed out by Maurice Hayes, an ex head of the Northern Ireland civil service and a member of the Patten Commission:

"The change of name and symbols were not proposed without deep thought, without regard for the feelings of those who served and suffered. Change is necessary to ensure that young Catholic nationalists join. There is pain, but there is the possibility of great gain" (Belfast Telegraph 14th Step 1999)

Political events moved quickly. On the 14th of September the Ulster Unionists published an alternative to proposal to those of the Patten Commission, and on the 18th of September ex Chief Constable of the RUC Sir Jack Hermon spoke in opposition to the Patten Report at pro RUC rally in the Ulster Hall in Belfast. On the 25th September 500 people took part in a 'long march'

in support of the RUC and on the 27th the Police Authority (facing abolition under Patten) attacked the concept of district policing partnerships as 'balkanisation'. On the 28th a UK wide campaign was launched to '*Save the RUC*' , beginning with a province wide poster campaign on Oct 1st, with the slogan '*defend the RUC – they defended us*'. On the 6th of October at the Conservative Party conference Norman Tebbit began what he described as '*the Conservative fight back'* to '*save the RUC*', followed up by UK Conservative Party's front bench attack on Patten in the House of Common's on the 7th. On the 8th Ian Paisley branded RUC changes 'an insult' and ex Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher expressed her 'disgust' on this issue' *of great importance'*. The Methodist Church which had asked for people to think and make prayful consideration of the proposals, faced protests outside their Churches and on the 25th of October two former RUC officers chained themselves to the railings of Downing Street under the banner *'302 police officers killed'*, as a symbolic gesture of the '*slaying*' of RUC. On October 27th the former NI Secretary of State Lord Mason called Patten 'petty and mean spirited'. This was followed in November by the distribution of the Police Federation's '*Save the RUC*' petition to Churches (omitting Catholic places of worship). On the 12th January 2000, two RUC widows handed a petition against the change in name and symbols of 400,000 signatories into 10 Downing Street. In contrast the SDLP in their response to Patten stated:

"The Patten Report represents a serious body of proposals from a serious body of experienced public servants and administrators...Ultimately, the Patten proposals must be measured against the standards and requirements set out in the Good Friday Agreement for a police service which can attract and sustain support from the community as a whole...
The nationalist community in Northern Ireland has never been able to identify with or share ownership of the police, and too often the RUC has failed in terms of impartiality and fair treatment" (SDLP 2000)

6.5.6 Interaction between Patten and the Fundamental Review

There is little doubt that Chris Patten and his Commission took detailed soundings from the Chief Constable and the policing establishment in the process of coming to their conclusions (Ryder 1999). In terms of 'shaping' the Patten Report, the significance of the RUC 'Fundamental Review' should not be underestimated. One senior civilian figure in the RUC commented:

"My understanding was a lot of the fundamentals review issues were discussed between Ronnie Flanagan and Chris Patten and that Chris Patten asked Sir Ronnie Flanagan not to pursue the fundamental review agenda in advance of him making his report because he felt it would cut

across many of the things that he wished to look at in his report but he asked for a submission of all the fundamental review documentation and got that." Interviewee 12

Another commented:

"It predated Patten, it was put in mothballs because I think they felt that the political discussions were going on, there was still some uncertainty I suppose the securocratic influences I suppose were around – lets just see whether the political developments are successful before we started reconstructing the organisation, so you know, all of those things and probably some vision around if there is some kind of fundamental review politicians will want to the fingerprints on it so it may not be appropriate that all of these changes that were suggested". Interviewee 23

As we have seen above, those within the RUC tend to define the beginning of the change process as being coterminous with the development of the RUC's 'Fundamental Review'. Externally though, the beginning of the process is more generally linked to the establishment of the Independent Commission on Policing – a consequence of the Belfast Agreement[21]. This linking of policing organisationally, to policing politically is clear among nationalist politicians. One such politician, when interviewed and asked to pinpoint the beginning of the change process was clear:

"For convenience it would be the clauses in the Good Friday Agreement that called for a representative accountable civic police service. So, taking that as your starting point, and that is the right political starting point but it is not the only impetus for policing change that subsequently arose, because these things, that was clearly the political moment and that created the political context and the right framework for what happened to happen, but you know there were skirmishes let's put it that way around policing long before that which could have prompted people, what Brendan (McAllister, Mediation NI) was doing prior to 1998, I wouldn't want to categorise that as a skirmish, that was much more, that was to get the police to recognise where things had to go ....the SDLP were also involved in probing and challenging and confronting the RUC on a rolling basis at the most senior level, they weren't necessarily always the most construct of encounters but they were all part of what led up to the preamble to that political moment - the declaration of the Good Friday Agreement. And therefore it is the right time to start" Interviewee 28

So this phase ends with the publication of, and consultation on, the Patten Report. As we have seen above, views on the Report's usefulness ranged from straight acceptance, to absolute

[21] Within the interview data, the difference in internal and external people definitions of the beginning of the process is stark: very few externally initially mentioned the Fundamental Review, although some were aware of it when prompted. Others dismissed it as an attempt to move forward without dealing with the 'hard issues, and there was also a suggestion that the review was a pre-emptive attempt to 'set the agenda' on change.

rejection and most of the degree in-between. The next phase sifts its focus from these external events, to internal ones.

Major Events : Phase II

1996 June July	 'All Party' Talks begin Widespread civil disturbance over Drumcree dispute
1997 May June	 British Labour Party elected New IRA ceasefire
1998 May	 Good Friday Agreement
February 1996	IRA Ceasefire Ends Police Authority Flux
July 1997	New IRA Ceasefire 'PODs' Programme Starts
April 1998 June	Belfast or Good Friday Agreement Patten Commission established
6th Sept 1999 9th Sept 1999	Establishment of Change Team Patten Report

TABLE 4 MAJOR EVENTS: PHASE II

6.6 PHASE III: IMPLEMENTATION, STRUCTURAL AND ORGANISATIONAL MODIFICATION, SYMBOLIC TRANSFORMATION

6.6.1 A Temporal Narrative and Key Events

Up to this point, our focus has been largely on the police's response to external events and political activity. This is necessary because of the extreme and highly unusual political storm that engulfed the police service and the effects of this external 'political' process, on the organisation's strategic development. However, within Phase III, this focus shifts to an internal perspective. This phase is the longest and most complicated aspect of the process because it looks directly at the heart of the change. One of the difficulties with analysis of this type is its 'messiness' (Pettigrew, Ferlie et al. 1992). It needs to simultaneously tell the story of change, to convey the 'narrative', but at the same time pinpoint, dissect and discuss issues and themes within that narrative that themselves tell us a great deal about the strategy and decisions that made up the process. This section is lengthy, and its focus is largely internal. In that sense it should give an account of the concealed process at work within the organisation, while 'events' were taking place outside it. This section continues with the story but breaks off in sections to discuss the behaviour, decisions and interventions that have been significant. Four main aspects emerge and weave through the analysis of change. The first of these is the structural change. This represented an enormous challenge for an organisation accustomed to working within long defined command unit boundaries and through a rigidly centralist structure. Structural change is not just internal but also relates to the framework of policing accountability outside the organisation which had a necessary effect on organisational strategy within it. It includes the role of the Oversight Commission and the impact of the Policing Board and District Policing Partnership's (DPP's) on the organisations change process. The second major shift is the push towards cultural change in organisational perspective and attitude, particularly with regard to the primacy of community policing. This change began slowly with the intervention of external participants and was cemented by Patten with is focus on community policing and human rights. It centres upon an awareness of policing in a divided society and a translation of that awareness into actions on the ground and training of officers. The third theme is the restructuring of personnel, and in particular the use of voluntary severance, promotion and recruitment as a lever

of change. The fourth aspect and most controversial set of issues was the revision of organisational symbols which went to the heart of the organisation's identity and its place within a divided community undergoing transition.

These four pillars; structure, perspective, personnel and symbols, represent the story of Phase Three. In order to look at them constructively, this section carries on with the temporal narrative while touching on each aspect as they arise. It then looks directly at the core issues of structure and symbols to explore in detail how the organisation addresses them.

6.6.2 Internal Delivery

The publication of the Patten Report on the 9th of September 1999 kicked off a period of public consultation but also intense internal activity within the RUC. It was clear upon publication that the leadership of the RUC embodied by the Chief Constable Ronnie Flanagan was not going to dismiss the Paten recommendations out of hand but instead begin to plan for the implantation of radical change outlined in Patten's Report. It's reasonable to assume that Flanagan would have been aware of the Governments opinion on the recommendations.The next few months saw a period of putting together a formal response to the Report, amidst the increasingly fevered political debate outside. On the 6th of September, slightly preceding the publication of Patten, the Chief Constable Ronnie Flanagan, established what was to become the 'change team', under the direction of Assistant Chief Constable Tim Lewis. The fact that the Team was established at this point (although it appears not to have been staffed or resourced at this time) is a clear indication that the leadership accepted the reality of change and was preparing for it. Such an acknowledgment was not new for the Chief Constable. While he was, in public, extremely supportive of and committed to the RUC, he was also careful not to rule out the possibility of change. For example, Flanagan first acknowledged the possibility of a name change in his evidence to the House of Common's NI Affairs Committee in November 1998 – almost a year before Patten reported, but around the time (as we have seen above) when there was enormous public discussion about a way forward for policing. He was elaborating on comments made a month previously in a lecture to the Church of Ireland in which he talked about the RUC neither being afraid of change, or embracing change for change's sake. Interestingly his comments were rebuffed by the Police Federation (the Union which represents rank and file officers). They

stated that '*any change in our name is unacceptable to our membership, our widows and our injured*' (Federation 1999). It is clear that even at this point, Flanagan is preparing the ground for the system shock that was to come.

6.6.3 The Change Team

There is evidence to suggest that the establishment and staffing of the Change Team was the outcome of a series of decisions rather than a clear point in the developing change process. The Fundamental Review had been an in-depth process of consultation for the organisation. As such, it was an opportunity for the organisational hierarchy, represented by Flanagan, to make contact with rank and file members in a way and with an intensity that had not previously occurred. This process appears to have been a very valuable 'lead in' to the actual change itself. Flanagan comments on this process as a 'thinking' time in which he and others were able to gather views and formulate future approaches:

"*I was determined for example, that I would spend night after night which I did, in open forum meetings, and I remember coining the politically correct phrase I would say to our people, every Tom Dick and Harriet are now saying what should happen to policing - you are actually the people you know best. You tell me what needs to happen so you can do your jobs even more effectively. I went round open forum after open forum, and at the start, I think there was a certain reluctance its a hierarchical organisation starting in 95 and right throughout' 96 as I got to the team together*" Interview with Ronnie Flanagan

Whether deliberately or by accident Flanagan appears to merge the two processes of the Fundamental Review and the establishment of the change team. This is interesting. While the two processes were fairly distinct (few others appear to confuse them at all), the determination of one (the Review) was cut short by the initiation of the other (political developments leading to the Good Friday Agreement and the Patten Report). There is also no doubt that the personnel involved in both to some degree overlapped. While it is difficult at this point to determine the exact nature of the linkages, there is very little doubt that people within the organisation identified the closeness between the two processes, but not the seamless fluidity that Flanagan seems to refer to. For example, of those internal to the organisation who were interviewed, all but one identified the Fundamental Review as a precursor to the Patten Commission's Report

and the process of change. Many sought to identify linkages between the two reports, and underlined their 'sameness' in terms of 'best practice' policing change.

6.6.4 Defining the Task

At this point the temporal dynamics of the change process were again largely at the mercy of external political events. It is safe to assume that the police, in common with the NIO and the British Government were carefully monitoring the reaction to Patten to determine the clearest and safest way to move ahead. This hiatus is reflected in the memories of the participants of those events:

"after Patten published, which was September 1999, there was a period up until about December 1999 were there was an atmosphere of not knowing whether we would accept it all, except some of it, or reject and when I say 'we' I mean RUC command. It became very clear by December, even before that, that Ronnie Flanagan in his response to the Patten Commission's report was saying basically, we accepted ..... as soon as those of us who were either close to the Chief or in positions of management or likely to be involved in the change process, as soon as we realised that the Chief Constable's formal response was 'we accept Patten' it became clear to me that the ball was rolling" Interviewee 4

So in a sense the 'deliberate' strategy which had taken the shape of the Fundamental Review and which had seen considerable organisational consultation and engagement, was subsumed and swallowed by the much bigger environmentally emergent strategy of the Patten Report. While the Patten Report contained nearly all of the Review in terms of 'best practice' policing, it also went much further on the 'hard' issues that the original Review did not touch. The understanding that the task was now being set from a point external to the organisation was not lost on those within it. One senior member commented:

'I think you have to start off and realise that the change management process was not defined by the PSNI, it was defined for the PSNI' Interviewee 5

However, views on the process by which the organisation approached the change, varied enormously depending on the views and perspective of those in control, as we shall see as the process widens.

6.6.5 Building the Team

This period after the release of Patten clarified for many in the leadership team the task faced. At this point ACC Tim Lewis had been appointed as Change Manager: a tacit acknowledgment that change was a matter of time. As an individual and leader of the change Tim Lewis was central to the developing process. He declined to be interviewed for this research and cited a number of reasons. Firstly, he was clearly uneasy talking at all about his time in the RUC and particularly about a time which was politically sensitively. Secondly, he commented on previous research conducted on the police and the lack of ethical sensitivity displayed by researchers. He did not feel that this project (or any others) was something that he could participate in. This is unfortunate principally because he represented a central linkage point in the operational reality of the change process, in the same way that one of his colleagues Chief Superintendent Cecil Craig had performed the same role in the Fundamental Review. For this reason then and given his central position we are forced to rely on the accounts of others in terms of his role. Helpfully, these are clear and consistent. ACC Tim Lewis was the first appointment made by Ronnie Flanagan to the change team. He was given responsibility for the process the day before Patten published on the 8th of September 1999. No doubt this formal role confirmation was the result of considerable thought on the part of Flanagan, no doubt in consultation with others. As the 'Change Manager' Lewis was a cautious and risk averse tactician, who was regarded as trusted by Flanagan and representative of the 'old guard' of the RUC who had policed through the Troubles and were wary of radical change. One of his colleagues commented:

"*Tim who was his change manager was quite cautious – grey and in the shadows…..*" Interviewee 4

Another colleague commented:

"Tim, well, he was Ronnie's safe pair of hands..." Interviewee 21

The elevation of Lewis is also significant because the Patten Report had envisaged the appointment of a change manager who would be brought in from outside the organisation and bring with them significant change management experience (ICPNI 1999). While Tim Lewis had

an enormous amount of experience within the organisation he was obviously not the profile of change manager that the Patten Commissioners had envisaged. In appointing him Flanagan made a significant decision about how the process would be managed, controlled and communicated. A senior personnel manager commented on the appointment of Lewis:

"*Now Ronnie Flanagan ..... it was a subject of discussion between he and I at the time, decided not to do that because he felt to try and pursue this change which would not be widely accepted in the service, to try and bring in a stranger to pursue the change would make the prospect doubly difficult. If we had someone who was historically, a well known and respected Royal Ulster Constabulary officer then that would make the selling of change within much more easy to conduct*". Interviewee 12

For Flanagan too, the appointment of Lewis was an acknowledgment of his own strengths and weaknesses within such a rapidly evolving and potentially volatile process. Lewis was in many ways the opposite of Flanagan in terms of leadership style and strategic approach. A senior member of the team commented:

"I think one of Ronnie's skills is that he very quickly sees the end game, he very quickly sees the strategic direction we need to go, but his weakness if it is a weakness, is he doesn't want to get involved in detail. So his strength is picking people like Tim Lewis, cautious Tim, safe pair of hands Tim, to see him through, knowing that Tim will identify all the pitfalls all the problems for Ronnie, and Ronnie will just move them out of the way, I'll deal with that one, I'll go and speak to...., Ronnie, its hard to explain just how good he was". Interviewee 4

One of the things that also characterised the change team as it evolved was its adherence to rank and authority within the organisation. While this may seem like an obvious point in an organisation which was structured in the fashion of command and control, but the fact that the '*ranky*' (Interviewee 4) nature of this structure was mentioned by interview participants is illustrative of some understanding of the need for this work to permeate the rest of the organisation. The team as we know was headed by ACC Tim Lewis who reported directly to '*the Chief*' (Interviewee 4). The other core team members were recruited over the period September 1999 to January 2000 and included Chief Superintendent Stephen White as its programme manager, Superintendents Robin Campbell and Seamus Hamel, and lastly Cecil Craig (who had managed the Fundamental Review process).

One person who was not part of the team, who appears to have been deliberately distanced from it, was the newly appointed Deputy Chief Constable Colin Cramphorn. Cramphorn was appointed in 1998, in the midst of political argument over peace and policing, and a time of extreme political sensitivity and volatility. There is no doubt that Cramphorn's background in the Home Office made him an attractive candidate with change looming in NI, but almost immediately upon his appointment he gave a radio interview that was subsequently reported in the Belfast Telegraph which effectively scuppered the rest of his involvement with the change team. At a time when Flanagan was spending increasing amounts of time and energy consulting, reassuring and engaging with members of the Force who were uncertain about their positions, Cramphorn made the following public remarks:

"I think you can safely assume I wasn't appointed here because the Chief Constable or the Police Authority thought I could bring any particular insight into the operational business of the RUC. What I was able to offer and hopefully able to deliver, is some experience of change management" Belfast Telegraph Sept 9th 1998

This explicit acknowledgment of preparations for change while Patten was still consulting and a full year before Patten reported, acted as a confirmation for those within the organisation who were opposed to change and those outside it who were campaigning against it, that the deal was done and that the RUC was being 'sold down the river'. It also gave rise to concerns about the top team's complicity in such a sell out. His words would have had the effect of weakening Flanagan's position within the organisation and hinting at a pace of change which would set alarm bells ringing. Flanagan was reportedly furious. One senior colleague who worked closely with the change team commented:

"Blair Wallis retires and Colin Cramphorn takes the position, Almost immediately he gives a radio interview in which he points out that he has been appointed because of change management skills, which immediately highlights the whole issue, causes public interest and makes Flanagan question his judgement to the extent that he is sidelined from the process" Interviewee 4

The fact that Flanagan expected his senior colleagues to display the same degree of political skill as himself in relation to organisational matters is perhaps not surprising. Cramphorn, who sadly died in 2006, seems to have got on with what he was assigned to do and the disagreement and

tension between the two men does not appear to have negatively impacted on the process. One academic who worked with the change team reflected on Cramphorn's behaviour in this regard:

"There was a political issue there. I'd certainly liked him a great deal, he had a great deal to offer intellectually but there was a tension between him and Ronnie. Would things have been any better had the attention been resolved, I personally can't say. So a minor little irritant, which I believe had no particular impact, for some of the individuals involved though they felt sorry for him, I think that the impact of that tension was blown out of all proportion but as far as the change process was concerned you wouldn't have known the difference either ways. But that was one good thing about both the Deputy and Ronnie. They were very professional in that process and had the Deputy wanted to be awkward, and damage the change process by talking rightly about his position in the organisation and the way he was being treated he could have done. But give him his dues, he didn't". Interviewee 29

Putting the Team together was also part of defining the change management task. At this point the task was no longer a theoretical exercise dependent on improving security scenarios as defined by the Fundamental Review, but a politically sensitive and externally assessed change process. With the general political acceptance of Patten's recommendations, the slow but forward progress of the legislation through the House of Common's and Lords, and the movement towards appointing an Oversight Commission it was clear that change needed to move quickly. All of these factors are significant in relation to the pace of change which was largely externally driven and determined. One senior member of the change team commented:

"*So between the period of November, December, January 1999-2000, that's when the team took shape and to me in a sense, that's when the task was defined*" Interviewee 4

The decision to keep the team small was significant. While change needed to happen, general policing with all that it involved in a society going through transition also needed to continue, so a small dedicated team with clear roles was a conscious choice. What was not obvious however, was the existence of another 'team', put together by Flanagan and Lewis with the task of operationally verifying the options for change produced by the change team. Flanagan refers to this group in these terms:

"*I wanted a very small dedicated team but that they would co-ordinate the work it right across the organisation so that other people would be doing this, but they would be doing it along with their day job. But that the actual full-time team would be small in number, and a very important*

thing for me was, I decided to create what I call an operational inspectorate and I deliberately selected people in a range of ranks and in a range of departments, who had utter operational credibility. And the important thing I think was I made a commitment to them, as recommendations emerged from the working groups those recommendations would be put to them and their job was to test recommendations to operational destruction. And my commitment to them was if you tell me these things will not work operationally and convince me that that's the case that's the end of it, they'll go no further. And lo and behold these people, who some might have called the dinosaurs, the red necks, the old 'this is the way it always has been', operationally they were brilliant people and they became the most innovative, the most progressive group". Interview with Ronnie Flanagan

Two things are important about the creation of this 'operational inspectorate'. The first is the tacit acknowledgement by Flanagan that the change process will be extremely difficult for some, if not many, within his organisation. By pulling together a group of people, who might have been regarded by (as he acknowledges) as 'dinosaurs' and 'rednecks' he creations a buffer for the process: a safety valve. There is little doubt that given the nature of the RUC and the huge political controversy surrounding the change that disenchantment from the rank and file would be felt at some point, maybe many points, in the process. This Group would be personally and professionally close to those most likely to ferment discontent. By bringing them in and giving them a role he drew them into the process and protected the planned changes from some of its biggest critics. The second significant point is that this 'inspectorate' is not mentioned in any detail by others interviewed for this research or in any of the documentation that the author has had access to (with the exception of one reference as to its intended formation in April 2000 in a 'quality assurance role'). The conclusion that we can reach is that this Group and the individuals involved in it were shadowing events as an early alarm system and functional test group on operational feasibility. They also operated as a 'buy in' mechanism for those outside the process, especially in the new District Command Units.

6.6.6 Defining the Approach to Change

As we have seen, Patten was not the first to begin to explore the need for structural and strategic change. Like all policing organisations, the RUC had considerable contact with other police forces within Britain and Ireland. Unlike Ireland where the Garda Síochána are a unified state police force, UK policing is defined by geographical units under the command of Chief Constables and accountable to the Home Secretary, and Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary

(HMIC). Not only did the RUC have considerable contact with their UK counterparts through various mechanisms (such as senior staff training in Branshill), but had links with the Garda Síochána built up over decades, and through international policing organisation's links with other forces such as those in Belgium and particularly in the United States. The FBI training college was a regular destination for senior commanders and their skills and competencies in conducting anti-terrorist operations in conjunction with army colleagues made the RUC a destination in its own right for other police forces. So while the RUC were putting in place their change team, it was within an environment where not only the recommendations of Patten were of concern but also the recommendations of recent HMIC reports and a desire to incorporate aspects of best practice internationally. With this in mind the Team adopted a comprehensive approach which was as broad as necessary to cover all areas of change. The process at this point had gone through political and legislative developments such as the Police NI Act 2000 had become a formalised necessity. Some members of the Team regarded this transition as the beginning of the 'second stage' of change – the point at which the real decisions needed to be made. One commented:

"*the Fundamental Review has been published and has actually been overtaken or subsumed by the Patten Report. the Patten report has been accepted, fought over and argued over, but it's been accepted and then we are into what I would call the second and big part of the change process, that is to say the formal change process, supported by political will in the sense that government was driving it forward, supported by finance the resourcing, money it was going to come forward, supported by the structure and the implementation team made up of as I said the NIO and the police, the change management team, the RUC as it was then, so the second stage was very formal....*" Interviewee 4

6.6.7 Planning the Change at Senior Levels

This formal process began at the end of 1999 with a grouping together of all the recommendations that the team felt were relevant to the organisation. This process was conducted by Superintendent Robin Campbell. Grouped together, recommendations for change that required implementation amounted to 861 separate issues, 385 of which were declared '*merged or inert*' leaving 476 '*live*'. 175 of these recommendations were from the Patten Report, the rest were from the most recent HMIC reports, another RUC document referred to as an 'Integrity Thematic', the Fundamental Review, the Lawrence Report and its separate

recommendations[22], the RUC's draft strategic plan, the Force Inspectorate, previous HMIC inspections, and internal strategic programmes in the RUC's B Department, A Department, Belfast Region Programmes and Finance. The 'task' ahead was defined at this stage as '*consolidate, connect and prioritise all recommendations, lay basis for critical path, lay basis for departmental action and additional analysis*' (Change Management Team 1999). Such a large number of actionable recommendations presented the Team and the organisation as a whole with a very complex task. Consultation with senior ranks on this approach continued until January 2000 and included significant contact between Lewis and other senior officers. Part of this contact was a letter sent by Lewis to member of the Chief Constable's policy Committee on the 23rd of December 1999 (Lewis 1999). This letter sets out in detail the actions that have been taken in respect of the change process since the Change Team was established in September under his direction. He makes two important points. The first of these concerns the approach taken to date to the change management task. He describes the grouping of recommendations as preparatory work and efforts to rationalise these and link them to 'manageable strategic groupings'. He then talks of the need to identify the 'key aims' associated with these groupings and from these 'develop a vision for a 'transformed' service'. He also acknowledges that this approach to developing strategic aims and a vision is not necessarily the classic one, but interestingly draws attention to the fact that he has '*tested the process with two academic mentors and it is considered to be entirely valid for the very unusual circumstances in which we find ourselves*'(Lewis 1999). These two mentors were Professor Andrew Kakabadse of Cranfield University and Prof Colin Eden of Strathclyde. The second point of note is a more political one. Lewis draws attention to the current drafting of the Police Bill. He describes this as a '*legislative driver*'. In the context in which the Secretary of State (then Peter Mandelson) had not yet announced a decision in respect of the Patten recommendations, Lewis acknowledges that the NIO are continuing to prepare for the introduction of a Bill regarding policing in February 2000. He comments during the process:

"*on return from the Christmas break, or immediately there after, Department Heads will find on their desks a suite of Patten recommendations, relevant to their area of responsibility.....and in respect of which we need to provide further persuasive advice to the NIO*" (Lewis 1999)

[22] The Lawrence or McPherson Report 1999 was the result of a public enquiry into police handling of the racially motivated murder of the black teenager Stephen Lawrence in 1993.

The role of the RUC in influencing and impacting upon the legislation and upon the Government's 'policing implementation plan' is clear, as is the tightly connected nature of the change process and the external political environment that drove it. Legislation would eventually determine the name, symbols, and governance arrangements for the new police service and be the focus of intense political scrutiny. The Policing or Implementation Plan represented the Government's public commitments (and timetable) to implementing Patten. Obviously, the is a distinct relationship between this 'external' implantation plan and the implementation 'process' that was underway within the organisation. As we shall see later in this section, the RUC leadership was by no means the only group attempting to influence the drafting and passage of the Bill.

It is obvious at this stage too that the time constraints on individuals in leadership roles within the organisation were beginning to be of concern. Lewis comments upon the possibilities for easier communication (an intranet), and the need to incorporate regular Sunday 'away days' as one solution to the intrusion of normal business into change discussions. Such considerations acknowledge the need to manage the competing demands of the change on one hand and normal operational activities on the other.

Many felt that the mechanism for defining the change objectives was unnecessarily complicated. A framework of hundred's of recommendations, impacting on every aspect of organisational life, coming from a number of perspectives and still partly dependent on external legislation was a tall order for any change programme. Robin Campbell had been tasked with developing a structure that merged the overlapping recommendations together into one document. One senior member who worked with Robin Campbell at this initial stage was blunt in his analysis:

"*I think the process, even though I had my fingerprints over it was over intellectualised and over complicated, but elements of it certainly did work well*". Interviewee 3

Another had an even more interesting assessment:

"*They weren't just looking at Patten, they brought in all these other HMI Reports, reports from the Audit Commission, the Report into Stephen Lawrence, the McPherson report , and we put all*

these recommendations together and tried to make them, to knit them into the Patten report and I always found that a bit strange, because I thought, I can see the logic in some way because Patten doesn't stand in isolation, but for us in Northern Ireland I actually thought it did. I thought that's what we should focus on and I thought that should be up front, but I suspect that was something to do with the organisational culture then and I suspect the organisation wasn't quite bought into Patten and all that it stood for". Interviewee 15

Submerging Patten among a sea of other recommendation, including a substantial section from the RUC's own Fundamental review did have one particular consequence however. The directive impact which Patten had intended became diluted within a more general strategic planning approach. If the organisation were implementing a comprehensive change programme that was acknowledged as overdue and to some degree be perceived as self defined, selling that programme amongst officers was much easier than attempting simply to implement Patten, with all the political, cultural and emotional hostility directed against that Report from many officers.

6.6.8 Managing Change at Lower Levels

While at the top of the organisation and in the change team especially, there were concerns expressed about the change process and the volatile external environment, at lower ranks concerns were arising from a number of perspectives. It is important to recognise that while we can look at this organisation at this time from the perspective of the process's conclusion (if we take the last Oversight Commissioners Report as a conclusion of sorts), at this point in the organisation's development, the outcome was unknowable. Policing and policing organisations differ in some critical respects from other organisations in the public sector: police cannot go on strike, and are severely limited in terms of industrial action of any sort. They also operate largely, and this was especially true of the RUC as we will see, along principles of 'command and control'(Reiner 2000). It is also inconceivable that a situation could develop where the police can't carry on with normal duties for a time, while internal disputes play out or the change process evolves. So normal policing must continue and the concerns of all ranks must be addressed or at least managed. This research focuses much of its attention on the upper levels of the organisation, simply because of issues of access that are dealt with in Chapter 4. However, it is clear from a number of sources that concerns were present about the change process throughout the organisation and they mirrored the strength of feeling outside it. The Police

Federation (which represents police officers up to the rank of superintendent), had rejected the more controversial findings of the Patten Commission, particularly in relation to name, symbols and recruitment. The campaign against Patten touched on in Phase Two gives us some indication of the strength of feeling. Consultation that had already taken place in relation to the Fundamental Review, the high profile of policing as a political point of contention in the media and the simple reality of army withdrawals and ongoing ceasefires made it obvious for officers that change was afoot. This was unsettling and difficult. One of the key members of the Change Team comments on the extreme emotion which at time characterised discussions of change and its implementation:

"*there was a feeling among officers, 'look, what were all the deaths for, you are just forgetting all those people who died', that was creeping through as well. I mean I was one of the ringleaders and to a certain extent I don't think I have ever been forgiven by some people because they saw me as being quite ruthless, but I had a job to do – I was brought in to do it. So there was a sense .. even I had to remind myself that people had died and I had to be more sensitive. I lived through it and was part of it and what I am describing to you was real – I have sat on focus groups where I have seen chief supers with 30 years service, who were going anyway, they were just in turmoil and they were just not accepting what I was saying, and it got very aggressive, I could write a book about it – very difficult times*" Interviewee 21

Another commented:

"*There were a few difficulties in a couple of areas, there were public threats to people who were going to do this or that but they were always - they were just talk, nothing ever came of them, and local commanders usually sorted the problems out themselves. I think Ronnie Flanagan might have jumped in a couple of times, that's where he had great skills as a winner round of people*". Interviewee 15

In order to stem the rank and file disaffection, senior management took a number of decisions. The first of these was to instigate internal communication mechanisms such as newsletters and regular meeting to keep officers up to date with developments. The second was to instigate and staff a rumour hotline, with the aim of scotching rumours before they took hold. Roadshows were organised to tour districts and while information about the change was being communicated internally, Flanagan and others continued to staunchly defend the RUC in public. For example in the media, Flanagan spent time publicly talking about the personal difficulties that he and others had with Patten's proposals:

"I understand the feelings of my members because I share those feelings," he said. He added that he was not convinced that the changes to the RUC title would attract more Catholics into the force and bring about the acceptance of Northern Ireland's police force by the nationalist community that Chris Patten's report promised. If we are to endure this great hurt proposed then I hope the gains envisaged are demonstrable and achievable." (BBC 1999)

One of the most significant aspects of the communication process to officers was the direct intervention of the Chief Constable in the debate. This was regarded by Flanagan as a continuation of the consultation and information opportunities that began with the Fundamental Review. For Flanagan the continuity between these two processes was vital. Talking about his contact with RUC officers he says:

"And I carried it on through implementation of Patten because it was different obviously. So, I created a little newssheet called 'the bottom line' because rumour is rife in all these areas so through this combination of things - constant, I'm talking about nightly open forums -down in Enniskillen, up in Coleraine all over the place, and being very refreshed by the fact that not withstanding the hierarchal organisation, people had the confidence to a stand-up and be challenging. And my commitment to them was ' if I have an answer you'll get it, and if I haven't got it and think it can be found I'll do all I can to find it and if there are no answers, I'll tell you very honestly there are no answers' ". Interview with Ronnie Flanagan

Others too, commented on the role he played as a persuader for change within the organisation and as its defender outside. One senior civilian commented:

"..he took an awful lot on his shoulders at that time.... He could have worked twenty three hours a day seven days a week and this was something extra after driving round the country having these forums with the reserves and regular officers sitting in a canteen, sitting up there doing questions and answers and they didn't hold back and he carried that because even though the officers maybe didn't like the changes and couldn't see the reason for them, they respected him and it was the respect for Ronnie Flanagan that carried the thing through". Interviewee 12

Concerns abounded not just in terms of the emotive issues of symbols, name and structure, but from another perspective around the issue of severance. Implementation of Patten meant a significant downsizing of the force, in part to make way for 50/50 recruitment. Downsizing needed to be significant enough to allowing 50/50 recruitment to bring in a critical mass of Catholics within a relatively short period of time (ten years). Patten had recommended a

generous severance programme for those that left voluntarily, but the reality of this process was up for negotiation. Concerns about whether severance would be worthwhile were foremost in the minds of many who were wiling to leave:

"For the first few months that the Patton report came out the amount of rumours, concern and anxiety that that created and interest – you know a lot of people wanted to know 'when am I getting away – when am I getting the big cheque – getting my severance' and then down to the full-time reserve, you know 'when am I losing my job' because basically what it says is that the full-time reserve will go and other things too like the name, 'what about our comrades who gave their lives?'". Interviewee 3

6.6.9 External Interventions

At this point Prof Andrew Kakabadse from the Cranfield School of Management joined the process *' in a mentoring role, with a particular focus on the process of change'* (Lewis 2000). Kakabadse had first met Flanagan when Flanagan acted as a tutor in Bramshill police training college and they had keep in touch. Flanagan contacted Kakabadse out of the blue in late 1999 and asked him to get involved:

"it all started with a casual call from Ronnie Flanagan. He said,' I need some help, will you be able to help me?', and I think he was calling from Belfast airport on to somewhere else and I said of course, and that's how it started..." Interview with Andrew Kakabadse

Kakabadse's involvement continued for about three years, until after Flanagan's departure in 2002. He was joined by Prof Colin Eden from Strathclyde University who had previously worked with Robin Campbell. This involvement from external academics was significant to the process as we shall see below.

6.6.10 Developing a 'Vision of Success'

Defining the parameters of the task was an in-depth and complex activity. The period of January to April 2000 saw the endless political wrangling about the shape of the Police Act and the Government's 'implementation plan' continue and left the RUC leadership in a position where they paradoxically needed to instigate, formulate and operationalise a change programme, without the type of detail, certainty and political cover that underpinning legislation would give

them. This difficulty in moving ahead on detail was reflected by Tim Lewis in a memo on the 13th August 2000:

"The political wrangling (debate!) over the Bill seems set to delay delivery of an Act to at least January 2001 – assuming it progresses through the Lords. This means we will remain on something of a political tightrope; expected to progress change but also to respect the parliamentary process and not make assumptions as to the outcome of the democratic process!" (Lewis 2000)

A meeting of the Chief Constable's Policy Committee at Hillsborough castle on the 24th of January 2000 was designed as a 'seminar' in which the complex issues arising from the change were to be discussed. A previous meeting on the 10th of January, had been insufficient to get resolution on the key issues. This meeting on the 24th was attended by Chief Officers, Department Heads as well as representatives of the Superintendents Association and the Police Federation. It's seems this meeting served first and foremost to keep stakeholders (as identified by the invitation list) involved in the process. Meanwhile work was ongoing at addressing significant issues in terms of the change. The most pressing at the point were the major structural change in terms of a review and 'slimming down' of Headquarters, the reorganisation and redrawing of District Command Units to deliver policing on the ground and a need to address the issues raised by Patten and others in relation to organisational culture. Significant consultation in the form of meetings and focus groups was undertaken in relation to the review of District Command Units (DCUs) in terms of *'DCU and regional functions, roles and responsibilities, sector policing and gradings District Commanders'* (Lewis 2000). Consultation included meetings with Divisional Commanders and their deputies, Chief Inspectors, Inspectors, Sergeants, Constables, Reserve Constables and PFNI representatives. Later this month senior members of the change management team visited South Africa in an exchange programme with the South African Police, facilitated by the Independent Projects Trust, a South African conflict resolution organisation. The South African trip was one of many external learning exercises that we will look at in Chapter Seven.

In relation to the sensitive issue of organisational culture a measured approach was taken. On the 15th of February a position paper on culture was distributed to the top team, and was marked confidential. The paper attempted to summarise and draw some conclusions from previous research done on organisational culture by the RUC itself (including surveys in 1996 and 1997

on sexual and sectarian harassment), and also incorporate additional work done by the Patten Commission. The position paper makes the point that internal RUC research on harassment suggested that problems were minor and that confidential systems dealt with problems sufficiently. In contrast, the survey carried out by the Independent Commission on Policing (which had not them been released to the public) showed that while there was support for some proposed changes (reduction in layers of management, devolved authority enhanced communications etc), there was a notable lack of support and indeed opposition to change in the areas of the names, removal of flag, badge and symbols, openness and involvement with communities, and positive discrimination in the recruitment process (Lewis 2000). The survey also showed differences in responses from different groups that could be delineated by rank, gender and religion. In the paper the author (a researcher with the RUC) refers to the RUC's own research but makes the point:

"The later surveys associated with the Patten Commission paint a rather different picture with substantial numbers opposed to change. It should be noted that the more structural elements of organisational change, such as reducing management tiers and devolving authority are well supported. Whilst the softer cultural issues of names, emblems and symbols attract substantial opposition. Worryingly it is the more emotional aspects of culture which can often pose the most serious problems for service based organisations" (Wiggins 2000).

This early acknowledgment that organisational culture could be a serious obstacle appears to have impacted upon approaches to change by the top leadership team throughout the process. Considering the top leadership team were all (with the exception of DCC Colin Cramphorn) long serving RUC officers who had policed throughout the Troubles, it is questionable if the document would really have told them things they did not already know. Perhaps it served better to reinforce their intuition of the barriers. Ongoing work such as this led to a significant meeting in April of that year. It was at this meeting that the 'transformational change strategy' was presented and a decision was taken to pursue a 'Vision of Success'.

This meeting which again took place in Hillsborough Castle had a number of objectives (White 2000). Among these objectives was the need to: update and inform members as far as possible as to the governments intentions and policing implementation plan; to outline proposals for managing the changes; and how the work programmes involved might be categorised, allocated

and co-ordinated to ensure that the 'Vision for Success' was achieved; and to outline for those present the overall context and the challenges perceived by the Change Management Team. Essentially the meeting was about '*identifying and considering the critical success factors and how we intend to address them*' (White 2000). One of the key aims outlined in this strategic approach is the need to '*think and act corporately and move away from discreet functional responsibilities and activities*' (White 2000). There is a recognition in this meeting (outlined in the notes that were used to structure it), of the need to move towards a form of 'cabinet responsibility' among the chief officers group (White 2000). One of the other interesting points that were raised in this meeting was the impending arrival of the Oversight Commissioner and the setting up of his office.

Official records of this meeting reflect a new sense of urgency and purpose in references to the Oversight Commissioner and also in the 'Vision of Success' which was outlined in a series of presentations[23]. These presentation are accompanied by a set of illustrative diagrams which set out for the senior team present a structure upon which to begin '*building for the future*' . The first of these is set out in the shape of a building with the 'vision' as the roof, bolstered by the 'overarching aims and objectives', and the 'district command units' and in turn supported by the pillars of 'transparency and openness', 'accountability', 'integrity and impartiality', 'human rights' and 'representative of society'. These are bounded by 'Skills, Staff, Style, Strategy, Structure and System with Shared Values acting as a roof – reflecting McKinsey's 7s's. Above this 'building' of a new police service are the clouds of '*political instability, terrorism and public order*' and the sun of '*political stability, peace and partnership*'. The ever present nature of politics as a backdrop to a new police service is obvious. There is no single 'vision' as yet [24].

A set of overarching aims and objectives are also outlined as a '*protocol tree*', alongside a '*statement of purpose*'. These are in addition to another set of aims and objectives outlined in the '*Vision of Success*'. This overarching framework sits within the strategic leadership of the Senior Management Team and the Police Authority.

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[23] The Vision of Success adopted is illustrated in Appendix 13
[24] This diagram is illustrated in Appendix 14

The next section will look at this initial 'Vision of Success' and plan for managing the changes.

6.6.11 Vision of Success

It was at this point that the large of number of recommendation for change that had been identified were refocused into a strategy to remodelling of the organisation. The principle source for this strategic design was based around a classic McKinsey 7 S's model, linking in policing activity and organisational management with Shared Values, Style, Staff, Skills, Structure, Systems and Strategy (Campbell 2000). A strategy consisted of a complex plan that outlined a 'Change Strategy' on the one hand (described as 'Transformational', and a 'Service Strategy' on the other (described as 'Transactional') (Campbell 2000). The Plan was headed by a Mission:

" *'Professionalism, Partnership, Respect'*
To achieve effective and professional policing in a partnership with the community, helping to secure a safe and just society on which the human rights and responsibilities of individuals, families and communities are properly respected and balanced. " (Campbell 2000)

The need to run two parallel strategies reflected the policing concerns that faced the RUC at the time (including ongoing civil disturbance around the ongoing Drumcree dispute) and the need to incorporate the demands of the change process with the demands of day to day operational functions.

The structure which was developed to incorporate these simultaneous processes is contained in Appendix 13, but works from a series of stand alone aims which feed down to programmes, and through those to the fulfilment of change recommendations. The aims defined relate closely to Patten and on the 'change strategy (Transformational)' side are; policing with the community; human rights; effective best value policing; representative; accountable; open and transparent; impartial; integrity. On the 'service strategy (transactional side) they are; promote safety and reduce disorder; reduce crime and the fear of crime; contribute to delivering justice.

It is important to recognise at this stage the context during which these meetings took place. The RUC, and in particular its senior management, were engaged in a number of parallel initiatives. Section Two of this Chapter will look at these in more detail. Now however, it is important to flag them as contemporaneous processes which interact with the planning activities above. The first of these was the engagement of a number of levels of the police with Mediation Network (as it was then known) and related to this, a number of individuals who had links with the community relations and mediation sector. Part of this engagement involved 'fact finding' and 'learning' trips to the US, Belgium and South Africa. In comparison to this fairly low key engagement was the ongoing public controversy about the future of Force itself, the Police Bill, Government Implementation plan and (in a significant gesture to the concerns about loss of symbolism) the decision taken in late 1999 to award the George Cross collectively to the RUC. The George Cross is the highest civilian honour which can be bestowed on any British subject for valour in the face of attack. The award of the George Cross to a collective body was only the second such award in its history – the only other being to the people of Malta after World War II. The award was made in February 2000 – just before the 'Vision of Success' document was outlined. Another process underway was the confidential cultural report referred to above concerned with the development of both a change strategy within the RUC and of the possibility that it would go unsupported by the rank and file (Wiggins 2000).

Within this context, on the 13th of April 2000, the Chief Constables Policy Team and the Change Management Team had outlined to them what was described as the 'plan' for managing the changes.

6.6.12 How the 'Deliberate' Strategy is Developed....

On the 13th of April it was agreed that there was a need to pursue a 'Vision of Success'. Such a 'Vision of Success' was described as a document which would '*describe in some detail what the new Policing Service will look like in five years time in order to achieve our mission*'. The new mission (outlined above) and the transformational aims are identified as a platform. Eight work streams are identified comprising of; shared values; style; staff; skills; structure, systems

(information management); systems (finance); and communication, image and marketing. Accountable Officers were appointed for each work stream (Lewis 2000).

The change management team were also engaged in developing a report on District Command Units and Regional Headquarters. This is significant because it shaped the major part of the structural changes envisaged by the change strategy. The consultation for this structural reorganisation was taking place in tandem with the other change processes (Lewis 2000c, Lewis 200d). At the meeting on the 13th of April it was also agreed that a new structure of 29 District Command units would be introduced, if possible, in November of that year. A process of consultation was outlined, involving engagement with existing 'Divisional commanders', scoping of organisational charts and wide-ranging discussion down the line of command (Lewis 200h). A similar Review of Headquarters was commenced in June. The accountable officer for this process was Tim Lewis himself. The introduction of a new structure was being proposed to take place a little over a year after the publication of the Patten Report and less than six months after RUC senior management decided upon a change strategy which was still to be formulated fully.

The next stage in this strategy formulation process was a request for each Accountable Officer to prepare a short document in which they outline in some detail how their transformational change work would inform and impact upon the new policing service. This request did not issue until September of 2000, leaving a considerable gap between the meeting to develop the 'Vision of Success' strategy and the furtherance of this strategy. There are a number of possible reasons for this delay. Firstly, political stalemate had again enveloped Northern Ireland in the form of a lack of IRA decommissioning and the suspension of the nascent power sharing executive by Secretary of State Peter Mandelson in February of 2000. Additionally, an initial attempt by the British government was made in May to publish a Bill to reform the police – a document which failed to meet the expectations of the SDLP and hardened attitudes to policing change. It is not until November of that year that legislation on the reform of policing becomes law after much politicking, wrangling, brinkmanship and discontent. Even at this point the name of the new policing service had not been decided. With this kind of backdrop and the added operational

concern of the marching session, it is easy to see how the change strategy temporarily dropped in priority. In August of 2000, in a confidential memo to his colleagues, Lewis attempts to set the scene and describes the progress of the overall change programme as tightly linked to the political 'wrangling' over the Police Bill. He states:

"*This means we will remain on something of a political tightrope; expected to progress change but also to respect the parliamentary process and not to make assumptions as to the outcome of the democratic process!*" (Lewis 2000a)

He goes on to comment on the shortfalls in Patten and service budgets and the difficulties of '*increasing service delivery demands and the high expectations for transformational change 'without cherry picking' Patten*" (Lewis 2000a). The term 'cherry picking' is significant because it is a term generally associated with the NI political process. The use of this term illustrates that Lewis understands clearly how heavily the RUC will be criticised by the nationalist community if they are perceived to be 'not delivering' on Patten. As he says '*some difficult negotiation and choices lie ahead*' (Lewis 2000a). The aim at this point in the process seems to have been to have new annual and strategic plans for, as he puts it '*public deployment*' in April 2001. This would require that the eight work streams constituting the 'transformational change plan' be in place alongside the ongoing service delivery commitments. He identifies the introduction of new District Command Units as a catalyst for comprehensive organisational change. It is easy to see how this very public and organisationally significant process would be held up as key indicator or progress. While the original commitment to move to DCU structures was envisaged for November 2000, this memo makes it clear that delays in the Police Bill (which was to determine boundaries) and more importantly delays in the agreement of a severance package for those wishing to leave the organisation, held up this original deadline. A new deadline of April 2001 was decided upon, with '*blue prints for the DCU's and Headquarters structure*' to be arrived at by November 2000 (Lewis 2000a). The need for flexibility in terms of appointing commanders is acknowledged, as is the impossibility of moving to new DCU boundaries incrementally. Instead, what is needed is, as Lewis says, '*an agreed date when everything changes*' (Lewis 2000a). However, recruitment processes for new District Commanders cannot be completed until *'the first batch of severance applications is completed' (Oct 2000). 'Substantial training'*, Lewis

says would follow appointment (Lewis 2000a). The sensitivity of these issues is underlined by Lewis's requirement that the memo and its contents are not shared widely with staff teams. In fact this information only became public within the organisation in a 'Force Information Bulletin' from the Chief Constable on the 17th of October 2000.

It took until the 15th of September 2000, for Accountable Officers (AO's) to be asked to address in writing the top 22 recommendations that fall within their remit, for a meeting called for October 2000. Interestingly those Chief Constables Policy Meeting (CCPM) members who were not also accountable officers were asked to provide full views across the entire service, on both change and service delivery aims and any particular area of interest (Lewis 2000b). Papers were to be correlated and distributed in preparation for a two day residential meeting in which issues would be developed into a consolidated 'Vision of Success'. This two day meeting was facilitated by Andrew Kakabadse who was also engaged within this process.

6.6.13 Responses for Discussion

This final stage in formulating what could be described as an attempt at 'deliberate' strategy making culminated in October 2000 with a two day residential meeting facilitated by Kakabadse that looked in detail at the eight work streams and their development. The 'responses' submitted in preparation for this meeting by AO's and members of the Chief Constable's Policy Committee are interesting because they reflect the concerns, preoccupations and ongoing problems that many officers had with the change programme. For example, within the work stream 'Shared Values', the Accountable Officer, in his response makes it clear that the recommendations under 'shared values' would, if implemented in full and providing that there was no return to '*terrorism*', result in a professional policing service, '*within the spirit and principles of the European Convention*'. In his view, officers would also view the Convention as '*means of protecting their rights as well as the rights of victims and suspects*'. Confidence would be '*enhanced by a less sceptical public and a greater involvement of the community as a whole*'. However, the Accountable Officer goes on to comment:

"*In arriving at the above situation, I would ask that the words 'transformational aims' be tempered by the inclusion of the words 'as possible' after the sentence on transparency and openness*'. (RUC 2000)

In contrast to this rather hesitant and wary approach, the contribution in relation to communications, marketing and image was more forthright. It asserts that:

"*Communication and marketing must ...have an external, community relationship building focus since widespread community support is the 'great prize' "* (RUC 2000)

Another contributor (although not an Accountable Officer) felt it important to make clear the importance of commitment to long term involvement of officers within communities (rather than short term appointments and abrupt departures) and comments that;

"*We might therefore need to review our policy on promotions within particular geographical areas without long distance transfers. We are already rather better at maintaining some continuity of local knowledge in appoints to specialist branches*" (RUC 2000)

Within the general interview data another contributor referred to the issue of some officers spending almost their entire career in certain areas, particularly E Department, better known as 'Special Branch'. Special Branch had responsibility for anti-terrorism policing and intelligence activity, in particular. The difficulty if integrating 'Special Branch' into the crime department is one of the issues we will explore in Phase IV. The contributor also reflects on the changing role of the police commander and the increasingly political judgements that the police will have to engage in at a local level. It is important to remember that within this context the term 'inexplicably linked' generally refers to the political representatives of paramilitary groups such as the IRA:

"*One perceived downside in all of this is the inevitable corrosion of the operational independence of the police commander. Clearly, if a significant part of the local policing effort is devoted to problem solving initiatives in partnership, the commander cannot have everything his/her own way. Some potential partners may even be criminals (or 'inextricably linked' with criminals) but we will have to feel our way forward in such relationships. In such cases, that other buzzword, 'transparency', may prove useful".*

"There are, and will remain, significant areas of police activity in which I would not welcome 'transparency' " (RUC 2000)

The Chief Medical Advisor to the RUC also raised serious concerns about internal issues which he regarded as 'fundamental to the delivery of a satisfactory and acceptable police service'. He comments:

"At present the organisation is clearly in a state of flux with little concrete having been decided as regards changes etc. This clearly is causing considerable difficulties amongst the members of the Police Service and I believe it is vital to have some degree of certainty and clarity as soon as practicable. I clearly appreciate the difficulties involve in this but until direction is clearer there will be difficulties amongst the members of the Force". (Courtney 2000)

He goes on to comment ominously that *'absence management ...will become an even more significant issue, I believe in the future days'.* (Courtney 2000)

It's important to bear in mind that by this meeting in October 2000, each of the eight work programmes had established teams with which to progress the recommendations under their remit. Coincidently (or not), October 2000 also saw the First Oversight Commissioner's report into policing change. Tom Constantine, a former New York Police Chief and DEA Drugs Head, was appointed by the British Government to oversee policing change in May 2000. There is little doubt that his appointment and his successful lobbying for high calibre staff and an appropriate budget acted as a motor to move the internal change process swiftly forward.

The outcome of this October meeting was concrete. A mission was agreed upon *"In partnership with others helping to make Northern Ireland safer"*, and a strap line: *'Making Northern Ireland safer together'*. Risks and hurdles to achieving the key aims were also identified, as are ways to minimise them. One thing stressed in the meeting's preliminary report – the need to communicate effectively within the organisation and to watch for stress points as they emerge (White 2000).

The process of *'formulating a strategy for change'* had been a long and complicated one, which was conducted in the shadow of political instability and high emotion around policing. However, the implementation of this 'all encompassing' strategy, was a process whose focus was as much external in terms of adhering to the demands and requirements of the Oversight Commission, as

it was internal in terms of retaining operational focus while moving forward on change. The next sections will focus on the impact of the Oversight Commission and its role as a 'change lever', before going on to look at of two key events within the change process: the establishment of the new DCU boundaries, structures and command systems; and the tense, emotional period which resulted in the change of name and title from RUC to PSNI.

6.6.14 Oversight Commission

The establishment of the Oversight Commission was another outcome of the Patten Commission. Chapter 19 of the Patten Report is entitled 'Overseeing Change', and recommends that:

"*an eminent person, from a country other than the United Kingdom or Ireland, should be appointed as soon as possible as an oversight commissioner with responsibility for supervising the implementation of our recommendations*" (ICPNI 1999)

Patten also recommended that that the proposed Commissioner should '*have perhaps two colleagues*' and a small staff in NI, and that they might develop a work programme which would include reviewing progress with the police command team and other accountability mechanisms such as the Policing Board, DPP's and the Police Ombudsman's Office. Patten also recognised that an Oversight Commissioner would present a useful validation mechanism for the implementation process in the context of ongoing political negotiations, and also provide an important impetus to transformation. The Commission itself defined its role as a '*complex analytical task for which there is no historical model to follow when implementing the oversight process*' (OCC 2001). By reiterating the relative uniqueness of the task in front of them in policing history, the Commission also gave themselves latitude to move ahead in a format of their own choosing.

The Office of the Oversight Commissioner was designed as an independent and impartial body which would gather together top level policing expertise and ensure that the high standards set by the Patten Commission were realised through the implementation process. As we have seen above, the then Secretary of State Peter Mandelson appointed the new Commissioner in May 2000. Tom Constantine, who became the first Commissioner, recalled the concerns that he had originally raised with the Secretary of State in their preliminary conversations prior to his appointment;

"...the interview with Mandelson went round the issues. He is a very unusual, introverted person. I just said to him three questions: Are you philosophically committed to the project? Are you financially committed? And would I be independent?" Interview with Tom Constantine

Given the intense political speculation that existing over policing at that time, Constantine's concerns are understandable. These concerns were also raised publicly by the release of the Governments first attempt at the policing 'implementation plan' on the day of the announcement of Constantine's appointment. This initial implementation plan (and indeed the second version in August 2001) essentially set out in public how policing and justice would be reformed. It went through each recommendation of the Patten Commission report and stated, the Government's public acceptance or rejection of it, and the timescale by which each recommendation would be operationalised. This Implementation Plan, which was intensely controversial and deeply political, symbolised the relationship between the external political process and the internal organisational processs. Without internal reassurance that, for example a human rights based approach to policing could be in place within a particular timescale (in this area the deadline was April 2001), the Government could not make a public commitment in the Implementation Plan. But without clear guidance from the Government in terms of what was accepted and rejected from the Patten Commission's Report, the police had a difficulty in moving forward strategically on the myriad of issues that confronted them.

This initial plan caused uproar among nationalist politicians who felt that it attempted to dilute the reforms recommended by Patten that it was withdrawn from circulation almost immediately. Constantine was aware of the political storm into which he had walked but responded in a characteristic way:

"they announced me over at Castle Buildings and at the same time they announced me, the Government released the May implementation plan, which is a collectors item, because they withdrew it in a couple of hours. In the minds of the leading politicians on the nationalist side it seriously degraded the intent of the Patten report. It started off obviously, a firestorm of criticism and now I'm in the middle of it, I'm being announced so I had to assert my independence really quick which I did, a lot said the changes don't give you any independence and I said - I got all the independence I need. You see that briefcase there – in that's my airplane ticket home, if any politicians interfere then I'm going to pick it up and go home and you can find somebody else to

act as your stooge. And the headline in the Belfast Telegraph was 'Oversight Commissioner warns politicians not to interfere' ". Interviewee with Tom Constantine

The Oversight Commissioner's first report was produced in January 2001 and set out both the terms of reference for his Office and his main concerns in relation to policing change. One of the important initial aspects of this report was it defined '*priority setting*' as the first point in the oversight methodology. The second clear indication of approach is that the oversight process would be defined clearly in relation to the Patten recommendations and only Patten. This approach was very different to the broad, all encompassing task which the Change Team had set itself.

This dissonance between these two approaches made the role of the Oversight Commissioner extremely significant in relation to the change implementation. Up to the appointment of the Commissioner, the focus of the RUC change team was on establishing the logical challenges that faced them during the implementation of 418 composite recommendations. Some of these were from Patten, but some were also from a range of HMIC reports, the RUC's own Fundamental Review, the McPherson report and others. The singular focus of the Oversight Commissioner on Patten jarred significantly with the approach decided upon and being implemented by the RUC Change Team. This focus on the centrality of Patten itself to the work was reiterated by the Commissioner:

"we would go back and see what Patten said about that particular area so we didn't start spinning off and making up our own theories, we really stayed within the parameters of Patten, there are any number of people here who though Patten was too strong on an issue, and some that thought he was not strong enough and that the Oversight Commissioner would act as a correcting model for the deficiencies they saw in Patten. We thought that that was not at all what we could fulfil". Interviewee with Tom Constantine

The Oversight Commissioners approach was a structured, compliance based one, which expected a similar 'compliance' based approach from the RUC itself. This was immediately at odds with the slow considered approach taken by the change team. The Commissioner himself commented on the incremental realisation within the police that Patten was the key change motor and needed to be regarded as such:

"As the peace process was starting to evolve and the ceasefires, I think there was an internal recognition that hopefully their role was now changing, and they would have to change with it, so the basis for that was there.

And then when the Patten recommendations came in, there's another 20% (of change). Now the 80% that they identified internally they were comfortable with, the 20% that Patten recognised were an addition. Some were looked upon favourably, some weren't, so they developed their own change team, and it was very sophisticated and very detailed so when we first arrived here v| they had already put in place a change team of key officials, Tim Lewis was in charge of that and I met with them, and they had this very complicated, three thousand items and I said, look, that's very good, I have no problem with that, but our questions are going to be specific and direct, so when we ask you a specific question we want a specific responses, simple and clear as that. If I ask someone what time it is, I want to know what time it is, not how to build a watch". Interview with Tom Constantine

Constantine's first report set out the approach and methodology for the oversight process. The second report, released in September 2001 detailed the performance indicators that would be used to provide a baseline for information to measure and report on progress *"of the changes recommended by The Report of the Independent Commission on Policing for NI (Patten Report)"* (OCC 2001). This second report sets out a three stage evaluative process consisting of administrative compliance evidenced by written directives, policy changes etc, follow up interviews and site visits. It was this process and the very focused performance indicators produced by the Office of the Oversight Commissioner which came to have an effect on how the change process progressed on an implementation level. This had the effect of refocusing the minds of the change team in terms of how they moved ahead:

"As soon as their programme of visits started, their first visit was in October 01. That was the second kick start for it, if you like. You can see from their report number 2 they sort of go through it and say, they haven't done anything, they haven't done anything, they haven't done anything, and suddenly we have to sit up and take notice". Interviewee 15

However, the 'administrative compliance' structure which the OC insisted upon was regarded with great scepticism by come in the senior management team. In particular, the so called 'box ticking' attitude of the Commissioner left certain work streams feeling that they had no leeway or room for manoeuvre for implementing changes. The frustration of this was evident within some interviews. In relation to training, one senior civilian commented:

"I'm saying look, I'm trying to reinvent training, I'm bringing in a new head of training from Canada to bring in a new culture, I've sacked everybody else and I've put all these new people in and I've created budgets and I'm changing their thinking processes now when I get all that done I'll have a meaningful SLA (Service Level Agreement) because it's a change process, but the response from them is , ah no progress. Not done. So I said, right give me an SLA, so when the boyo's come next week they'll have an SLA - its not worth a .. because we haven't got everything else lined up thats going to make this really work. We'll give it to them, they'll stamp it completed and then we'll do something that really matters. Now that might be trivialising some of the things but everything has the same level, and Patten never envisaged, not in a million years, that every word that he wrote in that report and was commented on by himself and his commissioners, because we've had this conversation with him, would actually be sub-divided into sentences and have actions attached to them. And that's what the Oversight Commissioner did" Interviewee 12

He went on to comment:

"I'll give you a classic example. They asked me something about a policy on something or other and I gave it to them, and they said, it says draft on this, I can't take that, why? because we don't take draft polices, - if I take draft of it? yeah, so I got someone to tipex draft of it and they said yeah, that's great. And that's where we're at". Interviewee 12

However, crucially the appointment of a Commissioner shored up some criticism of the police and the change process from those in the nationalist community whose support for the new structures was vital. One RUC Chief Inspector who, although heavily critical of the role and position of the Commissioner, commented on the significance of the new Police Ombudsman (appointed prior to Patten after the Hayes Report) to the SDLP in particular:

"I would be quite sure that the SDLP probably got a lot of reassurance from the Oversight Commissioner and if that is the case then it is probably beneficial" Interviewee 3

6.7 TWO KEY PROCESSES: DCU'S AND SYMBOLS

As we have seen, the eight work streams which were designed to implement the complex change process designed by the RUC, all focused on different aspects of change – based on McKinsey's 7S model. However, the Oversight Commissioner and his office which had a different focus and based their performance indicators and structures for accountability squarely within the 13 areas defined by Patten. This was a major issue of contention. In an effort to look in more detail at

how this internal / external interaction operated the next section will look specifically at the implementation of two key change processes – those related to structure and symbols.

6.7.1 The 'Structure' Workstream

The Structure work stream was divided into two specific review areas. The first and one that will be concentrate one in this section, relates to the re-organisation of divisional commands and the staffing of those commands within a period of rapid personnel change. Divisional commands are the local areas that make up regions under the command of an Assistant Chief Constable. The second aspect of the 'structure' programme related to the review of RUC head-quarters and required slimming down of the substantial administrative functions and commands centres situated there. The two processes were somewhat interlinked, and while the review of divisional commands' began in early 2000, the Headquarters review did not begin until May of that year, because of a requirement to have some idea of how many DCU's would exist and some outline picture of the type of functions they would have.

The need for the existing centralist, divisional command structure to be reviewed was evident within the RUC's own Fundamental Review, and was a major theme of the Patten Report. The need to keep lines of command clear and delegate authority to the lowest effective level were clear pathways that ran though both of these documents (RUC 1996, NIO 2000). As we have discussed above a considerable amount of time was spent initially consulting through the ranks on the best way to move ahead on divisional command restructuring. An Operational inspectorate was also created to '*quality assure*' all proposals flowing from this consultation process (Lewis 2000). At the Chief Constable's Policy Executive meeting on the 13th of April 2000 is was agreed that a new structure of 29 District Command units would be introduced, to replace the previous twelve divisions and thirty eight sub-divisional units. The proposed timescale for their introduction was originally November 2000 (Lewis 2000). Notably, it was also agreed that the macro structure of the three existing geographic regions would be retained; therefore re-organisation would occur within an already tested and established set of boundaries. The first step to developing these 29 individual District Command Units (DCU's) was to devolve responsibility from the CMT to each of the current divisional commanders to establish a working

group and design a draft organisational chart for the new district command units (or units in the case of divisions which would contain more than one DCU) (Lewis 2000). This process was to work in tandem with the a series of focus groups, run by the Accountable Officer for Structures (Superintendent Cecil Craig), which discussed with operational staff the development of DCU's as well as other concerns (no doubt about the process of change in general). This set of focus groups and individual interviews can itself be seen as a process of information distribution – with the aim of settling down an increasingly unsettled organisation. The aim of the organisational chart exercise was to get an indication from each of the divisional commands the functions within the DCU in terms of main stations and other stations, and the total number of staff, police and civilians deployed in the district. The fact that the CMT needed this information shows the very local nature of devolved policing and the need to work closely with those at a local level to produce a structure which effectively meets those needs.

6.7.2 Establishing the DCU's

While the original date for a move to DCU's was set for November 2000, upon review this was shifted to April 2001. At this point the first round of severance applications had been run, those initially wishing to go on severance had indicated so, and DCU Commanders could be appointed with greater certainty. The senior leadership's approach to these appointments has been discussed above, and while the Chief Constable may not have been able to compel possible appointee's to remain in post for a length of time after their appointment, he could certainly make it clear his vision for a team that would remain stable despite the instability it was surrounded by. The appointment of these commanders and the establishment of clear geographical boundaries was a significant point in the development of the change process:

"*once the District Commanders were appointed and their geographical area decided I think that was a great leap forward and I think people will tell you that – that really focused our minds – we had key leaders in key positions and we were driving forward the new structure throughout Northern Ireland – that was a big breakthrough*". Interviewee 21

Another commented:

"*The District Commanders were the people that took that (structural change) forward*". Interviewee 2

Being appointed to the position of a District Commander brought with it significant new responsibilities at a time of resource downscaling, organisational turbulence and external political controversy. In particular, new DC's would be required to make regular public reports to local district policing partnerships – putting them in a much more public, transparent and exposed position than their predecessors, or indeed anyone else in the organisation with the exception of the Chief Constable himself. This factor, and the degree of devolved responsibility accrued to the new DCU's made it clear that these individuals would require professional support; both technical and personal. It was also recognised that their role would be vital in stabilising the new arrangements and maintaining organisational focus and discipline. The training designed for them fell into two categories; traditional 'management style' training concentrating on leadership, financial responsibility and presentational style and work which was much more concerned with developing an understanding of the contextually sensitive issues of policing within the divided society and the challenges that this presented to the police. For the academics engaged in this capacity building developing competencies with newly appointed commanders formed a significant part of his involvement with the RUC at this time. One recalled:

"A two day programme was created looking at leadership and driving through change for the DCU commanders and each one of them got considerable feedback on their leadership and management capacities; team and personal. Each person's feedback was made visible to all, how they would operate as a team was made visible to all. And each person's feedback was to look at consequences of action: team consequences, as well as individual consequences." Interviewee 29

He went to comment on his surprise at the level of competency he encountered in his work with the DCU commanders and how that impacted upon the development of the new structures:

"What we noticed about the DCU commanders, and what I was amazed to find when I compared them with my private sector data base and my public service databases both in the UK and in Australia, was how capable these individuals were. One of the most difficult messages to get over was, if that group of DCU commanders, if they had been given half a chance and had been trained properly they would be able to basically manage one of the massive mergers and acquisitions between a Shell and a BP. Now obviously they don't have the technical experience of energy, oil or finance but their capacity as leaders and I'm only concentrating on that bit, rather than their functional expertise, that bit was superb and that showed itself both in the seminars and it showed itself in the various psychological tests we used so the evidence of leadership at critical positions in the organisation I felt were all in place. It was not a matter of

synergies and tying them together and it was a matter of sorting out the reality in the relationship between centre and DCU's". Interviewee 29

One of the key issues in terms of the appointment of DCU commanders was the decision to appoint people who had long, solid records within the organisation but who inevitably, would shortly retire or leave under voluntary severance. This decision has been criticised by many within and outside the police as a waste of resources and time, and serious concerns were raised about the appointment of people who were clearly not going to be in post for considerable lengths of time:

"....some were literally retiring in months of their appointment, again this was Ronnie Flanagan's style there was a dispute within the police about who should be appointed to be DCU commanders. Some people said, the radical thing to have done would have been to step over, pass over obvious people and go to a whole new generation. He didn't do that, because as I said at the start of the discussion, he's cautious ' if we go too fast maybe we'll lose people', so as I say, people were given the honour of becoming a Chief Superintendent before they retired, very good for your pension and your severance cheque". Interviewee 24

But others, while expressing and feeling frustration at the time, had a different perspective in hindsight:

"*at first some commanders were about to go in a year or two and I felt quite frustrated that we put people in post to set up a new structure for the future and they were going to be leaving us in a year or eighteen months but again, on reflection now, wiser and a little less impatient a few years later that was actually good in that, you know, if your commander was saying, we'll not be too concerned with this change, we'll not worry, people didn't worry about it too much, whereas if somebody had come in and said right everything's going to be different, the world is going to be different, your going to do things different it could have caused, god knows what. Now there was a lot of consternation during it mostly about, cause people at the ground level are really not thinking about Patten's seven chapters, they are thinking, where will I be tomorrow, am I going to have to travel any further, will I loose out any of my expenses, that's the sort of thing people focus on so. But the fact that commanders really didn't rush into it, its really interesting just looking back on it now.....I would say the commanders teams probably changed quite dramatically from that first year just looking through them, I would say from the twenty nine, twenty have changed, but the people that have taken over would have been their number two's so there's continuity there as well". Interviewee 15*

Again, one of the academics expressed his admiration for the ability of the initial group of commanders:

"Well the breakthroughs were I was astounded to see how open, and positive and capable the DCU commanders were, I just couldn't believe it. I had not seen such a level of capacity brought together in such a short space of time to pull such difficult stake holding interests together in any change process I had witnessed in the last 20 years". Interviewee 29

6.7.3 Cultural Change Work with DCU Commanders

The process of 'management support' was not the only 'training' underway within the organisation at that time. Mediation Northern Ireland (previously known as Mediation Network) is an extremely well regarded conciliation and intervention service who work within Northern Ireland and increasingly worldwide providing strategic community relations interventions. Mediation NI also has considerable credibility within all communities and began their work with the police on the understanding that they would work in a way which protected and retained the integrity of their own position as a mediation service in a divided society. Their work with the police had been on-going for some time at the point of District Commander training and they were initially cautious at first that the RUC had also engaged external consultants:

"We were a wee bit wary in case the police got a bit starry eyed about consultants and professors and were able to say that outsiders were dealing with this and run away from us. And so what we agreed was, we did what we wanted to do and that we would continue moving together. I would do an initial residential which was meant to be a sustained period of reflection with these cops to get them in a room about reconciliation, about community policing challenges in divided societies with DCU commanders. Now twenty three of the twenty nine came" Interviewee 24

While its possible to get some idea if what was happening at commander level in terms of training, the access constraints imposed on this research make it difficult to gauge views at lower levels. Research by Neil Jarman (Jarman 2000) on police training within lower ranks happening around the same time, does open window to views lower down the organisation. Jarman's interaction with the police occurred as part of the divisional training cycle during January and February 2000. During this period over 120 officers took part in the twelve training sessions facilitated by Jarman and colleagues. They included officers from Neighbourhood Units, Sections and Operational Support Units. Apart from one Inspector all officers were of the rank of Constable or Sergeant. They included both Full-Time and Full-Time Reserve Officers. Jarman comments:

"*Overall officers seemed to have a general understanding of the main points of the Patten Report, but few indicated any broader knowledge of how many of the recommendations interrelated. Perhaps more significantly, there appeared to be little idea of how or when any changes would be introduced although there was some degree of speculation. But this speculation tended to take a negative slant*". (Jarman, 2000)

Obviously the focus, content and aim of what community relations and mediation workers were doing with the Police was quantifiably different to the work of other external consultants. And they were also more acutely affected by environmental and political pressures. By maintaining, in all circumstances, their credibility and critical distance they were able to maintain a relationship that had a large degree of independence but enough engagement to be of value. Their work and interventions have been described by one key internal interviewee as '*rich dialogue... providing key leadership...helped people to think outside the box* ' (Interviewee 5). In an environment of rapid change, an internal 'sense-making' mechanism such as this was invaluable. Keeping things 'grounded' and 'real' seemed important. Ultimately for the District Commanders, the 'management' focused training seems to be have been most immediately useful. However for the wider process the more intangible work focused on community relations was regarded as more valuable. As one PSNI Assistant Chief Constable expressed:

"*I would be quite sanguine about the consultants – a lot of the consultants, I think, got their money for our work – consultants come in and tell you what you already know and that was my experience in this – now they were very nice people but this was such a major ...This is a situation where a lot of the change process was external to the organisation – it was political, it required major process change, major cultural change. It required leadership, particularly at middle management level to deliver it. Consequently it just wasn't that suitable for external consultants....But Mediation Network were very useful but that is only because they know the problem over here and the difficulties. That's what was important, that and the fact you met people who were touch stones for you*". Interviewee 5

6.7.4 Training Not Cascading down the Ranks

While considerable work was done with new DCU commanders, the Change Team had very little contact and no developed training programme for those in the next layer of leadership or in the tiers below. As one member of the change team reflected:

"*We trained commanders. We didn't train sergeants, we didn't train inspector and we didn't train chief inspectors*". Interviewee 15

This gap would have been significant in any organisation undergoing change, but in a situation where the top level had already and was continuing to change rapidly, it was potentially disastrous. The lack of follow up and linkages was acknowledged by one member of the change team:

"*We should have recognised either that we should have accepted that training weren't doing anything and bought in more training for them, and we did try to give commanders budgets, we did give them budgets to help them bring their management teams away for away days to understand the new role because what happened was normally staff devolved from the centre out to DCU commanders and DCU commanders devolved whole areas down to inspector. Inspectors who used to be on duty was just a supervisor really. Now they owned an area and had to make policing work in that area. And not all of them were up to it or had any training for it or it was different to how we did things in the past. So I think in a way we sort of let them down*". Interviewee 15

However, conducting training with DCU commanders without cascading it down the ranks was not the initial plan. At this point good practice collided again with realities on the ground as external events played a role. On Wednesday 12th December 2001 the Police Ombudsman's report into the Omagh bomb was published. The Report reached a number of damning conclusions about the role, behaviour and operational independence of Special Branch, and about the conduct of senior officers in relation to the investigation. The Report finished in these terms:

"*The Police Ombudsman has concluded, with great sadness that the judgement and leadership of the Chief Constable and ACC Crime have been seriously flawed. As a result of that, the chances of detaining and convicting the Omagh Bombers have been significantly reduced. The victims, their families, the people of Omagh and officers of the RUC have been let down by defective leadership, poor judgement and a lack of urgency. This should not have been the response to an incident which resulted in the death of twenty-nine people and two unborn children*" (Ombudsman 2001).

This Report was explosive in terms of the change process and the already embattled position of the Chief Constable. It was published less than two weeks after the RUC officially became the PSNI and caused an enormous political storm. Relatives of the bomb victims called for the Chief Constable's resignation. Other told of feeling 'utterly betrayed'. Those in the nationalist community, including the moderate SDLP who had always been unhappy with Flanagan's continued presence became openly hostile and shortly before its widely anticipated publication

Flanagan announced his intention to retire as Chief Constable. Most importantly, the Report highlighted the serious and persistent issue of Special Branch that was already complicating the Review of Headquarters. Original intentions to cascade DCU commanders training down the ranks quickly floundered. Within five months the PSNI had a new Acting Chief Constable in Colin Cramphorn and by September 2002 Hugh Orde had taken up the Chief Constable's position. As one of those facilitating DCU training put it:

"...when we started the development for DCU commanders that was the intention to filter it down and then we got the Omagh bomb and then we got Ronnie's disgrace, then we got Hugh Orde coming along and Hugh Orde basically put an end to all of this" Interviewee 29

As we shall see later in this section, Orde's perspective on the change process was markedly different to that of Flanagan's. Another academic working with the organisation, put forward a very stark perspective on the impact of the rapidity of change and the gaps in capacity building down the ranks:

"We're left with a bunch of superintendents who were absolutely crucial to the change process but to my mind that they were never worked with. The change in Chief Constable didn't help; it would be hard to find a change process which had all or some more of the characteristics of disaster that this one did". Interviewee 20

So leadership instability at the highest level, instigated by unforeseen external events impacted upon the process in a profound way. Another respondent reflected on the loss of Flanagan at this juncture and the effect it had on pursuing training for change beyond the DCU Commanders:

"But with everything he (Flanagan) did, it was a balancing act of maintaining all these different influences so that the initiative for change could be transferred from the Centre and the Assistant Chiefs to {get to} know the DCU commanders in such a way that they would have some sort of corporate understanding of how they would need to handle the change process and that is why his presence was so important, because we were just about at that point of transfer. Had it just been six months later, let alone a year, we would have had the basis of a new form of leadership to drive through that change. It just wasn't reached - that just wasn't reached". Interviewee 29

Other participants in the process pinpointed the missed links in the training processes:

"We focused on, we did all we could do in a way, we focused on commanders and that was the right thing to do, but I still think below that, we should have spent more time with sergeants, inspector, chief inspectors. Not only that, selling the change to them. Selling the reasons and explaining the rationale. You can't accept that everyone has read Patten, you know. So all they

saw was sort of structural changes and we relied on commanders to some extent to do that and some did it more than others but the centre [Police HQ] didn't do anything and I feel that that was wrong". Interviewee 15

However this participant pinpointed a series of more complex reasons for the difficulties that resulted from a failure to cascade training down:

"They got their structures in place, they got their people in place and they started to, you know be influenced by the training they got, by the Oversight Commissioners and their visits and that was useful to the Commanders to explain. By then the evaluators from the Oversight Commission had got their heads round, you know, what sort of organisation we were and what sort of organisation we were trying to be, so the combination of all of that, the commanders started to take off, and deliver, and some of them were so far ahead, well, there is a scale like everything, some are at the top of that scale and some at the bottom. Others who didn't change that much. They might have had new structures but they just continued to do things the way we did it. That's the reality of life". Interviewee 15

While the transfer of leadership at the top levels certainly had an impact on the process, the structural change to a DCU model and the training provided for initial commanders seems to have given some sort of foundation at least upon which to drive through the process. The experienced nature of the first set of DCU Commanders gave trainers a structure to work with. It may well be that the combination of some support in terms of logistics (financial planning and the like) as well as the prospect of 'failing' publicly in front of new District Policing Partnership's usefully concentrated minds.

6.7.5 Symbolic Shift: Name, Badge, Uniform and Oath to the Queen

"I remember a meeting in which somebody said to me - a person from the Federation said to me, 'we're going to fight this to the bitter end', and I said, 'why does it have to be a bitter end?' " Interviewee 30

The transfer to new District Command Unit structure and the appointment of District Commanders were concrete and visible outworking of the change process. On the ground level, they were the clearest early indication that the structure and local accountability mechanisms were changing. However, while this process was difficult and complex logistically, it had lacked the symbolic resonance which surrounded the change in the name, badge, flag and uniform of the

Royal Ulster Constabulary. Chapter Three explores in a linear way, the history and conflict of Northern Ireland and the central role of policing and justice within that conflict. As we see in Chapter Three, the contested nature of policing and the lack of significant Catholic participation in the RUC meant that the police did not have the confidence of the nationalist community. The events of the late 1990's and particularly the Drumcree stand off exacerbated this situation still further. The name, badge, flag and uniform of the RUC with its references to the British crown and its oath to the Queen, became synonymous with loyalty to the state, or rule by it. One of the major issues, and that which was most contentious in the Patten Report was the change of name, badge and oath. In this section we will look at the impact of these changes on the RUC and how their implementation was managed.

6.7.6 The 'Great Hurt'

As we have seen in in Phase 1 of this Chapter, a firestorm of criticism which was directed at the Patten Commission over this aspect of their Report. This anger came from a broad spectrum that included unionist politicians (including the then First Minister David Trimble), some Protestant churches, the Police Federation, the RUC Widow's Association, the British Conservative Party and some of it gathered together in a campaign run by the Daily Telegraph under the slogan – '*Defend the RUC, They Defended us*'. Margaret Thatcher made a statement abhorring the name change and even the Queen was reported to have made private comments to members of the RUC linking the name change to '*the meddling of politicians*' (Gordon 2005). Sir Ronnie Flanagan was more guarded in his remarks, but likened a change of name to '*a great hurt*' that would only be worthwhile if it guaranteed the future involvement and participation of the Catholic community in future policing (BBC 2001). However, the acceptance of the Patten Commission's Report by the RUC in late 1999 and the eventual progress of a much amended Police Bill and Act through 2000 and 2001 saw the decision to rename the police service and begin the process of identifying new symbols and a new oath. It is important to reflect upon the fact that these significant decisions which materially affected how the organisation represented itself (referred to by Flanagan as the '*brand by which it was known in the policing world*' (BBC 2001) were not made by the organisation itself, although its views were sought and articulated in the strongest terms. Decisions on the name, badge, oath and uniform were outside the authority

of the organisation and were subject to political control and negotiation. At this point it might be useful to recap the legislative process of change which heralded such a symbolic shift.

6.7.7 The Police Bill and Act 2000 and Amendments 2001

The UK Government published the original Police (Northern Ireland) Bill on 16 May 2000. An Implementation Plan containing the Government's response to each of Patten's 175 recommendations (dealing with all aspects of policing including the Policing Board and the District Policing Partnerships) was issued on 6 June. The Bill was criticised by the SDLP who raised 44 separate amendments within the House of Commons. The Bill was also criticised by the Police Ombudsman, the Police Authority, the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission and Amnesty International. The central thrust of this criticism was that the Bill weakened Patten's proposals on police control and accountability. Patten's Report envisaged a strong and independent Policing Board linked to a system of District Policing Partnerships (DPP's). Unionists were opposed to this and referred to it as "Balkanisation" of the police. The other key areas where the Bill failed to follow Patten were: the proposed Oversight Commissioner; the proposed provision on transparency and accountability in relation to the powers of the new Policing Board to initiate inquiries, and; the proposed provisions on human rights in the new police service. Amendments were made to the Bill before it received its Royal Assent on 23 November 2000. Although the SDLP and Sinn Féin accepted that some of their concerns had been dealt with, sufficient changes had not been made to enable them to support nominations to the new Police Board or recommend that Catholics join the new Police Service. For the SDLP everything hinged on Secretary of State Mandelson's implementation plan that set out when and how various aspects of the policing changes in the Act would come into effect. On 24 January 2001 Peter Mandelson resigned from the government and was replaced as Secretary of State by the former Scottish Secretary Dr John Reid. After detailed discussions at Weston Park in July, Reid published on 17 August a 75-page Implementation plan outlining in detail changes to be made to the RUC as it was transformed into the Police Service of Northern Ireland. The new plan included substantial changes to the Policing Board and powers of investigation of police operations.

Sinn Fein rejected the document which they claimed fell short of expectations. However, on the

20th August 2001 the SDLP announced that they would endorse it and called on Catholics to support the new Service. The Irish Government and the Catholic Church in Ireland had already indicated they would support the plan.

In a thirty year break with tradition the SDLP agreed to nominate members to the new Policing Board and some weeks later, on 21st September the UUP and the DUP also agreed to nominate. The new Board had ten political members and nine non-political members.

On the 4th of November 2001 the RUC changed its name to the Police Service of Northern Ireland and on the 12th December the Police Board unanimously agreed on a badge for the new service. The emblem features a St Patrick's Cross surrounded by six symbols - a harp, crown, shamrock, laurel leaf, torch and scales of justice. In the Police Act the title of the new service contains the reference "incorporating the RUC".

6.7.8 Symbolic Change

Unlike the detail involved in creating new District Command Units or the process of recruiting new Commanders, planning and implementing symbolic change meant putting into practice external decisions and managing uncomfortable outcomes for the organisation. While the District Command Units illustrated the structural nature of change, changing the symbols that represented the RUC went to the very heart of the change process for both the organisation itself, and the political constituencies who were closely observing and in some cases, determining outcomes. It is not surprising that the change of symbols and name was not included in the RUC's own Fundamental Review, and that this is the area that was resisted most strongly inside and outside the organisation. However, such change would not have come as a surprise. We have already seen (in Phase I) that Ronnie Flanagan was making reference to a possible change of name as far back as 1996 in informal speeches, and a change in name and symbols was always one of the major demands of nationalists who had remain stubbornly outside the policing framework. As Seamus Mallon, former Deputy First Minister and former Deputy Leader of the SDLP commented:

"Any young man from within the Catholic community in what probably would have been termed a hard-line nationalist area, when he starts to think if he will join the police service, he will not be reading the legislation. He will be judging it on what he sees.

If the first thing he sees is a flag he does not particularly adhere to and an emblem he does not particularly adhere to, then I pose the question: Will he be disposed to joining the service?" (BBC 2000)

However, these views were dismissed by many who saw the name and badge as symbolic of the sacrifice and loss of many members of the Force through the Troubles. The previous Chief Constable Sir Hugh Annesley had dismissed such historic objectives as recently as 1996:

'I accept there are differences....but if a clock is losing time you don't break it – you adjust it. He said the name of the RUC should only be changed if the majority of people in the province wish it to happen' (Belfast Telegraph 1996c)

Therefore, even more so than other aspects of the change, symbolic re-imaging required a dual approach: logistical organisation on one hand, and sensitivity to organisational loyalties on the other. However, just over a year later the political landscape had changed to such an extent that the new Chief Constable Ronnie Flanagan first acknowledged the possibility of name change in Commons NI Affairs Select Committee Nov 1997, after having previously addressed the issue in an October lecture to the Church of Ireland. Flanagan's tone was clear; he was not afraid of change but not supporting change for change sake (Belfast Telegraph 1997). The Police Federation, by contrast was firmly opposed to change and commented:

'any change to our name is unacceptable to our membership, our widows and our injured' (Belfast Telegraph 1998)

The organisational environment then was one of general resistance to the sort of symbolic shift which had been outlined in Patten and which, it was feared by many, would spell the end of the RUC. It's important at this point to reflect again on the external environment and the unstable position of the political structures and the constant political horse trading, with the police as a significant bartering chip. It is clear from an analysis of internal documentation that while a change in name, badge and other symbols was hovering around the sidelines and was obviously going to be part of the change process, it did not fit neatly within a particular work stream. Rather it ran through areas such as marketing and communication, shared values, style etc. The area of culture was firmly within the grasp of the change manager himself, Tim Lewis. This is

hardly surprising given the sensitivities within the organisation. One thing was clear: the political process was both the driver and constraint on symbolic change. As one member of the change team commented:

"The first bit of legislation came in, in 2000. I think that was the driver for those issues. The legislation was the driver. Once the legislation changed then obviously we had to change recruitment. Fifty – fifty, the name and the badge, so that's the driver for those". Interviewee 15

As we have seen above, this first 'bit' of legislation was the enormously contested Police Act 2000, which was rejected by the SDLP and Sinn Fein and resulted in a refusal of both these parties to join the newly established police board. However the Weston Park talks and the policing plan published by the Secretary of State in August of 2001 made it possible for the SDLP to join the Policing Board and for the change of name and badge to proceed. This created a number of logistical issues. One of these of particular sensitivity concerned Remembrance Sunday in 2001, at which point the organisation had no new badge, but did have a new name – The Police Service of Northern Ireland. This name change occurred on November 4th, but on October 29th the organisation announced to nationalist uproar that wreaths laid on behalf of the PSNI at Remembrance Sunday would bear the RUC insignia. One senior civilian member reflects on the difficulties this posed:

" the timing was very unfortunate because the change of name of the service was within a few days of remembrance Sunday and that was a very big deal for us at the time significantly. What were we going to do how were we going to lay wreaths. We didn't have a badge as I recall for the new police service at that point in time we had RUC wreaths. Now these sound like small things but actually symbolically very significant. And we agreed that we would lay wreaths on this occasion on the basis of the RUC because we had nothing else. And we could also put down police service but we had no logo type or anything for the wreaths but people were watching this politically internally and externally to what signals we were sending". Interviewee 12

6.7.9 Clean Walls

Changing the name represented a significant point of the symbolic changes that saw the police change from RUC to PSNI. Their implementation is the main focus of this section. The first significant change was the neutral working environmental policy, introduced on October 4th and resulting in a 'clean walls' policy. This meant that pictures, posters and RUC memorabilia had to

be removed from offices and buildings from that date. One member of the senior team commented:

"I mean in most of our police stations in the year 2001 if you went into them you would find the walls covered with mementos of the various battalions and so on and so forth that had served with our officers. Every unit that came to Springfield road, for example well say you know, men of the forty six highland.... maybe they would have got pictures done like of them out with search dogs or helicopters and all this sort of stuff and that was their way of marking an historical thing the military always did". Interviewee 12

Another member of the change team reflected:

"there was a lot of ... anxiety about the neutral working environment issue. That probably caused people some more anxiety and there was a lot of misinformation.
(JM) You mean over flags?
No, not even that. Pictures. There was all sorts of rumours, people said clean walls, you weren't allowed to have anything to do with the RUC on the walls, that would be wiped out, that caused a lot of hurt and a lot of pain and still does". Interviewee 15

In an interesting turn of events, the police developed a strategy to catalogue and archive articles and pictures that had been gifts to the Force or that had been previously displayed in public areas or private offices:

"it had to be checked out with the military, the military were content, they understood, and we actually then created a cataloguing process where these things were taken off the wall, and catalogued and hived of to the RUC museum but there was annoyance about that" Interviewee 12

Two exceptions were made to this policy. The first was over montage to murdered colleagues, which also extended to memorials in stations. There was some resistance to this decision politically, but it was one on which the organisation refused to budge:

"There was pressure behind the scenes to have these things moved as well from the political parties and we said we're not doing that, because that would have been a question of airbrushing the past and more than we were prepared to tolerate and the organisation would not have tolerated it and would have jeopardised, something as small but as big as that if you see what I mean, could have jeopardised the change processes". Interviewee 12

The other exception was a '*graduation photograph or a passing out photograph*', which was regarded as less contentious. What's interesting is that this policy, although extremely difficult in its introduction, was implemented with a degree of ease and had some other unexpected benefits:

"The amazing thing was when the order went out and again it comes back to the pragmatic thing of it from when the order went out to the reviewing of it ... we found that a clean bill of health from the audit process. So that was a big thing as well. Its quite a difficult thing and we used that as well to make sure that all the other rubbish that you sometimes see in any organisation, inappropriate posters that relate to women and all that, we got rid of all of that". Interviewee 12

Perhaps the 'command and control' culture of the organisation facilitated this transition, or the compromise in terms of graduation or 'passing out' photographs helped to ease concerns. The collective nature of the process meant that everyone carried out the order simultaneously which may also have assisted what might otherwise have been a much more difficult procedure.

6.7.10 Changing the Name

A series of rapidly moving events now occurred. The first of these was Flanagan's public announcement on the 2nd of November that he was planning to retire. The name change itself occurred on November 4th, which was also the first day of training for new officers recruited into the PSNI. On November the 15th, the PSNI was granted £1million in financial aid to build the RUC memorial garden within the grounds of PSNI Headquarters. Before and between these events, measures were being taken to communicate the changes within the organisation. These were by any measure necessary as sickness levels were at an all time high and moral was reported to be at an all time low[25]. The difficulty of changing the name was reflected and communicated by members of the change team:

"I think the main barrier was the change in the name and change in the uniform. And I think it there was a sort of a general resistance, I mean particularly people who had been in the RUC for a very long time and who had been personally affected - who had lost colleagues, lost relatives during the troubles. That was a difficult thing for the organisation to handle. I mean those people had, could identify with a lot of very traumatic things that had happened in the past and you know, I think really the sort of watershed was the change in name. I think there was sort of a slow movement up until that point and after that it really started to progress and progress quickly". Interviewee 14

Again, rumours and scaremongering sent shivers of fear through the organisation. These concerns tended to focus on severance, or on recruitment (that serving officers would have to

[25] On November the 2nd, the Police Federation issued a statement claiming that moral was at an all time low, as a result of management 'rushing' change (Belfast Telegraph 3rd Nov 2001)

reapply for their jobs for example), that ex IRA members would be appointed to senior posts, or that members of the force were already mobilising and prepared to take quasi industrial action:

"There were all sorts of rumours, they were going to do this or that, there was going to be a green flu day". Interviewee 30

The general consensus among interviewees was that many of these rumours were '*put about*' for political reasons, in an attempt, however late in the day to influence the change process. However, Flanagan in his private and public announcements to those against the change kept to one clear message:

"Look, this Title and this Crest - let nobody here be in any doubt, it means as much to me as it means to anybody. But as an organisation which is no stranger to pain, if we get the great gain of young Catholic men and women, if this is a chill factor to prevent young Catholic men and women coming forward to join our organisation in numbers that we have never ever been able to achieve in the past, then that great pain will be worth the pain of the change in the title and the crest. Now I said, so any programme that is embarked upon to prevent this has to be one with an eye to the future so that if it actually doesn't happen we don't all have to pack up and go, yes you can make this clear of the how much this means but we should all actually be singing from the same hymn sheet, and that will be my constant message: I believe in my heart that that pain will be worth the great gain, if the gain can be brought about". Interview with Ronnie Flanagan

Among those interviewed many identified Flanagan's local background and consistent engagement with the rank and file as the key to carrying through the most difficult points of the process. Another pinpointed the particular qualities in Flanagan that allowed him to lead the organisation through such contested territory:

"Ronnie Flanagan was a local boy – there was a feeling that he had a feel for what was going on – I hope he doesn't mind me saying this because you might interview him – I think Ronnie Flanagan was the man for his moment – he was tremendous at bringing people along – I always described him as – he reminded me of a consultant who would bring the patient in to the theatre but he was probably never going to operate himself. He was very very good at bringing the RUC into a very difficult and new environment but he knew that he probably wasn't going to be the one who was going to have to take the scalpel out and start doing major surgery but he was absolutely excellent at preparing us for everything that was going to come and of course it was him that had to facilitate the introduction of Patton – he had deal with all the pain of Patton, both internally and externally. So I think in that sense a tremendous leader – he had the charisma and he had the ability to be able to bring people maybe beyond where they were at present". Interviewee 21

This was underlined by Flanagan's particular style, a relatively emotional and relaxed attitude:

"I think Flanagan was a very charismatic leader and I think he was able to nurse the organisation through what I think were very painful times for a lot of people. Like he went on publicly and spoke of his sadness about the name change and what it meant to him – outside that resonated with a lot of the rank and file whereas if he had taken a much colder, blunter approach in the terms of 'that is a Patton recommendation and I support it and that's it' – he was able to sugar the pill a lot and probably to that point he assisted the change process just by sugaring the pill but he was still nudging the organisation forward". Interviewee 3

This fire fighting effort was carried through to other levels of the organisation as well, as one ACC recalls:

"In Belfast me and my commanders set up forums in every police district and those meetings were hot and heavy and we sat with maybe fifty sixty people and talked it through the issues". Interviewee 30

This message didn't always get through and while some within the Change Team acknowledge that they could have communicated more or better, one senior member put forward a different perspective:

"So the difficulty of the communication system was that sometimes you were passing messages that people did not want to hear – because they did not want the RUC to end – certainly at the beginning of the stage this was one of the problems and we got people saying ' ah this is .....nobody talks to us' but actually people did talk to them and they did hear messages, Ronnie Flanagan was running around all over the districts talking to people – we were putting out messages, we then put out newspapers but they didn't like the message which is different that saying 'nobody is talking to me'. Also they couldn't understand why this was being implemented – it was being implemented because it was government policy but also it was being implemented because a large number of us actually thought it was a good idea". Interviewee 5

One argument that was used related to the close working relationship between the RUC and the British Army in NI and may have helped make sense of the change for some of those resisters, at least:

"You know in many ways the fact that we have a close association with the army was a big assistance, because the army were saying to us when there was all this worry about changing the uniform and title. They said, look at all the change we've been through with the disbandment of regiments, the reformation the reorganisation. In many ways it must be quite similar and it's was a good lesson to quote and we quote it to police officers, look at all the army regiments that have

been compiled into one and you don't see them kicking up a big fuss, yes the politicians talk about the Black Watch (regiment) but in fact these thing go on all the time". Interviewee 12

Interestingly, the actual moment of change-over was low key and straightforward. Flanagan himself had made it clear that the day of the change was irrelevant – that his organisation was still the same the day after, as the day before:

"And I kept saying and I said it in a public statement to our people at midnight in 2001 when the RUC became the PSNI the men and women didn't become different people at midnight". Interviewee 7

A senior member of the change team spoke of the anticlimax that accompanied the name change after the concerns that had preceded it:

"It was a very big issue before it happened, in the build up. When it happened it was nothing. It was done like that and it was just, but the build up to it there was a lot of anxiety about it and more anxiety about the neutral working environment issue". Interviewee 15

The beginning of severance and the change of the name and badge set down a marker for the impact of the change process on the organisation:

"Lots of change met no resistance because it was a better way of doing business but some of those heart-in-pocket issues which are always the difficult ones which effect peoples heart and their sentiment or you effect them in the money into their pocket are issues. So the actual name change and the change of the badge I found crystallised the change initially". Interviewee 3

6.7.11 Communicating the Change: Brand PSNI

With the change of name and the acceptance by the SDLP of seats on the newly established Policing Board, the task in hand changed from managing the internal difficulties of an emotional shift to the logistical details of communicating the new name, developing a new badge and creating new uniforms, vehicle livery's and signage. The badge itself after much discussion was agreed quickly and unexpectedly in December 2001, at the first meeting of the new Policing Board. The deadline dictated by the need to attach the badge to new uniforms helped to concentrate minds somewhat and the badge itself contained a plethora of symbols; a laurel leaf, a torch, a crown, a shamrock, a harp and scales surrounding the cross of St Patrick all set on a six

pointed star. The badge itself is a classic example of the kind of political negotiation which has characterised external engagement in the change process.

Figure 1 PSNI Badge

In terms of the PSNI's own media and marketing process, Weber Shandwick, who were engaged as PR consultants by the organisation put in place a very clear strategy to communicate the change as widely and as deeply as possible. The person who lead the account within Weber Shandwick NI, described the detailed process by which the firm set out to gain some recognition of the new name and badge:

"Well in the media relations side there were significant briefings with journalists to make sure that they understood that there was significant work undertaken with local politicians, councillors and all sorts of people at all sorts of levels to ensure that they understood what the process was about and that they knew the new name. The badge as well I think helped because while at the early stages whilst there were views that cynics would have said 'well the Policing Board who actually commissioned the design of the badge itself would never get agreement on that' and they did – they got unanimous agreement" Interviewee 25

The new uniform was introduced to coincide with the graduation of the first PSNI recruits who had started their training on the day of the name change. It was at this point in April 2002 that the badge began to be worn by officers. This created some problems for the PSNI recruitment campaigns since the new uniforms were not available until this point. From a communications point of view it was vital that the uniform and the badge were easily and readily recognisable to the public:

"again we put together a very defined communications package to make sure that people recognised the uniform very quickly because the outside world you needed to make sure that the Police uniform was very easily and very quickly recognisable even just from the very practical point of view that you didn't feel they were masquerading as police officers or trying to do take

offs of the badge and so forth. So you probably still see quite a lot of the images on TV yet because they tend to keep using these where we got them to do like a road show with the uniform using their own staff as opposed to using models. Now again you were aware that that took a lot of courage from the young men and older men and women who agreed to be the models because this was then actually out in the limelight – their photographs, them walking down a cat walk right across the world and up to that we had some worries about security and so forth but they did it and I think that too sent a tremendous signal both internally and externally". Interviewee 25

The difficulties in developing a uniform with a nine to twelve month production lead time and the lack of political certainty on how it should look also presented certain organisational challenges. The ACC who was charged with developing the uniform and livery recalls the difficulties he and his team faced:

"one of my projects was, the whole look and feel of the organisation. The uniform, vehicles, badge and signage etc. For a long time we were held static because we had Police Authority in place and we'd wanted a new uniform for years. The Federation had been in and had been sitting on a working party with us designing a new uniform because our uniform was thirty five years of age. Police women were still working in skirts that they couldn't run in them. So we had this running in the background and to provide a new uniform for the new PSNI was a twelve month lead. We were saying to Government, if you want this for a new organisation starting now you've got to give us nine – twelve months notice to procure it. And at the same time we didn't have anywhere to validate politically, validate the new designs. How do you ...We were waiting for the new dispensation and we knew as soon as the police board came into existence they'd want there say on this, so we were sort of stuck in limbo". Interviewee 30

While the uniform raised political issues, for many the concerns raised in the widespread consultation were more practical:

"A lot of the comments that came back were political but when you actually went down to that level and said 'what do you think about this' you got some politically motivated comments 'I don't want to loose the badge' or I don't want this 'cause its Patten' but the vast majority were concerned about the design, how would it wash, what about these trousers, are they lined?." Interviewee 30

The graduation of the first recruits on the 5th of April 2001 was itself a controversial event as Ronnie Flanagan, no longer Chief Constable (he had retired on the 31st of March) but still in the eye of the storm over the Omagh enquiry attended the graduation in an honorary role, to the fury of the SDLP who threatened to boycott it. Also in attendance was the Garda Commissioner Pat

Byrne, which lead to other threats of boycott by Unionists if Commissioner Byrne was to make a public address (BBC 2002). But getting to this stage, with the enormous difficulties and problems encountered at all levels, was an organisational achievement. As one external commentator reflected:

"In many ways the least important change was the most significant change because it indicated change can happen and it was the change of the badge, the symbol. It was insignificant because what does it mean in terms of good policemen – it means nothing. But in terms of the symbolism of Northern Ireland about change itself it was highly significant in that it showed that change could be achieved without walking all over both traditions, either or all of the traditions in the North of Ireland and secondly it showed that this Board could actually bring that about and drive it through and achieve a win-win situation for everyone and I think it gave the Board status – it gave it a very good beginning to the point now that nobody ever notices. But it was an indication that change could happen – that was a big breakthrough". Interviewee 18

6.7.12 Initiating a Legacy

There were obviously significant legacy issues in terms of managing the history and past of the RUC, while moving into a new era as the PSNI. The first and most unique of these was the award of the George Cross to the organisation as a whole, presented almost immediately the Government had made the decision to move forward with Patten's proposals. The Police Act of 2000 saw the establishment of the Royal Ulster Constabulary George Cross (RUCGC) Foundation which had the aim of *"marking the sacrifices and honouring the achievements of the Royal Ulster Constabulary"* (RUCGC 2008). It commenced work in December 2001 and has its genesis in a meeting between Flanagan and the RUC Widows Association:

"I wanted to be able to say to the Widows Association, I know how deeply you feel about this, and by in large, they were virtually all men who died, there were a couple of female colleagues here and there, but by in large, it was a widow's association and they felt very deeply that their husbands had died for the Royal Ulster Constabulary. That the Crest of the Royal Ulster Constabulary was on their headstones and when I said in this period before Patten was actually published, look if this does happen, and I'd made inquiries to make sure it was able to deliver it, I said if these does happen, I said, I promise, I'll have you built the most beautiful garden of remembrance that will always be the garden of remembrance of the RUC GC even though it happens to be in the Headquarters of the NIPS or police service of northern Ireland, or whatever the new title might be, and what I found it most inspirational was that they said to me, that's lovely and of course we would support that, but can you not think of something that looks to the future and it was like a light going on: I immediately thought what about something like a Churchill Fellowship, was about the RUC GC Foundation". Interviewee 7

Another of the legacy protections as we have seen above, was the cataloguing and archiving of military memorabilia and RUC insignia. Perhaps the most emotive issues in this regard related to memorials to dead colleagues which remained in police headquarters and in local stations. Recent attempts have been made to develop reminiscence projects with ex RUC officers to form a verbal archive of experiences and individual history.

Overall, the development of new symbols and a brand for the PSNI is regarded as a successful aspect of the process in general. There is little doubt that it was the most controversial and most difficult aspect of the change but there is evidence to suggest that the new symbols have had their desired effect:

"I think the Communications Audit is about 2 years old now but we are reviewing that again, or Austin's people are. One of the biggest and strongest brand names in Northern Ireland was the RUC and the heart and the crown and if you realise that in a short period of time we have created a completely new brand name in PSNI and a symbol identified with that and we have carried that through into areas for example, onto our buildings, onto our vehicles, onto our uniform – and also electronically through our web site, internet and all that – so they have been tremendous". Interviewee 6

The next section (Phase IV) will look at the impact of a new Change Manager (Dec 2001) on the change process, the events leading to the departure of the Chief Constable Ronnie Flanagan and the impact of leadership change at the top on the process.

Major Events: Phase III	
6th Sept	Establishment of the change team under Tim Lewis
9th Sept	Publication of Patten
Sept - Dec	Change Team recruited
Dec 23rd Dec	Flanagan contacts A. Kakabadse and asks him to assist Lewis writes to change team advising them of process
2000	
24th Jan	Meeting of key stakeholders to progress main change issues
29th Jan	South African exchange
15th Feb	Position paper on culture distributed to top team
29th Feb	Award of George Cross collectively to RUC

13th April	Decision to pursue a 'Vision of Success'
April	Creation of 'operational inspectorate'
May	Appointment of Tom Constantine as Oversight Commissioner
June	Release and withdrawal of first Gov Implementation Plan on Patten
Sept	Vision of Success – responses
Oct	Consolidated Vision of Success
Nov	Original aim for DCU implementation – moved to April 01
Dec	MNI facilitated visit to San Diego
2001	
Jan	Identification of DCU commanders
April	DCU implementation
August	Revised Implementation Plan Catholic Church, Irish Government and SDLP endorse PSNI and call for Catholics to join
Nov 4th Nov 15th	Title changes from RUC to PSNI First new recruits begin training PSNI granted £1million funding for RUC memorial garden
Dec Dec 12th	Tim Lewis takes early retirement. New Change Manager appointed (ACC Sam Kincaid) Policing Board meet and agree new PSNI badge and symbols Police Ombudsman Report into Omagh Bomb Published

Table 5 Major Events: Phase III

6.8 PHASE IV: A NEW CHANGE MANAGER, A NEW CHIEF AND THE 'SETTLING DOWN' OF CHANGE

6.8.1 Introduction

Just as the change of name and badge signified a new beginning for police in Northern Ireland, Ronnie Flanagan's intention to retire further underlined the move into a new era. Since his appointment as Chief Constable in 1996, Flanagan had been the public face of an organisation. His local roots, long standing service, high media profile, background in Special Branch and most of all, his easy manner all served to focus attention on him as a charismatic leader. However, longstanding distrust between him and nationalist politicians meant that he was always a visible reminder of the past and was regarded by those constituencies as a hindrance to the vision of a new police service. Even with those variables, Flanagan's position was initially strong given his close relationship with Prime Minister Blair and various Secretary's of State. It was the Omagh bomb enquiry which hastened Flanagan's departure. This section will look at the departure of Flanagan and the appointment of Hugh Orde as the new Chief Constable of the PSNI. It will also look at the appointment of a new Change Manager in ACC, Sam Kincaid, and how that impacted upon the ongoing change process. Finally it will make some assessment of how far change had got in 2002, and the trajectory which it still follows.

6.8.2 The Omagh Bomb and Police Ombudsman's Report

The Omagh bombing occurred in August 1999, just months after the Belfast Agreement and the establishment of the Patten Commission. The bomb represented the biggest single loss of life in any single atrocity of the Troubles, and was perpetrated by the Real IRA. With 29 people dead, the attack was condemned by all sides of political opinion. John Hume, Leader of the SDLP, called the perpetrators '*undiluted fascists*'. The RUC pledged to find and bring to justice those who had both planted the bomb and rang in the vague and inaccurate warnings which had caused people to be moved into the area around the bomb, instead of away from it. Investigations continued for nearly two years with no convictions. On 29 July 2001, the 'Sunday People' newspaper carried as its lead story revelations and allegations from a man described as a former British security force agent, given the name of Kevin Fulton. The Sunday People newspaper

article, leading with the headline "*I told cops about Omagh*", suggested that the Omagh Bomb could have been prevented had the police acted on the information which Kevin Fulton had provided. On 2 August 2001 the Police Ombudsman informed the Chief Constable, by telephone, that she was making some tentative enquiries into the reports in the Sunday People newspaper in relation to the Omagh bombing. The Chief Constable promised full co-operation (Ombudsman 2001). On 14 August 2001, having carried out initial enquiries, the Police Ombudsman informed the Chief Constable that she had decided to carry out a formal investigation to ascertain any information of relevance to the bombing was available to the RUC prior to the Omagh Bomb, and if such information did exist, whether it had been responded to appropriately by the RUC. The Police Ombudsman's Report was published on the 12th December 2001 and was damning of both the initial police investigation into the Omagh Bomb, the review of the investigation, the role of Special Branch and the leadership of Ronnie Flanagan. It concluded:

...If these matters and the recommendations in this Report are dealt with in a very positive way, then the new Police Service of Northern Ireland will be healthier, more professional and more effective as a result. What is outlined here will take no little courage and self-examination, but positive consideration of it will be a good investment. This report presents windows of opportunity, it is not designed to be destructively critical and it is not directed at the foundations and most of the superstructure of the RUC. Leadership failure is identified but the recommendations are designed to recover, as far as is possible, lost ground". (Ombudsman 2001)

Flanagan, no doubt aware of the direction the report was moving in announced his intention to retire on the 30th of November, just prior to its publication. The timing of this is significant and while many of those working with the organisation closely link Flanagan's intention to retire to the Police Ombudsman's Report over Omagh, its seems more likely that the Flanagan may have altered his planned announcement slightly to precede the Report, rather than be accused of retiring because of it. The intention however, appears to have been there already as Flanagan had talked openly of his wish to go once the PSNI was up and running.(UTV 2001). Whatever the reasons, his announcement of his intention to leave had repercussions on the change process. While Flanagan had announced his intention to go at the end of November, he did not actually leave until the end of March the next year (2002), after accepting an invitation from the Police Board to delay his departure. This decision was extremely controversial at the time, and was only taken under the casting vote of the Chair, Sir Des Rea. The SDLP who had taken up their seats

on the Policing Board the year before were totally opposed to his staying on and Alex Attwood, the SDLP's Policing Spokesman described Flanagan as a 'lame duck' Chief Constable. Similar controversy surrounded the appointment of Hugh Orde to the post of Chief Constable on the end of May. Orde, who had previously worked on the Stephen's Enquiry into RUC collusion with loyalist paramilitaries, was a Deputy Assistant Commissioner with the Metropolitan police in London. As an external candidate he was in competition with three of the RUC's former ACC's. While it is normal practice for interview panels to be confidential a number of members of the panel in this case spoke to the press and it became very clear that Orde's appointment had been opposed by unionist members (because he was an external candidate) and supported by nationalists (for the same reason). The depth of feeling was such that Unionist members of the Board failed to turn up to the press conference announcing his appointment. Orde took up his post on the 1st Sept, and in the interim, Deputy Chief Constable Colin Cramphorn (who had been effectively sidelined from the change process) became acting Chief.

6.8.3 A New Change Manager

ACC Tim Lewis, who had been the Change Manager from the beginning of the process took severance himself at the end of 2001. Lewis's retirement, shortly before Flanagan's himself saw the change process shift significantly from the complicated, process-based analytical approach accepted by Lewis and designed by Robin Campbell, to what many characterised as a more straightforward and pragmatic approach of the new Change Manager, ACC Sam Kincaid. Kincaid's approach was focused squarely on Patten and the need to achieve the performance targets set by the Oversight Commission and sign off as many as possible, as quickly as possible as a measure of progress. One of his colleagues commented:

"Sam Kincaid eventually coming in gave them a lot more clarity, for example, we tried to run the project on a project management basis so we would have asked them to do a project initation document which is a classic project management tool which sets out their task, their resources and their actions – what they are going to do and we ask them to try to utilise methodology breaking their work down into chunks and sequencing the time taken to develop a critical path and we created this fairly sophisticated reporting mechanism where you had a project central and each of them would have terminals they could update and it just didn't work – it was too complicated....It might have worked in British Airways or in a private industry but it wasn't going to work in a public sector organisation undergoing massive change with people who you know and one of the big things too – all of these people involved in this work had their jobto do

at the end of the day and I think that looking back there were points where we really over complicated and over intellectualised it and I think Sam Kincaid coming in gave us a lot of clarity – we still kept the good parts but stripped away some of the .. you know maybe we were building a Rolls Royce when what we really needed was a good Mondeo". Interviewee 3

This approach represented a change in focus for many on the change team which in turn required a different approach to move the process forward. One recalled a conversation early on with the new Change Manager:

"I said to him 'Sir, ... I am not being critical, but I have been working under Mr Lewis's direction and he wanted this a certain way – are you now saying as the change manager that this is what you want'. And he said '.... the bottom line is this is what the Commission will be looking for and more importantly this is what the Policing Board will be saying to us – the Oversight Commission created a template, we want you to sign up to it'. And that, to be honest with you, was real good news for me because that gave real direction". Interviewee 17

One issue that was moved forward with the new change manager was the integration of Special Branch into the Crime Department. This was a controversial and disputed area, and access to data in relation to Special Branch is limited. However, it is clear during the structural change that the integration of 'the Branch' created real difficulties:

"the Headquarters review was a nightmare because Special Branch – and again this is maybe where we are getting into some of the sensitivities of it, and I was involved in a lot of work in 96 on the Special Branch – in 2000 we were implementing Patton and Patton had made some recommendations for Special Branch – that took months and months and months of consultation with the Branch and we still didn't cut our way through it – we made some progress but to amalgamate CID and Special Branch – really it is only happening now (2003) to be perfectly honest". Interviewee 21

Intriguingly, one of the motors which is identified as significant in moving forward the area of Special Branch is the change in leadership;

"(JM) Is it significant that the integration of special branch is happening now, quite late in the process?
No, it could have happened earlier if there had been a will. It would be fair to say there generally wasn't a will within the Branch for it to happen. It was really when Hugh Orde came, Orde was significant in that. He is completely apolitical about what happened in the past and I've said this many times to people but it's just been so important, in fact that changes the whole top team". Interviewee 15

The different focus and background of Kincaid is also identified as a considerable strength in this regard:

"And apart from anything else, apart from the significance of Special Branch to the nationalist community, to the rest of the organisation there's a lot of resentment about Special Branch, as a force within a force. And it's just useful to explain this to you. I know this isn't your focus. So not only is it important to the community, but important to the rest of the force, that feel resentful about how Special Branch sit apart from and above everybody else if you like. Its a massive department, they need to be dealing with crime in Northern Ireland, if their getting agents and intelligence it needs to be about organised crime and serious crime and the focus taken away from national security and that's what Sam Kincaid is doing. So he's totally integrating them so, OK, their still keeping an eye on the people who were involved in paramilitary organisations, but there much more focused on the people who were involved in organised crime". Interviewee 15

The appointment of Kincaid comes towards the end of the research period, but the interview data in particular would conclude that the new in Change Manager heralded a different and more straightforward approach to the change process. However, this change in style also coincided with a resolution of the difficult symbolic and emotional aspects of the process. It may be that such a change in style was made possible by the particular stage the change was at, and the strengthened position of those arguing for change within the organisation, rather than simply a change in personnel.

6.8.4 A New Chief

'WANTED: New Chief Constable of the Police Service of NI.
Salary: circa £130,000. Candidates should ideally posses a very thick skin and be prepared for continual criticism. Should be able to get on with unionists, nationalists, loyalists, republicans, liberals, conservatives, the Orange Order, residents groups, the Policing Board and maybe even the Police Ombudsman'

Belfast Telegraph Front Page (12th February 2002)

As we have seen in Phase Three, the interim period between the Chief Constable's retirement and the point at which Hugh Orde takes up his new post is important because it coincides with the cascading down of training within the District Command Units and also overlap with the period in which large numbers of staff were still going out on severance. We have already seen

the concern with which academics working with the PSNI regarded Flanagan's departure and Orde's intervention in this training process. One of those giving leadership support to the change team, expressed real unease that the good initial work that had been done would be lost after the departure of Flanagan and the 'new broom' of Orde:

"Now if you wanted a good start to a major change process fraught with difficulties, ironically my view was that the RUC had it. They just weren't then given a chance to continue with it. That was the real problem". Interviewee 29

There were also concerns that a new, purposeful but less open approach was seeping into the top team generally:

"it's the difference in Hugh Orde and Ronnie Flanagan. Rather unfair that I say that because I've never met Hugh Orde so I can't really put my hand on my heart and say I do know what the differences are but from what I observed with the changes of attitudes with some of the Assistant Chiefs at the centre, far more proceduralised, far more administratively disciplined far less to do with communication of people. Almost like an economy, watch the numbers, watch the figures, watch the budgets, attitudes that you would find in a private-sector organisation and the leadership and the flamboyance to handle some of these critical issues so you get value of service and quality of service that somehow was lost. I can't say it was neglected but as a critical message it was lost in an overwhelming bureaucracy". Interviewee 29

Orde's appointment was controversial (three PSNI ACC's applied unsuccessfully for the post) and he was widely seen as representing a mainstream British policing culture, in contrast to Flanagan who had been steeped in the politics of the Troubles. As someone who had served on the Steven's Enquiry into RUC collusion with loyalist paramilitaries, he was aware of the RUC's past. Most of those interviewed were quick to comment on the change of style his appointment brought and the usefulness of this new focused approach to *'bedding the change down'* (Interviewee 15). However, many were unsure if this style would have worked in instigating and following through the difficult initial period.

6.8.5 The 'Settling Down' into Normal Practice

By September 2002, the Northern Ireland Police had changed their name, badge and flag and reconfigured its oath. It was operating under a new Policing Board which replaced and reworked

the role of the old Police Authority, and which had nationalist representation in the form of the SDLP (Sinn Fein were to follow in 2007). It had a new Chief Constable and 50% Catholic and 50 % other recruitment to redress the historic community imbalance. The change process had a significant structural impact as well. Fifteen months into the severance scheme (which began in January 2001), 1274 officers had already left. By the beginning of 2003, 1789 officers had left under voluntary severance, and the scheme was suspended for six months to give recruitment a chance to catch up. How the organisation delivered policing on the ground had been significantly changed with the introduction of new District Command Units under new Commanders. Many of these units moved quickly from the first commander to the second from the same leadership team within a matter of months. October of 2002 saw the symbolic gesture of the first GAA match between PSNI and the Garda. The impact of such a huge amount of change is such a short period of time is difficult to overestimate and the Police Ombudsman's office acknowledged in 2004 the degree of modification undergone by the organisation:

"*we have been able to say with out reservation that the amount of change that the Police Service of Northern Ireland had undergone say over the last three or four years is quite striking, it is phenomenal for any organisation and given the circumstances and the fact that there are a lot of other political developments which the Patton commission anticipated which have not necessarily taken place this change process has gone on regardless*". Interviewee 10

One member of the organisation who was involved in the change process described it as a three stage process, of which the PSNI were, at 2003, at the last stage:

"The story for me is there were probably three stages ...to me ...there was a fundamental review, internal soul searching or internal research into best-practice, how to evolve policing from a hierarchical autocratic, security minded structure, to a more English style police service with DCU's district policing command areas working closely with local communities in a more partnership approach, and taking away all the military trappings, so there was that process which Sir Ronnie and Cecil Craig headed up, then there was the middle process, which is part of the process that I was involved in which was the formal, you know, Patten's reported, recommendations are out, an implementation plan has been put together, legislation is going to follow a change management team has write up projects and programmes and deliver and then there's the third bit, which is all that transformational change plan, which became almost core business, when it became part of corporate development". Interviewee 4

The feeling that this process had moved into a normalising period was echoed by one of his colleagues:

"A lot of it has settled down I have noticed now - we have been through that pain barrier of change and I can see now there is a receptiveness to change – still weary, but more receptive because we are now in the PSNI". Interviewee 21

Another agreed:

"I would say it was primarily addressed at the strategic level and then addressed at a secondary level – there was the strategic level and then the tactical level – it never drilled down any further – nor should it have done because of the enormity of the task. Now, the third, the tertiary phase which we are in at the minute is the devil in the detail and where do we go from here?" Interviewee 5

Others reflect on the slowly building new identity of the organisation and how that has emerged:

"like everybody else, and I did 20 odd years in the RUC – I am a PSNI officer – the cultural identity is building". Interviewee 5

Another senior officer assesses the change in these terms:

"the RUC as it was in 1998 is entirely different from the PSNI that exists in 2004 – not just in the name and the badge and elements of uniform but in operating style and in dominant philosophies – the way they do their business – it is fundamentally different – it is not an over exaggeration". Interviewee 3

The most striking conclusion though is that which relates not only to the process of transformation embarked upon by the PSNI but also the impact that process would have on the external environment which had been so significant in developing the impetus for change in the first place. An official from the Oversight Commissioner's Office comments:

"there has been progress in many areas of society, politically and so forth but few or none as striking as that which I think has taken place ... .here and as far as I am concerned this quite likely will be a singular success for the evolution for peaceful and more democratic society". Interviewee 10

Major Events : Phase IV

2001	
4th November	Name Changes
30th November	Chief Constable Ronnie Flanagan announces intention to retire
12th December	Police Ombudsman Report in Omagh Bombing published
	Policing Board agrees new symbols
	Change Manager Tim Lewis retires
2002	
January	ACC Sam Kincaid takes over as Charge Manager

	A refocus on Oversight Commission's Performance indicators
March	Chief Constable leaves post
Sept	Hugh Orde takes up post as Chief Constable
	DCU training ceases

Table 6 Major Events: Phase IV

6.8.6 CONCLUSION

The beginning of this Chapter drew attention to the first research question: *How did the Police in Northern Ireland go about conducting a process of organisational change?* This Chapter has attempted to answer this question by identifying four phases in the organisations development that relate specially to the change process. Within these phases particular elements or motifs of change are identified and the linkages and interaction between them explored. The most significant element in this change story is the interaction of the internal organisational processes with the external events that were shaping the organisations future. Important 'change dramas' (Pettigrew 2000) are identified and explained such as the effects of the ceasefires; the role of Drumcree as a failure of the organisation to bridge the gap between itself and the nationalist community; the change in name and symbols; and the significance of voluntary severance as a change lever. In particular the change in structure and symbols are looked at in detail. The end of the research period includes the appointment of a new Change Manager and a new Chief and heralds a change in perspective towards change compliance, as defined by the Oversight Commission.

The next Chapter will look in more detail at four dominant 'themes' that emerge from the case data, set these in context and attempt to answer the second major research question: was the change strategy adopted appropriate?

7.0 CHAPTER SEVEN THE RUC, POLICING AND ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE

7.1 INTRODUCTION

In the last Chapter we looked in detail at how the change strategy of the RUC was formulated, outlined and redefined and how it eventually became 'realised'. The approach taken in Chapter Six was largely linear to keep a focus on how change 'happened' and the barriers and enablers it encountered in that journey. In this it went some way to answering the first of our research questions: *How did the Police in Northern Ireland go about conducting a process of organisational change?* However, while a linear approach can assist us to '*catch reality in flight*' (Pettigrew 1992), it is of a more limited use in exploring the more thematic issues which arise within the case and their relationship to existing research on change and changing. The aim of this Chapter is to bridge this gap. In this it will delve back into the literature and the data gathered from the case to identify salient and emerging themes. In this it follows Pettigrew's emphasis of the importance of linking theoretical and empirical findings across the case to wider bodies of literature (Pettigrew 2000).

The first section will concentrate on 'theories of change' (Bennis 1966) and look for new insights from the case data on how change happens, what propels it and how these dynamics played out in the RUC case. The second section will look at 'theories of changing' (Bennis 1966) and assess the decisions and actions taken by the RUC against the backdrop of research on large scale change processes. This should allow us to explore our second research question: *Was the change strategy adopted appropriate?* The Chapter will conclude with an assessment of what such a case tells us about change in large public sector organisations, policing organisations and the implementation of change programmes under pressure.

7.2 'THEORIES OF CHANGE' AND THE RUC CASE

'Theories of change' as defined by Bennis (1966) focus on the 'how' and 'why' of change. This 'change process theory' (Porras & Robertson 1992) is concerned with the underlying antecedents of change, how they originate and are propelled by forces internal and external to organisations.

7.2.1 The Underlying Motors of Change

As we have seen in Chapter Two, perhaps the most comprehensive analysis of theories of 'change' is put forward by Van de Van and Poole (Van de Ven and Poole 1995). Their four ideal type change theories (with primary motors of life cycle, evolution, dialectic and teleological) described in Chapter Two make this substantial framework very interesting from the perspective of the RUC case. Of course, in terms of the RUC we do not have enough data or a long enough view to really determine the dynamics exercised on every part of the organisation within the wider change structure – and the impact of these dynamics on the process. What we can do is make some informed suggestions as to how Van de Ven and Poole's motors of change play out within the case as a whole, within the timeframe under scrutiny. Van de Ven and Poole are also concerned with the 'mode' of change – the development of the process, and determine two modes – 'prescribed (seen in life cycle, evolutionary)' and 'constructive' (seen in teleological, dialectical). We identified in Chapter Two that the teleological motor was perhaps the most interesting from the perspective of this case. A teleological approach is one characterised by purposeful co-operation and is most closely associated with strategic planning – an association which is also found in the strategy focused RUC '*lived experience*' (Dawson 2003a). We also identified that it would be interesting to explore the relationship between the teleological primary motor and that of the dialectical motor which was embodied as the environmental driver for change and adaptation. That relationship still appears to be significant. It is clear that the dialectical process (if we regard the environment as one half of the dialectic and the RUC as the other in this case) was operating on multiple entities (as befits the dialectical motor in Van de Ven's and Poole's theoretical framework) within the change process around the RUC. These entities include the political environment; the institutional framework within which the RUC was embedded; and the paramilitary organisations it sought to act against. From an external perspective this motor is extremely important. Yet internally as we have seen, the teleological strategic change motor was operating to push forward planned, top down strategic change. At first glance the idea of a teleological and evolutionary interaction seems attractive – particularly with the outcome that Van De Ven and Poole suggest – that of 'punctuated equilibrium' (also identified by Gersick, 1999). However, the evolutionary motor understandably relies heavily on competitive survival as an underlying metaphor and an event sequence of 'variation, selection and retention'. Such a process did not exist externally to the RUC: no realistic competitors in the

form of other police services operated and neither did the opportunity to strategically generate variety or select and therefore retain valuable characteristics within its local environment. However, it might be argued that within the organisation variety was generated by the actions of people including the Chief Constable who were able to change internal mechanisms of selection and retention and thus promote a degree of internal evolution. However, the dialectic of recurrent confrontation and conflict with an environment which was paradoxically hostile on the one hand (if we think of nationalist and republican opposition to policing and the refusal to negotiate except within the broader context of political change), and overtly defensive on the other (if we think of unionism and its refusal to support even basic changes which would have immensely strengthened the organisation's negotiating hand) we can see a clear pendulum of conflict and a resulting synthesis of approaches. The identification of this dynamic leads to the conclusion that both the teleological and dialectical motors were at work within the case.

7.2.2 'Continuous' or 'Episodic'

Clearly, another important issue is whether the process of change in this case was 'continuous' in nature or represented a 'discontinuous' or 'episodic' juncture in the organisation's history (Weick 1999; Bartunek 1994; Porras & Silvers 1991). Given the nature of the process, the external organisational conditions and the radical nature of the structural and symbolic change attempted, it is appropriate to conclude that the RUC represents an example of 'episodic change' characterised as infrequent, discontinuous and intentional (Weick & Quinn 1999). It also represents a case which was inextricably linked to the particular environmental circumstances that existed in NI and further afield at that time – underlying Pettigrew's assertion that '*context and action are inseparable*' (Pettigrew, in Beer & Nohria, 2000). This also reflects on Gersick's work on '*deep structure*' within organisations that mitigates against change, forcing organisations to loose 'fit' with their environment, preventing adaptation and resulting in revolutionary punctuations and '*whole scale transformations*' (Gersick 1991:14). This is significant given the institutional strength of the RUC before the change process. This strength was derived from a number of sources including the unionist community; unionist political representatives; and the British Government. The fact that the organisation had considerable longevity, with structural penetration into all NI communities, also contributed to its institutional potency. However, throughout the period of the 'Troubles' it had become more and more

isolated from the nationalist community and increasingly defensive in its role. The peace process and the political convergence which resulted from it left the RUC seriously out of synch with the new political system, but still retaining much of its institutional power bases (as seen in the reaction to the Patten Report within Chapter Six).

Looking at the process from Gersick's theoretical perspective we can see the Patten Report as signalling the point at which the discontinuous process of change began to achieve a new state of environmental 'fit'. Obviously Gersick's model (essentially one of punctuated equilibrium) seeks more than one period of revolutionary change within organisational life cycles so the RUC case (and this research) is limited in its applicability. However, the perspective does allow us to view the process differently and is relevant because one of the things that immediately stands out about the RUC case data is the lack of a common understanding inside and outside the organisation on when the change process itself began. It has been seen above in Phase I that many *within* the organisation defined change as something which was overdue in relation to international good practice, but permanently 'on hold' because of the security situation. Change was, from this perspective, reactive to the paramilitary ceasefires, defined by the Fundamental Review, and cemented in its strategic trajectory by Patten. However, externally those interviewed overwhelmingly cited Patten as the instigator of change and officially on their website the PSNI relate the change process entirely to Patten and measure its validity in those terms (PSNI 2007).

Such a lack of agreement seems to correspond to Weick and Quinn's (1999) assertion of the importance of 'perspective' in terms of how we see change processes. Those involved within the organisation saw a gradual progress in thinking and action that made the likelihood of change, and then change itself, increasingly on the agenda. Those located externally, who were perhaps less aware of the complex interactions between the organisation and external change agents, pinpoint its beginnings with Patten and therefore sit more comfortably with the perspective that the change was revolutionary, episodic or radical, rather than a more incremental or continuous process. However, this dissonance in how significant players define the change initiation needs to be approached carefully for it relates very closely to issues of organisational loyalty and

defensive positioning. For example, as we have seen, the publicly expressed position of the organisation and the view of most of those outside can be summarised as follows:

Patten = Change.

The Patten Report, as we have also seen, was an essentially politically driven mechanism and one on which the reputations and aspirations of many within the nationalist community rested. It was also an integral mechanism of the peace process (since policing was considered too sensitive and difficult to be a subject of negotiation) additionally, for the organisation to engage and retain the support of the nationalist community it had to *publicly* recognise the significance of Patten in the heart of the process. Therefore: Patten = Change.

In contrast the expressed internal organisational view is somewhat different:

Environmental shift + internal strategic shift + organisational isomorphism + Patten = Change.

In other words, change is expressed as more incremental and continuous: held back through time by the wider political situation. This more complex internal and tacit view which is identified within the internal interview data illustrates a much earlier awareness of the need to fundamentally alter the organisation's mode of operation, projected 'brand' and perception within the general community. However, there is also considerable evidence to suggest that such awareness was not matched by a willingness to engage with the 'hard' issues (especially symbols and recruitment). This is exemplified by the omission of early discussion of these issues within the Fundamental Review and in the leadership's wariness of going down such a road. This of course, also serves an organisational purpose in that it supports the view that the organisation was fundamentally sound, that it would happily have conducted its own change process through the Fundamental Review and Patten was unnecessary. It also underlines the view that the police were outside the conflict, rather than at the heart of it. Obviously, as we have seen, the Fundamental Review did not go anywhere near the 'hard issues' of name, badge and flag which were so emotive, but without which the process would not have gained the support of nationalist

politicians. This duality in perception may be illustrative of Dawson's comment on the tendency for *'post hoc rationalisations'* by change participants (2003a).

Of course, Porras and Silvers (1991) have a point when they suggest that much change looks episodic when viewed from a macro perspective and that micro changes are indeed capable of altering structure and strategy. The view of Dunphy and Stace (1993) that planned change is usually triggered by a failure to create a continuously adaptive organisation (reflecting Gersick's concern for 'deep structure') does not seem to fully consider the environmental pressures towards inertia that existed within the RUC situation. This factor, which we might call 'induced inertia', seems important because it reflects the organisation's inability to change, even in a way with which it was comfortable (towards community policing strategies for example). We have seen in the RUC case attempts (small and fragile though they were) by the organisation to make some type of environmental realignment as far back as1992, but the external political situation, the lack of political progress and the continuing threat from paramilitaries stifled these attempts. Ironically, when the situation changed and the political process began to move forward accompanied by paramilitary ceasefires, the RUC was itself to destroy the fragile shoots of change by operational decisions taken on the ground during the enormously stressful, but also pivotal, period of the Drumcree marching dispute.

Even with an acknowledgment of some attempts at change within the RUC pre-Patten, it seems clear that the RUC case describes an organisation being forced away from its equilibrium conditions and embarking on an episodic change process. The fact that such episodic change tends to be emotional (Gersick 19991), and associated with planned intentional change (Weick & Quinn 1999), is underscored. Organisational triggers of episodic change such as performance, characteristics of top managers, structure and strategy as identified by Doty, Glick et al (1993) are also present.

7.2.3 Independent Change or Institutional Isomorphism?

One of the reasons that we can be confident in pinpointing significant movement towards change within the organisation before Patten is the significant movement which was occurring in policing generally in the developed world. The impact of institutional isomorphism (DiMaggio

& Powell 1983) in policing is significant, particularly with regard to policing with the community. The spread of this new approach to policing has been well documented and this research would suggest that an awareness of these new community focused policing practices had reached the RUC from the UK, USA and Europe. Such normative processes were commented upon by one senior RUC member:

"Good practice in England seems to be about devolution ... race diversity programmes which in our country would be anti sectarianism, more representative policing and so on". Interviewee 4

Another drew attention to embryonic community policing work that was ongoing in west Belfast (the seat of urban republicanism and in places a no go area for the RUC) which he had felt initially optimistic about:

"actually while the nationalist community were unhappy with the police, in reality, the sacrifices that had been made probably allowed them to prove themselves, given a chance" Interviewee 23

The impact of this type of international exposure was also felt in the unsuccessful policing change process in Israel, and conveyed by Weisbund, Shalev, Amir (2002) which would seem to indicate that the RUC was not the only police organisation (operating in a divided society) that was affected.

So while the introduction of community policing and community safety methodologies may have worked well in other jurisdictions, the core issues of ongoing political crisis and the nature of the divided society made it very difficult for the police to realistically design an acceptable change process itself. External commentators, especially those with a political focus maintained that no internal solution would ever have been politically acceptable or accepted and that may well have been the case. However, the extensive public campaign in support of the RUC might have had a greater degree of success and been better received by political decision makers in government without the damage of Drumcree.

The role of external mediators in engaging the RUC in organisational change preceded and carried on throughout the Patten process. External agents facilitated senior members of the Force in fact finding and discussion trips to America, South Africa and Belgium. This international

dimension is touched on in Chapter Six and had significance not only in building knowledge and confidence within the RUC, but created relationships between the police and members of the Police Authority and civil society generally who also attended. It is difficult to assess the importance of this process to the change as whole. There is no doubt that it had a big impact and was at times difficult and challenging. But it did given senior officers some perspective on what was to come and what would be expected of them and the organisation. In that, it may have helped clear the way on the road of change.

7.2.4 Contributing to Theory

Obviously, the story of change in the RUC has some implications for change theory. The research did not set out to build theory, rather to look at how existing theoretical models operate within the empirical reality of change on the ground. We have seen that it has been possible to detect both a teleological and a dialectical change motor, as defined by Van de Ven and Poole (1995). The important consideration here is the position of the environment as the oppositional actor in the dialectic. Within the RUC the dialectical relationship between the organisation and its environment has been a key change motor, intermingling with the teleological orientation of the strategic planning process. The 'deep structure' of the organisation was resistant to change and hard to move, and it was the dialectical process with both the environment and the organisation acting at multiple levels, which facilitated the eventual shift. The fact that after a period of great instability, the organisation seems to have returned to conditions of relative equilibrium relatively quickly, underlines Gersick's (1991) theoretical approach to discontinuous change. By losing 'fit' with its environment (due to the paramilitary ceasefires and the emerging peace process) the organisations 'deep structure', found it almost impossible to suitability adapt. It's counter terrorism operational core may well have been a factor in that failure to take on board new social and political realities. Even the Fundamental Review, which was an attempt to realign the organisation with a changing environment, did not come close to approaching the 'hard issues' of symbols and title. It was only a discontinuous change process which could force realignment on the scale needed. Where we fail in going further with Gersick's theoretical model is our lack of data in terms of punctuated change episodes, at other points in the organisations life cycle. Therefore, theoretically the research provides some empirical outworking of Van de Ven and Poole's change motors and also reinforces Gersick's concern for deep structure.

7.2.5 The RUC and Change

As we have seen the change process within the RUC was driven by both teleological and dialectical forces. While the evolutionary motor appears not to have been significant in the wider scope of the change process, it is clear that the 'variation, selection, retention' model may well have been at work internally within the organisation generating variation, altering some of its selection mechanisms and retaining new approaches to policing within a divided society. While the change process may have appeared episodic from some perspectives, it can also be seen to have a continuous developmental aspect especially when viewed internally. The role of institutional isomorphism is also significant both as a factor in itself and also as an example of a how deliberate external interventions can enable key figures to 'buy into' a change process. Police forces with their highly developed international links and professional bodies are in an ideal position to look to each other internationally for best practice, rather than seek advice from other public service organisations within their jurisdiction. The particular characteristics of organisational culture which are well documented in terms of policing further facilitate this isomorphic process.

7.3 THEORIES OF CHANGING

'Theories of changing' (Bennis 1966) or 'change implementation theory' as it is called by Porras and Robinson (1992) represents a vast body of literature on how to '*engender change and steer it*' (Bennis 1966). This section will explore some of the dominant issues of change implementation which arose in the RUC case and what the experience of these issues adds to our knowledge of change implementation within certain organisational environments. In particular, it will concentrate on the four of the main themes that arose within the data analysis. These were: leadership throughout the organisation; resource availability and constraints; the role of external change agents; and pace and sequencing in the restructuring process.

7.3.1 LEADERSHIP AS A LYNCHPIN

As seen in Chapter Two, Beer and Nohria in their change framework attempt to provide an overarching framework with which to unite the very different perspectives that exist on change and change implementation. While their argument is attractive and focused, the RUC case sits quite uncomfortably within their theoretical framework. This reflects both the public sector

nature of the case but also the textured reality of change on the ground. However, in coming to their eventual conclusion Beer and Nohria focus on the need to '*hold the tension*' between two quite divergent implementation perspectives and identify leadership as the linchpin holding these simultaneous positions together. Obviously many theories of change implementation see leadership as a key element in embedding the process and moving towards change objectives (Bennis 1985; Bryman, 1992; Collins 2001; Conger 1998; Kotter 1996; Pettigrew 1992). We define leadership in this sense broadly within Northouse's (1997:3) view that it represents '*a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal*'. The significance of leadership within strategic change has been emphasised because of the need for '*leaders be able to mobilise commitment to the redesign by creating emotional commitment to the changes*' (Beer & Nohria 2000:26).

While some (Kouzes and Posner 1987; Sashkin 1988) argue that the sort of organisational 'vision' that creates transformational change comes principally from the organisational leader, others (Bennis & Nanus 1985) see it more broadly as a product of many decision makers and influencers within the wider organisational structure. In their analysis of the wider literature on leadership and vision, Conger and Kanungo (1998) remain sceptical about the idea of a single visionary leader. Indeed, they state that their own research underlines their belief that the formulation of vision often involves many other organisational actors and is shaped as much by environmental forces as by the leader and the organisation. Strategy literature re-emphasises this point, particular in a period of rapid environmental change (Bower & Doz 1979). Dawson too, urges processualists to be cautious of the myth of '*the one leader*' driving through large scale change single handed (2003: 122).

Within the RUC case, leadership was a clear theme that arose throughout the data analysis. The theme was seen as significant at different levels within the organisation and at particular junctures in the development of the change process. As Dawson suggests, when focusing on leadership, there is an enormous temptation to look for unblemished hero figures: the charismatic leader driving through change (Dawson 2003b). Within the RUC case, while one figure necessarily dominates discussion (the Chief Constable, Ronnie Flanagan), leadership can be clearly seen at other levels within the organisation. If we consider leadership roles more

generally, we can determine a numbers of layers that are significant. The first and most obvious is that at the very top, occupied within the research timeframe by Sir Hugh Annesley, Flanagan himself, Colin Cramphorn and Hugh Orde. The layer below consisted of what was generally described as the Top Team, comprising the Chief Constable's Policy Committee. This Team contained the key individuals within the change process, including the ACC's, the Change Manager, the Programme Manager for the Change Team as well as individuals Flanagan had signalled out for the 'operational inspectorate' and as such may be regarded as the second leadership tier within the organisation. Below that were the more dispersed District Commanders who were regarded as vital to the implantation of the change process on the ground. This section will look at these layers in turn, before seeking to draw some conclusions about leadership in general within the process.

7.3.1.1 FLANAGAN AS AN FULCRUM OF CHANGE

It is well documented within the leadership literature that organisational crisis can represent one trigger to the emergence of transformational (or even charismatic) leadership (Conger and Kanungo 1998). It is also recognised that without the '*personal involvement of the CEO, successful discontinuous change is simply not possible*' (Hambrick, Nadler & Tushman 1998:9). The issue of charisma is interesting. Obviously there is a wealth of literature around the role, behaviour and traits of charismatic leaders (Conger & Kanungo 1998; Bryman 1992; Bass & Aviolo 1993). There is also certain unwillingness among strategy theorists to get involved in discussions about a concept as difficult to pin down as 'charisma' (Hambrick, Nadler & Tushman 1998). Pettigrew comments on the importance of leaders as gate keepers, enablers or thwarters of change, and the ability of leaders to soften the impact of the process on organisation members. He also comments on the need for leaders (and teams of leaders) to be astute politicians and political analysts as well as technically knowledgeable and excellent communicators (Pettigrew 2003).

Whether or not we identify Flanagan as a charismatic leader (and many of those interviewed spontaneously did), its clear that some of the behaviours deployed by him fall within the categories of a charismatic leader as defined by Conger and Kanungo (1998) and of the CEO's strategic exercise of power during transformational change processes, as defined by Hambrick et al (1998). The ability to articulate a clear and engaging vision, to influence the behaviour of

others and his skill at environmental assessment all feed into a general framework of transformational leadership (Eisenbach, Watson, & Pillai 1999). So, in defining Flanagan as a transformational leader, and working on the basis that leadership and context are interwoven (*'leaders are not born, they are made'* :Pettigrew 2003) it may be useful to look briefly at Flanagan's background to get some perspective on his attractiveness as an RUC leader going into the change process.

Ronnie Flanagan was born and brought up in Northern Ireland. He joined the RUC upon leaving Queen's University, Belfast and rapidly rose through the ranks becoming the youngest even Chief Superintendent in the organisation's history. He was appointed Assistant Chief Constable in 1991 and while in that role held a number of significant positions, including the command of Special Branch - a politically sensitive post which gave him prominence within the organisation, linkages with its most radical and conservative elements, but also notoriety within certain circles outside it. His involvement in the 1991 Drumcree dispute (touched on in Chapter Five) and his assurance that the wishes of the residents would be respected in the following year's parade (a commitment made personally by him and then broken) all lead to a substantial public profile at a turbulent time in Northern Ireland's history. He also took a clear decision to appear publicly at a point in time, pre-ceasefires when such a profile was very close to being an invitation to assassination. Flanagan commented of this public profile:

"I think that in terms of a media profile the first really important position I held was as Assistant Chief Constable Belfast, when terrorism was rife, and to be honest for very understandable reasons up to that point, police officers didn't want to be known publicly. And they used to have interviews with people's faces spangled and things like that and I felt that we're being physically attacked and we were being subjected to the most vile propaganda campaign which misrepresent us. And it was my intention and that if we were going to be attacked publicly than I wanted to defend them publicly. Now I coined a phrase at that time, the difficulty in doing that was that we were constrained by things like truth, our detractors were not. So fleet footed inaccuracy being chased by leaded footed determination for the truth is always going to cause problems".
Interview with Ronnie Flanagan

Ironically, his background as someone who was from Northern Ireland and his long RUC service (broken only by a stint in Bramshill, the police training college) made him an unusual Chief Constable in many ways. Both his predecessor, Sir Hugh Annesley and his two followers Colin Cramphorn (acting Chief after Flanagan's departure) and Sir Hugh Orde (who swiftly followed

Cramphorn) were English. It did however, endear him substantially to his colleagues. Flanagan himself commented on the significance of his origins to his role:

'I think for the time it was a big advantage having someone who lived and breathed it and if I could say I think these things are for the good of policing... I could not be constrained by what was good for the police – I had to always think about what was good for policing and I think it was an advantage being seen as such an integral part of this organisation. If I was saying, "I can live with this", then I was in a much better position to say, I'm going in this direction, you come with me' Interview with Ronnie Flanagan

Other members of the organisation also found his background and his 'history' with the RUC to be a significant factor if the change process was to succeed. For example one senior member of the change team commented:

"The fact that Ronnie Flanagan had been an RUC man you know who had walked behind the coffins, I am purposely using emotive language, but who had walked behind the coffins and went and met the relatives, the widows – all of that meant that when Ronnie was saying we need to change, we need to embrace this and all the rest of it - it was sort of OK. Had they have changed the Chief Constable earlier, I mean Mr Orde, obviously is a new chief for a different era – I just don't think they could have done it". Interviewee 15

There is little doubt that this close connection with the organisation on multiple levels led to Flanagan being perceived by the organisation as 'one of their own' and it facilitated greatly the difficult decision making during the change process. An experience based awareness of the needs of the organisation allowed Flanagan to use a particular set of behaviours, consciously or unconsciously, which further reinforced the message that change needed to be supported (Bass & Aviolo 1993). There is little doubt that many within the RUC found 'Patten' difficult to stomach. Flanagan himself in a TV interview with the BBC reinforced how difficult this process would be. Again, the phrase '*great hurt*' was used. He went further:

"I understand the feelings of my members because I share those feelings," he said. He added that he was not convinced that the changes to the RUC title would attract more Catholics into the force and bring about the acceptance of Northern Ireland's police force by the nationalist community that Chris Patten's report promised. "If we are to endure this great hurt proposed then I hope the gains envisaged are demonstrable and achievable."(BBC 2001)

Inside the organisation he appears to have played a key role as a persuader on the hard and emotive symbolic issues:

"Ronnie was really good at going round the offices and trying to talk to people about things – things were really important to him – the uniform change, the badge change, the name change –

what it meant for all our colleagues who had died as RUC officers and it was a real hearts and minds thing... I mean he was a great and proud RUC officer himself but he saw...- Ronnie saw the bigger strategic issue and he was really good at that". Interviewee 5

This represents an empirical reflection of the type of change focus that Hambrick, Nadler & Tushman 1998) regard as being significant in the behaviour of transformational leaders. By focusing consistently on the 'hot spots' that no one else can adequately address, Flanagan plays to the 'particular towering strength' of communication and empathy which marks his tenure as CEO or Chief Constable (Hambrick, Nadler & Tushman 1998: 12).

By 'stretching' the organization as far as possible, without alienating it and compromising its integrity and command structure, Flanagan walked a thin line. At times he was heavily criticised internally and externally, but his 'back story' within the organisation put him in an undeniable position of strength. As one interviewee commented:

'I think Flanagan was a very charismatic leader and I think he was able to nurse the organisation through what I think were very painful times for a lot of people like he went on publicly and spoke of his sadness about the name change and what it meant to him – outside that resonated with a lot of the rank and file whereas if he had taken a much colder, blunter approach in the terms of 'that is a Patton recommendation and I support it and that's it' – he was able to sugar the pill a lot and probably to that point he assisted the change process just by sugaring the pill but he was still nudging the organisation forward'. Interviewee 21

In stretching the constituency however, he was careful to remain fully inside it and only to go as far as it felt was safe and possible at any particular time. As well as being long term radical, he was short term cautious and this at times caused frustration as seen above. But he also displayed a clear understanding of just what was at stake. One external community relations practitioner commented on his considered perspective on Flanagan – one which he has come to through the passage of some time:

"So Ronnie Flanagan is a bit of a paradox, a complex man. In many ways he had vision, charisma, he was able to command the loyalty of his officers, who would have followed him over the top, that sort of thing and he always believed it was important to keep that, so he always erred on the side of caution. He actually was quite far seeing, in understanding the need for change, and how difficult that was going to be". Interviewee 24

Excellent communication skills are a key characteristic of a transformational leader (Conger and Kanungo 1998). Within the change process Flanagan used his skills to inform and persuade those

internal to the RUC of its merits. His own comment *'I can live with this'* and his staunchly RUC background made it possible for him to challenge those most opposed to change from a position of great strength. Others commented on his willingness to take extra steps to persuade the 'rank and file' of the necessity of this road:

'He could have worked twenty three hours a day seven days a week and this was something extra after driving round the country having these forums with the reserves and regular officers sitting in a canteen sitting up there doing questions and answers and they didn't hold back and he carried that because even though the officers maybe didn't like the changes and couldn't see the reason for them, they respected him and it was the respect for Ronnie Flanagan that carried the thing through' Interviewee 12

By spending time communicating with lower levels in the organisation and taking steps to scotch rumours before they took hold (through personal interventions) Flanagan became personally identified with the change, just as he was personally identified with the organisation. This allowed him to unify support organisationally and carry on the day to day tasks of managing policing (and at times an uncertain security situation) while the change process moved on. The words of one civilian interviewee reflect this:

'I talked about Ronnie Flanagan's role as the charismatic leader and so on, leading people through the change process as I recall and the fact that people were sort of rallying round him really' Interviewee 12

We have seen above how the leader's personal characteristics, communication skills and visioning ability reinforced and interacted with the ongoing change process internally. Externally as well, Flanagan reiterated his message through the media and affected how the process was perceived publicly, which in turn impacted upon the ongoing political process. By being utterly supportive of the RUC in public, while internally stretching the organisation Flanagan played the 'political' role of RUC champion securing an exceptionally generous voluntary severance package and playing brinkmanship with key stakeholder groups, attempting to secure early support and commitment for the new 'police service' (Buchanan & Badham 1991; Pettigrew 2003) . As a skilled media performer, even the Pat Finucane Centre (a human rights organisation with a distinctly nationalist perspective) acknowledged his media savvy:

'Having risen up through the ranks and, more importantly to an organisation bereft of media friendly spokesmen, has shown himself well capable of presenting the new image of the RUC

which the Northern Ireland Office regards as important. That new image involved frequent interviews in civilian clothes with the inevitable implication that an RUC uniform was a negative image' (Pat Finucane Centre 2006).

This made it much easier for the public (particularly nationalists) to track the process and acknowledge the change – something that was vitally important if the process was to be perceived as a success.

Of course these positive attributes were counteracted to some degree by negative or, at least more complex, ones. Frustrations were expressed at the level at which his intervention stopped, not in relation to communication, but in relation to detail:

"*I think one of Ronnie's skills is that he very quickly sees the end game, he very quickly sees the strategic direction we need to go, but his weakness if it is a weakness he doesn't want to get involved in detail. So his strength is picking people like Tim Lewis, cautious Tim, safe pair of hands Tim, to see him through, knowing that Tim will identify all the pitfalls all the problems for Ronnie, and Ronnie will just move them out of the way, I'll deal with that one, I'll go and speak to Ronnie, its hard to explain just how good he was*" Interviewee 4

This difficulty with detail caused other problems, related more specifically to the political processes and the particular way of doing business which Flanagan preferred. One external agent who engaged with Flanagan as a political operative was highly critical of his way of doing business. During the process of change, and specifically during the long running intense political negotiations over recruitment and the change implementation plan he meet with Flanagan regularly:

"they were the strangest meetings of all, that was Ronnie's style – to tell you what you wanted to hear but then he would subsequently backtrack, he was relying on us missing a detailed point, or buying his reassurance, I wouldn't meet him alone – I would bring a third party and in order to prompt the conversation in a certain direction, I would bring A, and we would meet for dinner, this would have been pre (Policing) Board, even the week that we went into the Board, even then we were still negotiating". Interviewee 28

This reflection on how Flanagan at times behaved relates closely to the necessarily 'political' behaviour of leaders and leadership referred to by academic contributors (Pettigrew 2003; Dawson 2003a; Buchanan & Badham 1999). Others within the organisation also showed these qualities, but some notoriously lacked them (like the Deputy Chief Constable who was conspicuously side lined) – and were excluded from the process as a result. Steering an

organisation through an emotionally difficult and politically sensitive change process is no easy feat. There is no doubt that there were many negative consequences of the change process in terms of leadership- the 'dark side' of leadership referred to by Finkelstein (1992) and others (Conger & Kanungo 1998).

Another interesting issue is the effect of a charismatic leadership figure on the internal and external development of the organisation. Flynn and Straw (2004) in their study of charismatic leadership and its relationship to external organisational support contend that having a charismatic leader within an organisation makes it more likely to be perceived as 'attractive', particularly to outside investors, and especially in difficult economic circumstances. While their research focuses solely on the private sector it has some salience with the public arena and this case study. Externally, its significance lies in the need for the RUC to build support among the wider public (beyond the Protestant community) as well as within significant stakeholder groups (the Catholic Church, the nationalist SDLP, and the GAA) to make the change process a success. Flanagan's charisma and transformational leadership style to some degree facilitated 'buy in' by these sectors, but was undermined by his own history in the organisation and his identification on another level with the security based policing of its past. However, his security credentials and his communication skills further encouraged those further afield (such as the British, Irish and US Governments) to believe that he could indeed deliver change.

A member of the Office of the Oversight Commissioner gives us the most accurate assessment of Flanagan's central importance to the process and his leadership role:

"whether you believe that people rise to their occasions or it is serendipity – the right person is there at the right time for that particular set of challenges – I think that was certainly the case with Ronnie Flanagan and he seems to have got the organisation to go down this very painful road – it was obviously his love for the organisation and his understanding and respect people had for him and allowed this to take place – if the situation were reversed – could Hugh Orde have done that? I don't know – maybe, maybe not". Interviewee 10

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7.3.1.2 The Top Team: Facilitating Change

The senior team within any process of transformational change has an extremely important role to play (Hambrick, Nadler & Tushman 1998; Pettigrew, Ferlie & McKee 1992; Finkelstein & Hambrick 1996). For the purpose of this analysis, the Top Team is defined as encompassing the Chief Constable's Policy Committee, who as we have seen in Chapter Six, were the key decision making and consultative body through the process. The Policy committee include key figures from the Change Team, including the Change Manager and the Programme Manager, the ACC's, and senior civilian figures like the Head of Personnel and the Director of Communications. The informal hierarchical structure appears to have been clear. In terms of the change, the Deputy Chief Constable (someone who would have been naturally central to the process) was sidelined because of a lack of confidence in his 'political' abilities to 'play the game' in terms of the hard political reality of the change. The Assistant Chief Constable's (ACC's) were then extremely important and none more so than ACC Tim Lewis who was also the first Change Manager. Others though, such as ACC Stephen White who was the Programme Manager performed a significant role in the delivery of the process. This section will look the role of this top team in delivering leadership for change and some of the tensions that existed within it[26].

From the internal documentation accessed and the interviews conducted, it is clear that many of the Top Team were supportive of the change process, although that support may have been more or less qualified on occasions. It is also clear that many dealt on the ground with the hard issues of change in a way that was similar to Flanagan's approach. It was probable that awareness of the necessity for change and their experience on the ground facilitated much of this. Of course, to a large extent the Top Team was selected by Flanagan for qualities and views well known to him. There does seem to have been recognition on the part of Flanagan that he needed a trusted and detail-focused Change Manager and placed Tim Lewis in that crucial role. The scope of this project was not wide enough to get a comprehensive view of the internal dynamics at work, but it is clear that many of the Top Team took it upon themselves to perform the communications role of a change agent, in a similar way to Flanagan himself. It's also clear from some of the documentary source material referred to in Chapter Five that some were keen to slow down the

[26] A diagram of the structure of the Change Management Team is illustrated in Appendix 12

process and were nervous of too much transparency, particularly in relation to anti-terrorist activity.

Developing change centrally with the Top Team proved more challenging than developing it further down the organisation and this dissonance was noted by external facilitators:

"To really get into the questions concerning relationship the DCU commanders were quite open to discuss their own styles of leadership their own misgivings and shall we say areas of weakness and it was that particular point were the Assistant Chiefs had a greater problem, they too would have had to expose their ways of operating, their styles and philosophies of leadership and it was that piece of feedback that we found difficult". Interviewee 29

Despite these initial problems two things appear to have fostered leadership competencies among the Top Team. The first is work by external consultants which reinforced learning, shored up support and provided a sounding board for seemingly intractable problems. The other significant factor appears to have been the important international dimension of the process and the way this broadened horizons and lifted heads above the daily grind. We have seen in Chapter Two how a significant internal role impacted negatively on police reform in Israel because it encouraged change to move quickly and was not fully aware of contextual realities (Weisbund, D. Shalev, & Amir 2002). The international dimension appears to have worked differently in NI, perhaps because of greater community involvement and the engagement of mediation professionals. The significance of the work and its potential impact wasn't immediately obvious to those initially engaged:

"I totally underestimated how important it would become. We thought it would help, we thought about it as a sweetener to draw the police into the project because in joining the development group they would get the chance to go on this American trip. Only the development group would go. The makeup of the development group itself was a piece of negotiation in itself". Interviewee 24

The fact that the makeup of the group to visit the US was itself a point of contention, debate and political negotiation again reinforces the political reality of change on the ground (Buchanan & Badham 1998). It also recognises the significance of relationship building and organisational

learning among those internally and externally engaged in the change process (Senge 2000). One senior member of the Top Team commented on the relationship building aspect of the process:

"It took people out of ourselves and broadened our perspective a bit and built up relationships with people. There were some unlikely relationships built up on those trips because there were a lot of community people on them as well and I think that helped to broaden our perspective. We were a very introverted organisation, and we really didn't, we really couldn't, some studied at university but it was all very secret. When I did my degree at the University of Ulster you didn't say who you were, I invented some job in the civil service that I did, or something like that so we weren't really part of the community, so that's changing all the time now which is great". Interviewee 15

The police had always had linkages with other policing organisations, and many interviewees drew attention to longstanding links with the FBI, NYPD etc. But the structured and community focused nature of this new involvement within the context of change helped to focus minds and foster leadership:

"It was a superb process of opening up people's minds, giving them the confidence that in fact other people were listening to their views and opinions and that in South Africa, Kosovo, and all the other ...certainly it was a very good benchmark that these guys could handle the pressures in the sophisticated way and other people respected that level of expertise. So if nothing else, it was a confidence building exercise and from what I've saw it really did you bring people on". Interviewee 29

It also, importantly added to operational knowledge and awareness of the pitfalls of change processes. It is possible to see within organisational documentation how new learning intermingled with new challenges and the experiences of others took on particular significance:

"the one thing that I latched on to from what they were telling me was more from South Africa I think than the others – was that South Africa after apartheid and the various changes that they had they had a fantastic change process but they did so at the expense of their day to day work – they took their eye off the ball and their service deliver suffered and crime rates increased. So the trick then and the line message from that was 'yes, progress with change but do it hand in glove with your day to day work' and so we used to create this slide which showed what the organisation was about – you know it had principal aims and Patton done under the 8 work programmes but on the other side but on the same page – a conceptual line down the middle – if you like on the left was the change programme and on the right was all the HMI still best value, crime strategies and what have you. The reason for that slide was to say 'look while we are doing change we also need to do this'" Interviewee 3

Some cynicism did exist. One interviewee commented dryly that he was '*not one of the chosen few who gets to go around the world*' (Interviewee 2). More significantly, a representative of the Oversight Commission made the point that '*spending time seeking out best practice is a very convenient way of putting off the decision*' (Interviewee 10) and both these positions are entirely understandable. By all accounts the experiences of the few were not transmitted very successfully to the organisation as a whole, or even down to the next level, but the personal development dimension is difficult to dismiss. One ACC commented on its significance for him:

"I believe that Mediation Network project helped us to gain enlightenment about policing and professional issues, personal insight into ourselves and deep-rooted issues about conflict management, conflict resolution and community policing and so on" Interviewee 4

In general, the Top Team were themselves faced with selling the change process in a similar (but less high profile way) as Flanagan himself. By allowing them to develop competencies and confidence in this regard, that process seems to have been made easier.

7.3.1.3 THE ROLE OF DISTRICT COMMANDERS

At a local level, the new District Commanders (DC's) who were appointed from January 2001 onward, were vital to the initiation and entrenchment of the change at a local level. This is a view reinforced by the research on change within policing organisations. With a international move away from the former militaristic, bureaucratic structures of European and American police forces and towards a more flexible, autonomous, interactive response characterised by a 'community policing' ethos, other researchers have looked at the role of local police leaders in reinforcing and developing change on the ground. Feltes in his study of community orientated policing in Germany emphasises both the 'newness' of community policing approaches and the implications for police training that arise from them (Feltes 2002). Indeed, recent literature on police training largely deals with the introduction of community policing philosophies and the problem solving skills associated with them (Greene and Mastrofsky 1988; Skogan 1995; Feltes 2002). But training (and re-training of commanders) has also been recognised as a factor in policing change programmes within divided societies. For example, one of the key factors identified as vital to the re-focusing of the post apartheid South African police was the emphasis

on retraining (Levin, Ngubeni et al. 1994). By identifying training as a vehicle for change the authors identify three arenas of training which have 'considerable potential as transformative vehicles'. These were: the basic training of new recruits; the retraining and upgrading of serving police officers; and the training of change agents at the management level. It is the third factor that we are concerned with here. It's interesting to note that the District Commander's seem to have been particularly keen to take part in the training in comparison to Headquarters' who were more reluctant to be involved. In terms of this willingness one external factor seems to have outweighed all others. One consultant attributed their receptivity to the relatively 'exposed' nature of the DCU commander's new position:

"The DCU commanders were open to suggestions and ideas about what they were doing. They were far more exposed; the centre had less exposure with the exception of Ronnie Flanagan himself and the police board". Interviewee 29

This exposure was a direct result of the configuration of the District Command Units along the local district council boundaries in Northern Ireland and correspondingly along the lines of the new District Policing Partnerships (DPP's). Each Commander was tasked with a public report to their DPP once a month. This report was reported in their local papers and DPP meetings routinely open to the public. Such a 'profiled' role was new and given the high stakes with regard to the success of the new policing arrangements, highly monitored. With the exception of the Chief Constable himself, no one else within the organisation would be held up to public scrutiny in the same way, with the same regularity. The vista of public scrutiny may in itself have been enough to encourage DC's to avail of all opportunities for help and support.

One of the key issues in terms of the appointment of DCU commanders was the decision to appoint people who had long, solid records within the organisation, but who would shortly retire or leave under voluntary severance. This decision was criticised by many within and outside the police as a waste of resources and time:

"....some were literally retiring in months of their appointment, again this was Ronnie Flanagan's style there was a dispute within the police about who should be appointed to be DCU commanders. Some people said, the radical thing to have done would have been to step over, pass over obvious people and go to a whole new generation. He didn't do that, because as I said at the start of the discussion, he's cautious and if we go too fast maybe we'll lose people, so as I say, people were given the honour of becoming a Chief Superintendent before they retired, very

good for your pension and your severance cheque. So there was too much of that again". Interviewee 24

However others within the organisation (and participants in the DC training) felt that the '*sense of change in the organisational was palpable*' (Interview 3) and in such an unstable organisational environment, the appointment of District Commanders with 'history' focused minds. This justification of organisational stability, and 'keeping people on board' may seem like a shaky one, especially considering the need to build and maintain the change process through the tiers of authority and without consideration of contextual factors it seems difficult to justify an expensive training programme with a number of consultancy elements for someone who may not be in post more than a couple of months - especially when no further training for subordinates was organised. However, the situational reality may have been more complex. As Pettigrew (1992) states, the 'untidiness of chance' often intervenes to effect change processes. In the case of the RUC this 'untidiness' was created by the Omagh Bomb, the biggest single loss of life in one incident throughout the NI conflict and a resulting Police Ombudsman's investigation which called into question the position of Sir Ronnie Flanagan, the then Chief Constable of the PSNI. Flanagan left the Service soon after and his replacement saw the process of training differently, as this comment from an external consultant explains:

"When we started the development with the DCU commanders the intention was to go further down (the ranks). But then we had the Omagh bomb, then we got Ronnie in 'disgrace' and then we got Hugh Orde coming along which Hugh basically put an end to all this" Interviewee 29

So leadership instability at the highest level, instigated by unforeseen external events impacted upon the process in a profound way.

The relationship of the change process within the DCU's to the one that was happening in Police Headquarters is also interesting. While the DCU commanders had a particular motivation for change – their new role with District Policing Partnerships, they also had a very clear role in relation to the implementation of community policing strategies. The significance of this leadership tier was reinforced by one interviewee who had himself become a District Commander later in the process:

"I think the district commanders – I think that was the big strength – we had clear leadership as soon as the district commanders were in place we had clear leadership. Don't forget before that what had we? We had Divisional Commanders and Sub Divisional Commanders who knew they weren't going to have jobs and half of them were leaving – not very motivated. How can you motivate – the whole structure that you were promoted into was crumbling and you were facing severance so you can see it was vital that we get that tier re-established and I think that is what happened" Interviewee 21

The same interviewee reflected on the lack of support from Headquarters to the District Commands after the initial change training:

"We appointed the District Commanders and said 'look, you are the people who are closest to it – you get involved', they are key players at this point. They will be critical of the support they got from Headquarters, although interestingly enough one of them said the other day in the presence of the Chief Constable 'Sir back in 2001 whenever we were making all the changes we got no support from Headquarters', and the Chief Constable's response was 'maybe that was a good thing', and I thought – very telling. So the District Commanders became the key players and I have to say they did an excellent job" Interviewee 21

7.3.1.4 Leadership and the Change Process

The three tiers of leadership of the Chief Constable, the Top Team and the DCU Commanders represent the structure through which the organisation put in place the process of change and carried it through. The central focus of Flanagan and his transformational leadership role is reflected to a lesser degree by the role and behaviour of the other tiers. The Top Team acted as a facilitator of change and a constraining mechanism when the pace moved too fast. The DCU commanders managed the process on the ground and had a particularly important role in terms of the structural change and uncertainty which characterised the early process.

In terms of how appropriate the organisational leadership was, it is fairly clear that Flanagan's approach to leading the organisation through such a difficult and complex process was conscious and nuanced. In his unwavering defence of the organisation externally and his internal challenge to his members he set the tone for how the organisation would move ahead. By reinforcing continually the aims of the process alongside the length of time it would take and negotiating successfully on severance Flanagan presented the organisation with a path ahead which, while difficult, was at least perceivable.

For the Top Team, it was inevitable that their contribution would remain in the shadow of the Chief Constable's profile. However, the logistical challenges of managing the process, restructuring the organisation, dealing with the emotional issues of the change of name and badge and the long periods of uncertainty required a steady hand through choppy waters. The Team was diverse (or as diverse as could be expected within a largely homogenous organisation) and represented both those who were publicly and privately arguing for change and those who were much more sceptical. By providing a foil for each other, the Team were able to avoid any tendency to 'group think' and push the organisation forward. There is no doubt that tensions existed, but in general the approach adopted appeared to work well.

For the initial DCU commanders, the training and consultancy support received left them in a strong position to move into the new structures and their new responsibilities. However, relatively quick turnover (encouraged by voluntary severance) left others new to post in a more challenging situation. It's clear that the training strategy broke down at this point and changes in the organisations leadership appear to have precipitated that. The scope of this research is limited and useful data on the DCU commanders in this regard is unavailable. However, given the rapid pace of change and the change of leadership, difficulties in this area were to be expected.

7.3.2 RESOUCE AVAILABILITY, COMPENSATION AND CHANGE INCENTIVES: SEVERANCE AS A LEAVER

When we think about change incentives, we tend to look at a range of financial and non-financial mechanisms that facilitate the 'unfreezing' of existing organisational processes (Lewin 1951; Lawler 2000). One of the unusual aspects of the RUC change process was the reliance on a particular method of financial incentive in order to 'kick start' the change process (voluntary severance), and the absence of any additional performance incentive for changing for those who choose to stay. The reasons for this are fairly clear cut: the RUC was a public sector organisation in the midst of a turbulent period of social and political change. While the British Government (the funding source) implicitly recognised that the peace process and policing change would incur a substantial financial outlay, it was also aware of the potentially huge savings it could make if security costs in NI dropped, as they would in a relatively peaceful situation. So while

the UK Treasury could be persuaded of the need to front-end a large financial commitment, the public service nature of the sector largely prevented any opportunity for financially incentivising change for those that stayed in the organisation, rather than just for those who choose to leave. One unusual aspect of the RUC change process is the very significant financial resources available to those managing the process, and particularly the resources which were made available as part of the voluntary severance process. These costs are defined by the organisation as 'Patten non-severance' and 'Patten-severance' expenditure. Patten non-severance expenditure was used to '*take forward the implementation of ...Patten related business cases*' (PSNI 2002). These business cases included: the provision of training; increased numbers of part-time reserve officers and civilian support staff; development of a new police training college; improvements in the appearance of police stations; staffing structures for the new District Command Units; and IT system upgrades. Patten severance included lump sum payments, commutation; pension; and administration costs.

It is useful initially to sketch out the financial commitment made to facilitate the change and its attendant costs. While it is not possible to entirely determine all costs in relation to the Patten process (not all figures are publicly available), if we work on the timeframe of 1996-03 (remembering that Patten 'kicked in' in 2001), the costs for those three years[27] putting together severance and non severance costs come to £216.61 million. The break down of the figures is interesting. As seen in Chapter Six, the Patten process began to impact in 2000 and severance started in January 2001. The costs of non-severance during the 2000-1 financial period was £7.36 million (PSNI 2002). Bearing in mind that severance did not start until January 2001 and that 483 officers left in this period, its cost from January to March 31st amounted to £28 million (PSNI 2002). It can be seen that in the period 2001-2002 things got really busy. Non severance costs at this point were £23.15 million and the 791 officers who left on severance cost the organisation £48.3million (PSNI 2002). That's a total cost of £61,061 for each officer who went out on severance in the financial year 2001-2002. From 2002-2003 which saw Flanagan leave and Hugh Orde take up his position as Chef Constable, Patten costs remained high. £26.3 Million was spent on non-severance Patten implementation and the 512 officers who left on severance cost £42.2 million (PSNI 2003). That was an average cost of £82,421 per officer.

[27] counting the financial year as 2003-March 2004

In the last year of this study (but far from the last year of the process), non-severance amounted to £31.1 million and severance (slowing to 81 officers) came to £10.2 million (PSNI 2004), costing nearly £126,000 per officer. By any standards, these figures amount to a significant financial outlay by the British Government. Attitudes to the expense vary. There was surprisingly little public discussion about the financial costs of either severance or the Patten process generally. At least one of the interviewees was under the impression that original estimates for severance were initially rejected by the Treasury in London (which was after all picking up the bill), but that the agreement, negotiated with the policing unions, was pushed through by PM Tony Blair who had a close relationship with Ronnie Flanagan (Interviewee 4). While that suggestion is difficult to substantiate, it's clear that the sums of money involved were enormous and it would hardly be surprising that the Exchequer would baulk at such figures. It is also important to point out that the per officer figures above are averages: with severance negotiated in terms of rank and longevity of service many of those leaving received three and four times the average payment. What is more interesting perhaps is the process by which the RUC itself arrived at the initial estimates. One interviewee recounts events:

"there were two budgets for change, ...called severance and non severance so there was a set figure for severance, £280 million, it was a massive amount of money.. paying people to go off, or setting up the PRRT, to give training or consultancy or whatever was required. Anything to do with severance - the money was there. But non-severance, I remember being asked one Saturday morning, will you go into work at 8am, and meet X and Y and Z and what I had to do was to take 175 recommendations of Patten and by lunch time give a figure of how much it would cost. OK, so a police academy, how much would a police academy cost? I remember putting down 280 million, excluding a police academy because that was the one, do you take a new building, or an old building, I remember Colin Cramphorn coming in for half an hour and having a cup of tea and a scone, how do you do it? And I remember ...I went through that and each recommendation had sub-recommendations, one of the recommendations was community policing should be the core of policing, how do you price that? Does a new IT system cost a million or a hundred million? Put down 10 million, I think it was about January 2000, you could say it was the first budget projections on Patten". Interviewee 4

The speed at which numbers needed to be generated certainly seems to have overridden the need for accuracy within the generation process. Such a series of events demonstrates the temporal constraints around planning the process, but also the reality that almost any figure that was generated would have been accepted provided the police could back it up with achievable change.

It is clear from the above that huge financial resources were allocated to the Patten implementation process, and the bulk of these can be clearly attributed to severance. As a self-selection mechanism (Wruck 2000), compensation packages to encourage employees to move on can be a blunt instrument for organisation change (Ledford & Heneman 2000). Obviously skilled individuals who are aware that they may be in demand elsewhere can seize upon severance as a way to further their career in a financially advantageous manner. Others, with less potential elsewhere, are often reluctant to move on because of an awareness of their own weaknesses as employees (Wruck 2000). By inducing turnover among the wrong people, compensation systems can backfire spectacularly. However, research looking at the role of compensation systems has been generally limited to the financial consequences for individuals leaving or remaining within an organisation undergoing discontinuous change. The RUC presents us with a case where a decision to stay represented for many a change to the emotional and socially constructed schema which existed within the RUC and which was at the heart of the change process. While some research looks at the reluctance of some employees to stay within an organisation and adapt to fundamental changes in operating systems (Dawson 2003b), the type of change faced by long term officers in this context challenges at a fundamental level their relationship with the organisation: what Hirschorn (2000) refers to as the 'moral order' they had invested within existing intra organisational rules and relationships.

There is no doubt that many officers who left found the process of change difficult and were offered the opportunity to leave 'with dignity' as was so often referred to in the interviews for this research and in public statements by senior police figures. One senior police civilian commented on the reality of the severance and the effect of the generous financial packages on offer:

"Quite a lot of them found the changes unjustified and unfair and therefore were happy to go. Whether, despite all that was said at the time and all the pronouncements that were said by certain people, whether they would have gone if they weren't given two-hundred thousand pounds in their hip pocket was another matter you know" Interviewee 12

Severance had a number of impacts on the organisation. Firstly, the voluntary severance package was designed to facilitate the moving on of people who had given twenty five years service to

the RUC and who were over forty five years of age. So it specifically targeted people who had entered straight after school or college and who were entirely steeped in the old RUC culture. However, initial concerns arose that officers outside that specific demographic would flood the programme:

"The fear was there would be thousands of officers who would want voluntary severance. The reality was the package wasn't attractive to anyone under 45 years old with less than 25 years service". Interviewee 12

This didn't happen in the numbers that were originally feared. The second big consequence of severance was that some of the people who were utterly central to the change process, including those within the Top Team and more importantly the District Commanders were almost entirely contained within this target demographic. Some leeway did exist within the scheme for the Chief Constable to 'red pen' certain individuals to prevent them leaving immediately while retaining their severance benefits but this appeared to have been used sparingly. As there is very little information in the public domain and interviewees were not keen to talk about it in detail, it is difficult to come to a conclusion about why this facility was not used more. Perhaps the simplest explanation is the most accurate: the sheer numbers of the people involved and perceptions of favouritism within what was a tightly knit organisation made the 'red pen' mechanism less attractive, than it may have otherwise been. We have seen above the consequences of losing District Commanders and there was widespread public concern about the level of detective expertise lost as well. This feeds into Wruck's concern for the double edged nature of compensation processes (Wruck 2000). Some within the organisation though were less concerned about losing such long term skills and organisational memory:

".. again at the time Ronnie Flanagan was criticised for letting too many people go, and too many skills, but on reflection it was the right thing to do, because those tended to be the people with the strongest objections to the change. The longer they'd been there. Older people naturally more attached to the organisation for a whole variety of reasons. But as well as that, their skills were not the skills we need for today...the people that were skilled detectives or that were senior, experienced detectives, don't have today's modern day skills for investigating. Which is completely different, it's methodical, it's computerised. Those people didn't have the skills, they might have been gut instinct experience but that's not how we do things today so I actually always felt that, and I've always argued that case and I would argue it to the death that people who left were the right people for their time but policing change moves so quickly and its now become a completely different accountable organisation ...I think people who left probably

weren't up to date with those and I think we need to focus much more on the people that we have now. I mean, I can't see any skills that we lost that were useful for what we need now because things have moved so fast for us in the past five years" Interviewee 15

One thing though which was both difficult and of great concern to the organisation was the chorography of severance which got caught up in the stalled chorography of the external architecture of the change process in relation to the establishment of the Policing Board and the engagement of nationalists within the Policing Board structures. When severance began in January 2001, it was originally anticipated that it would be coterminous with recruiting, so while people were leaving the organisation at one end, they were entering by another. Unfortunately, recruitment was postponed for fifteen months by which stage 650 officers had left the organisation and none had joined. This coincided with a huge rise in street violence (around marching etc) in which large numbers of serving officers were injured and off duty. This created a real human resource crisis:

"there were officers who I believe, I know, waiting to see if they could go on severance rather than retire early. I'm sure the pattern of retirements would show that. Plus, added to that mix, Patten also coincided in the huge rise in street violence because we then had the serious rioting broke out in Belfast which went on from the best part of two years and in Belfast I had in one year, one summer, I had in excess of a thousand officers injured out of four thousand. So you had a lot of injuries a lot of violence on the streets, you had no recruitment going on for about four or five years so you had no replacement officers coming in, you had a natural attrition of officers who became ill and who had to retire medically, some just went and this almost like a blocked pipe, this huge, something had to give in the organisation." Interviewee 30

Eventually, and for a brief time without the support of the SDLP (who were still pressing for further legislative changes), recruitment started again.

The other more positive consequence of severance for those who remain within the organisation was its impact on promotion. This effectively acted as a lure for younger, ambitious officers who felt able, and were effectively incentivised, to embrace the new order. One senior member of the change team commented:

"I mean one of the things that I have to say is that practically everyone I know got promoted". Interviewee 15

This appears, unsurprisingly, to have had an important positive impact on morale generally and most importantly on those who were keen to see change progress. The top team, who had a few

years previously been dominated by hard headed 'securocrats' with Special Branch backgrounds and an acute understanding of the hard end of terrorist policing was changed radically:

"I joined in this role with this organisation in October 2001 and that's just two and a half years ago as you and I sit here today basically and I and Sam Kincaid are the only two left. Now hopefully that will slow down now that there is stability and we now have some very young assistant chief constables in place and that will only change as people move on to do other jobs, I mean, the ACC's are in their early forties, forty – two, forty-three, we've another ACC position coming up for appointment in mid may and another hopefully young ACC into that so that will then hopefully create a period of stability" Interviewee 12

By dissipating the power of the 'securocrats' and the old guard, and in this instance power can be defined as the ability to influence effectively the behaviour of others (French & Raven 1959), severance fundamentally altered the power dynamics within the organisation and laid the foundations for the change process to progress. However, as other organisational members point out, there is a real issue about where the space for the next round of recruitment will come from. Indeed, it's most likely that the organisation faces a period of relatively little internal movement for quite a while as these young superintendents, Chief Superintendents and ACC's stay in rank for years and the impasse reaches further down the chain of command.

7.3.2.1 Appropriate Resourcing?

The process of change within the RUC was intrinsically linked to its environmental context. The future of policing was one of the key issues in terms of the peace process and an enormously important factor in stabilising the conflict and moving Northern Ireland onto a new phase. It's significance for the British Government was clear. Given the political risks that had been taken in the wider process and the difficulty getting political movement on many areas of concern around policing, it would have been surprising if the change process had been allowed to flounder through lack of resources. We have seen above the degree to which the organisation was financially resourced to facilitate the change. Existing internal resources (such as IT capability and even moral) were however, low. Financial resources went some way to fill those gaps. The appropriateness of this strategy on behalf of the Government is a contextual judgement, but given the enormous political resources and time that had been spent trying to get policing right, resourcing it appropriately seems like a relatively straightforward evaluation.

7.3.3 The Role of External Agents

Ford and Ford comment that intentional change occurs when " *a change agent deliberately and consciously sets out to establish conditions and circumstances that are different from what they are now and then accomplishes that through some set or series of actions and interventions either singularly or in collaboration with other people* (Ford & Ford 1995: 543). Change agents are usually defined within the literature as either a subset of internal leaders (Pettigrew & Whipp 1991; Stace & Dunphy 2002), or external agents who are often consultants brought into to facilitate the process (Grey & Starke 1984; Williams, Dobson & Walters, 1993). These agents are regarded as having significant legitimate power which they can use to motivate the change process (Buchanan & Badham 1999; Pettigrew & Whipp 1991). The change agent's themselves are defined as those who '*facilitate change in the particular area in which it is needed*' (McCalman & Paton, 1992:144). The political role and political activity of the change agent is of particular relevance within the process (Pettigrew 2003).

It is patently obvious that the RUC (and even the PSNI in some senses) has an unusually closed organisational culture (Brewer 1991). But the intensely political nature of the process, the involvement of external agents for change – particularly those with a community relations focus - and also the degree of international exchange which was involved, meant that others from outside the organisation played a role in 'thought leadership' within it.

Five different types of external influencers can be identified. The first of these categories can be identified as 'academic'. It contains two particular types of engagement processes. The first of these is academics who were sought out and engaged by the RUC themselves, including Prof. Andrew Kakabadse and Prof. Colin Eden. The second type of involvement that can be seen is that of academics who actively sought out the RUC to engage with them. This includes academics who were interested in issues of conflict, division and good relations, but also a number of anthropologists who had specific interests around parading and crowd control. The second category can be identified is 'community relations focused'. While there is some cross over between academics and this category, it is mostly populated by those who have a

practitioner interest in the development of better relations and the consequences organisationally of not dealing with the impact of the NI conflict on service delivery and the implementation of public policy. These community relations practitioners largely engaged with the active aim of fostering change and developing relationships both within the organisation and with the organisation and the wider community. The third category is that of commercial consultants engaged by the RUC for their specific skills. A number of consultant types can be described. For example, the police made use of a great deal of outsourced PR support to enable them to deliver key messages to a wider audience, but also to overhaul their internal communications systems which was regarded as sub optimal. External consultants were also used to manage the new 50 / 50 recruitment system, among other functions. The last identifiable category is that of external political agents who engaged with the police to further their own political objectives. Of all these groups, perhaps the two most impactful were the academic and the community relations practitioners. Chapter Five has looked in some detail at the role, interventions and opinion of academics including Prof. Andrew Kakabadse within the change process. This section then, will concentrate on the interrelationship between community relations practitioners and the policing change process.

For those within the voluntary sector (like community relations practioners), taking a decision to work with the RUC was not always going to be easy. Taking to decision to begin that engagement process was something that many practitioners and academics had reservations about. One academic, who also engaged as a practitioner, commented on the nature of this early dilemma:

"We had discussions with people about how closely we should get involved with the police, for instance, as time passed I became aware that Mediation Northern Ireland were involved. I was also aware that people like CAJ were keeping much greater distance and N and I had conversations about what our attitudes should be and quite frankly in the end we decided look people are talking to each other – this is a peace process – not talking to the police even if they haven't changed to the extent we want – doesn't make sense. We can't say, I know this seems to be jumping ahead, but there seemed to me to be no logic about saying 'we won't talk to them until they have changed'. I couldn't see how that was going to work so although I found it quite difficult to begin with and had my own apprehensions I decided I had no difficulties as a researcher" Interviewee 16

For organisations however, who were engaged on the ground with established client groups themselves deeply embedded within the conflict, engagement with the RUC presented even more concerns. After some initially tentative beginnings, one senior mediation practitioner goes on to convey the nature of the intervention process:

"I didn't yet fully understand what I had started with the police. I was to learn that. So its not like one knows at the start, but I have to say I had an intuition, a very very strong intuition that this was the place to go and work, to go and work on policing. And at the time people were saying to me, its too early for that, you shouldn't do that, you're going to damage yourselves and I knew we were going to damage ourselves, just like getting involved with parades, I knew we were going to damage ourselves. I knew that we'd make enemies basically but I factored in, here was a societal issue, conflict. If I travel abroad to conferences, people would ask me, not about neighbour to neighbour disputes, not about family rows, they would ask me 'what are you doing about Northern Ireland?'. So I had an intuition that there was a conflictual issue here, the relationship between the police and the community was one that needed to be fixed and that mediators could make a contribution". Interviewee 24

This feeling that the RUC and policing generally was a core concern of the conflict and as such should be a core function for those seeking to resolve the conflict, crops up again and again. But in order to intervene external community relations practitioners set up stringent conditions for involvement and progress occurred in spurts after successful intercessions. For example, one of those involved comments on the original engagement and the steps which had to be taken on both sides to retain both physical and professional precautions:

"he basically had the idea of us taking half a day with their trainers to show them how people, how community relations practitioners were approaching issues of sectarianism, prejudice out in the community, how were they approaching, how were they starting to train people around these issues and to do something, a two hour session he suggested to me, with their trainers. And I said well, that would be very superficial. It would work better if you let me take your trainers away on a residential because this work is experiential, they need to experience it and then they can think about what they would do with it. And to my surprise he agreed and at that time between the foundation faculty, there was no faculty, the initial training course, the initial training in Garnerville and also probationer training which at that time was in Gough barracks in Armagh, their were thirty four trainers so I worker out with Seymour Dobson to take the trainers away in two batches of seventeen on a residential complete with escorts, security backup because this was all pre-ceasefire, so it was something for them as well, a step out. I said it needed to be a non-police venue and I put together a team". Interviewee 24

These events happened in 1992, well before the Fundamental Review and Patten. The senior mediator involved was also aware of how difficult the process would possibly become as the RUC officers felt increasingly under pressure as the training progressed. The trainers themselves

raised initial concerns both about how important they regarded the training, but more importantly their lack of confidence in delivering it. The mediator goes on to recall:

"I met with him and some of his staff and they reported that the survey of the trainers was very positive, overwhelmingly positive about the value of this work but that the trainers were saying they hadn't the confidence to do it". Interviewee 24

This is important because it reflects the discomfort of the RUC trainers themselves with the new concepts and challenging ethos of what is relatively mainstream community relations work. For a community relations practitioner, the pervasive culture of the RUC at this time my also have been a challenge. The clash of working cultures was no doubt very apparent and very quickly developed into an impasse:

"if you were going down a corridor and a classroom door opened recruits would be going down in a line, and their used to be a line of coloured tiles down the edge of the corridor and the recruits had to walk on those tiles and the recruits would walk past you, with their hob nailed boots and their crisp uniforms and their guns on their hip in between classes to get the military bearing in them and every day they were out on the parade ground. You'd drive into the car park and a sergeant major type, ex marine sergeant major with his stick, his measuring stick, would be out on the parade ground. It could have been the Irish Guards , the Household Cavalry parading around that ground. It was called drill and they did hours of drill everyday. And at the passing out parade they would have to do a military style drill. It could be Sandhurst, it was that kind of standard. And that was the whole culture so into that you had community relations types coming to talk about self and feelings so some of the police trainers, two of them, one for sure, two were on headache tablets by the tea break on the first day, they came into my group, they had a spokesman, an ex-soldier and they were refusing to go on". Interviewee 24

At this point engagement became much more complicated and the other work began to intrude, essentially in the form of marching and Drumcree. Decisions taken by the RUC and referred to in Chapter six effectively caused a public disagreement with Flanagan and resulted in mediators suspending their involvement, while the situation remained heated. The nature of the decision to withdraw is also important:

"I felt that for our professional credibility as a mediation agency we need to withdraw. Roy McClune (RUC trainer) counselled me against doing anything too dramatic, anything the equivalent of resignation, you know walking away in protest or anything and he suggested I write in and say that we wanted to observe a pause, felt the need, very judicious language, clever man, so did that. Still, it got us into trouble because some cops would later complain that in their hour of need we deserted them". Interviewee 24

When the involvement began again, with an awareness of the real difficulty the RUC were now in and the level of resistance that existed within the organisation to change, the dynamic had to shift. Involvement restarted as an initiative which had support and follow through from the top:

"I figured was that one of the things we were going to be doing was going to be viewed as a very political act and I needed to demand of them that they treat us as seriously as they could and therefore I said to Ronnie Flanagan, if I need you I'll ring you, if I want to see you, I have see you and he agreed. An Assistant Chief Constable was appointed to be the main point of contact but it was also understood that I would regularly meet with the Chief Constable. That was essential because when we started to meet resistance lower down, they could see that I could go to the Chief Constable so I had to build lots of protection in". Interviewee 24

Such an awareness of the intensely political nature of their role reinforces empirically Pettigrew's assertion of the relationships of power, politics and political activity within change agency (Pettigrew 2003). It also represents an on-the-ground verification of the type of 'power assisted steering' advocated by Buchanan and Badham among others (Buchanan & Badham 1999).

The external agents brought into the RUC change process came with quite different aims and objectives. On the one hand the public relations / public affairs consultancy agency engaged had a clearly defined brief to media train a select group of individuals who would have a key role in presenting a 'police' perspective to District Policing Partnerships (DPP's). The academic and management consultants employed had another task – to begin to reconfigure the organisation along structurally altered lines and create an understanding and working awareness of this re-configuration among local leaders and central leaders. In contrast to these clearly defined aims, the community relations and mediation practitioners who already had an established working 'understanding' with the organisation had a different focus: to cultivate an awareness of, and commitment to, the challenges of community policing within a divided society emerging from a long sectarian conflict. The practitioners were also aware of the role of the police themselves within the conflict and the difficulties that 'conflict transformation' presented to all parties. Interesting, all of those involved had very different experiences.

Obviously the focus, content and aim of what community relations and mediation workers were doing with the Police was quantifiably different to the work of other external consultants. And

they were also affected in ways others were not by environmental and political pressures. By maintaining, in all circumstances, their credibility and critical distance they were able to maintain a relationship that had a large degree of independence but enough engagement to be of value. Their work and interventions have been described by one key internal change agent as *'rich dialogue... providing key leadership...helped people to think outside the box*' (Interviewee 5). In an environment of rapid change, both of people and structure (not to mention external political events) an internal 'sense-making' mechanism such as this was invaluable (Weick 1999). Keeping things 'grounded' and 'real' appears to have been important. Ultimately for the DC's, the 'management' focused training seems to be have been most immediately useful. However for the wider process the more intangible work focused on community relations was regarded as more valuable by most interviewees. As one PSNI Assistant Chief Constable expressed:

"I would be quite sanguine about the consultants – a lot of the consultants, I think, got their money for our work – consultants come in and tell you what you already know and that was my experience in this – now they were very nice people but this was such a major ...This is a situation where a lot of the change process was external to the organisation – it was political, it required inside the policing when it happened major process change, major cultural change. It required leadership, particularly at middle management level to deliver it. Consequently it just wasn't that suitable for external consultants....But Mediation Network were very useful but that is only because they know the problem over here and the difficulties. That's what was important, that and the fact you met people who were touch stones for you" Interviewee 5

To some extent it was the availability of these 'touch stones' in the form of external but trusted critical voices which allowed people to think creatively within the new reality.

7.3.3.1 Appropriate Interventions

As we can see above, external agents played key roles in the development of the RUC change process. At least two distinct strategies are at work, from two different perspectives. The first of these is the conscious process engaged in by the RUC and facilitated by the academics, consultants and some individuals. The RUC recognised through this conscious effort that they needed help and support (developing leadership competencies, PR expertise, recruitment support and logistical proficiency) and actively sought out individuals and organisations to provide that support. A small early aspect of this process was low level contact with individual nationalists

(such as journalists and Irish language activists) who came into the organisation to help build understanding of different community perception of the police (Interviews 11 & 4). However, such interventions were small scale and ad hoc. The second major strategy which can be observed is a more interactive and inductive process. In this community relations activists and mediation professionals took a strategic decision to work with the police to build relations and facilitate a greater understanding within the RUC of the contextual issues that arise when policing in a deeply divided society. The police were receptive to these interventions but wary, and the process ebbed and flowed through a number of iterations affected by external events (such as the Drumcree dispute which temporarily halted work) and became a key internal component of the transformational change process of Patten. Both the community relations / mediation professionals and the police approached this from different perspectives and the work fitted into their separate strategies in different ways. For the community relations / mediation workers, engaging with the police was a logical progression to their other work developing better relations in NI, and fitted within an emerging relations approach that was more institutional in focus and less concerned with basic cross community contact (Eyben, Morrow, Wilson 2003). For the police, engaging with Mediation NI and community relations figures allowed them to rebut criticism levelled at them after the paramilitary ceasefires, that they were not moving quickly enough towards change. The most interesting aspect of this intervention is the power dynamic which lay at the heart of it. By maintaining a critical distance, financial independence and a direct line to the Chief Constable, the community relations professionals and mediators were able to challenge RUC orthodoxy from a position of strength and mutual respect. For this reason the process became a shared exchange of education and learning, rather than the imparting of knowledge or help. This may be why it was regarded as such an important aspect of the process by the RUC leadership themselves.

It is clear that the RUC required the assistance of both types of external intervention outlined above. The first allowed the process to develop logistically. The second reinforced change and highlighted the ever present concern for context and the central role of policing in both the conflict and the peace. While it is probable that all policing going through change would require logistical support, the RUC case shows us that the type of change reinforcement provided by

mediators and community relations activists added a valuable and crucial dimension which is frequently missed and vital to success.

7.3.4 Pace and Sequencing

In the realm of change processes generally, the pace of implementation within policing in NI has been rapid. This research begins its analysis in 1996, because it sought to identify the antecedents of change and how the strategic trajectory actually happened rather than rely on external perceptions of change and its relationship solely to Patten. The formal changes occurred within a short timescale, beginning in 2000 and effectively ending in 2003. For an organisation this size, and for changes this substantial, the timescale is short. However, pace is less about timescale and more about how you speed up, slow down and sequence the major interventions of the process of change within that period. Within the RUC case it is clear that to some extent the pace of change was set externally, through the initial paramilitary ceasefires, to the Patten Report and the Governments implementation plan for policing. Chapter Five details how this implementation plan presented the public timetable for the implementation of those Patten recommendations that the Government accepted. The Plan was necessarily a function of both the Governments desires and the reality of delivery on the ground. Therefore, the Implementation plan also represented a public reflection of how quickly the police leadership felt they could deliver change internally. In terms of this sequencing, the police themselves were able to set the tone.

As seen in Chapter Two, commentators on the sequencing of change processes are generally consistent in stressing the importance of establishing a sense of urgency in terms of change itself, forming guiding coalitions and developing and communicating a vision (Kotter 1996; Pettigrew 1992; Moss-Kanter 1983). While the RUC case is generally consistent in its sequencing in relation to these models, in two areas the RUC case diverges sharply. The fact that much of the 'pace' of the process was determined by outside forces meant that when severance became a facilitative mechanism for employee turnover, these external forces (generally lack of political support in nationalist communities) also significantly stalled the recruitment of new officers and put considerable pressure on the process in its early stages. While a guiding coalition internally

may have been established early, the lack of a coalition externally created real operational problems. Given the intensity of the organisations relationship to its context, this was a major omission, but to some extent outside the organisations control.

More interestingly, Kotter's (1996) well known advice to create a sense of urgency to spark initial momentum was not followed. Indeed, looking at what the RUC leadership was communicating internally at the early stages of the process, Flanagan, was doing the opposite: consistently talking down the change and reassuring officers of the security of their own prospects and the importance of the organisation to the future of NI. It is important to remember Pettigrew's (2003) assertions on the significance of political skills and the overwhelming importance of context. In an already feverish political atmosphere, where rumours were rife and voices of injured and widowed were being heard loudest within the organisation, the last thing that was required was any more urgency. Rather reassurance, emotional empathy and a holding period allowed the organisation and its members to become accustomed to the idea of change, without needing to do much about it. Some of those interviewed were critical about the slowness of this initial period and what they regarded as the stifling role played by the Top Team at this time. One external commentator who worked with the police commented on the role of the change manager in particular:

"*Tim Lewis .. was also really gifted at treading water, I think ....there was some progress but was negligible compared to what it could have been what could they have done*" Interviewee 20

Others reflected on Flanagan's seeming stasis at the beginning of the process:

"I think we paid lip service a bit for a couple of years 1999 – 2000, there was a particular phrase 'we stand ready for change'[28] *which irritated me no end. Because it was totally meaningless, it was like the single transferable speech. It meant nothing. You know, why didn't we just get on and do it, as opposed to standing ready for it, you know. That sort of sums it up for me a bit"* Interviewee 15

Interestingly, this view changes somewhat. Interviewee 15 went on:

[28] This phrase was used repeatedly by Flanagan in public interviews. See http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/northern_ireland/1634984.stm (accessed 2nd July 2008)

"...but that might have been right. In reflection it might have been wise leadership to stand ready for change for a while until the organisation got used to it. Might have been right for the time. It allowed the people who were most resistant to leave so there may have been something in it." Interviewee 15

However, when change did happen, it was rapid. This is particularly evident around the issues of name and symbols. For example the period April 2001 to April 2002 saw the instigation of the new DCU areas with DCU commanders, the exhortation from Catholic community leaders for Catholics to joint the new police service, the change in title, agreement on new symbols and uniforms, the first batch of PSNI recruits, the new recruit training with a focus on community policing and human rights, severance moving swiftly forward, the clean walls policy, the retirement of the first Change Manager and Ronnie Flanagan himself, and the graduation of the new recruits, among other things. The long gestation of the process was followed by a rapid and radical programme of change, under the firm control of the leadership at the three levels outlined above.

7.3.4.1 Pacing Change Appropriately

While in hindsight, the internal 'pacing' of the early part of the process appears careful, risk averse and considered, the later part is rapid and fast moving. This internal pacing was defined both in action and tone by the leadership, and in particular by the Chief Constable. Given the challenges that faced the organisation at that time and the intense external pressure under which it was operating (as well as operational pressure from ongoing community disorder), the gentle initial pacing seems to have been a leadership response to dangerously rapid pacing which may have resulting in organisational instability. While it may have resulted in some grumbling from members who wanted change to move more quickly, looking at it from the perspective of the process at large, it resembles a plane which was moving through the air incredibly quickly but which contains passengers who are restless and unhappy with the length of the journey. The need for the leadership (and in particular the Chief Constable) to simultaneously act as a defender of tradition and an innovator for change is also apparent. This was evident through the layers of leadership. In this the sequencing and pacing adopted appears to be as appropriate as it could have been at the time.

7.4 AN APPROPRIATE STRATEGY?

At the beginning of this Chapter the second of the initial research questions was reiterated. It read: *Was the change strategy adopted appropriate?* Appropriateness is generally defined as something which is suitable or fitting for a particular person, occasion or place[29]. While this is a difficult question to answer in its entirety, the discussion above should bring us someway along that road.

Through an examination of the data collected four significant themes within the RUC change process were identified and expounded upon above. Within each of them the question of appropriateness arises and is played out to a greater or lesser degree. The overarching concern is to define whether the strategy was the appropriate one to lead to a successful conclusion of the change process (although the police themselves were reluctant for this research to reach into the realms of success or failure, as evidenced in Chapter Four). At its most basic level we can define a successful outcome as one in which the organisation continued to function effectively and implemented the change process in a way that corresponded to the requirements of the Office of the Oversight Commission. Pettigrew reminds us that success can only be effectively measured against an organisations 'self proclaimed targets' (Pettigrew 2000). If we the Oversight Commission's targets (which the PSNI were working towards) as a basic definition of success, then from the Commission's own perspective, the process was successful (OOC 2007). However, the four themes of *leadership*, *resourcing, external agents* and *pace and sequencing* help us explain why and what aspects of the strategy were most *appropriate*, and which worked less well. In terms of leadership it is evident that the three main levels of leadership worked well independently and at times jointly to deliver a cohesive message of change. Weaknesses were apparent, particularly in terms of cascading capacity building training through DCU's and of updating training when new DCU commanders were appointed. Some aspects of the Top Team were at times reluctant to fully engage in the leadership capacity building, perhaps because their role was not changing to the same extent (and in the same public way) as that of the DCU commanders. However, by leading the change with senior organisational members who were experienced and respected RUC officers and incorporating a range of perspectives - some visibly pro-change and others much more questioning and cautious - the Team was able to manage the

[29] http://www.thefreedictionary.com/appropriate

transition and deal with potential instability in the organisation effectively. The role of the Chief Constable as a defender of tradition and an agent of change was pivotal in this regard. In terms of resourcing, the political effort needed to get the organisation and the wider NI political process to the point where change was possible was not allowed to flounder because of a lack of available resources. However, there were significant resource weaknesses within the organisation itself, especially in terms of IT provision. The role of external agents was significant in terms of supporting 'capacity' changes (like PR and recruitment), but also in reinforcing the change process by placing it in the context of the wider political and social challenges of policing delivery in a divided society. 'Pace and sequencing' was both an internal and an external issue, with the pace set largely externally. But the sequencing of the management of change internally by the actions and attitudes of the organisation's leadership saw a more measured, restrained approach taken, which lead to a short process of rapid change and a fairly quick 'settling down' of the process with a new leader and a much changed Top Team.

While the strategy was appropriate, it was less of a linear plan than a messy and constantly adaptive and reactive approach to getting the organisation from A to B intact. In this sense it was less a rational and planned understanding of strategy formulation, than an approach which lived in the heads, and was articulated through the actions, of the organisation's leaders. In this it reflects how strategies are often defined in principal, but when met by circumstance, enacted in very different ways in practice.

While a change plan existed, a strategy to manage the change was never written down. However, it is clear that much discussion, formal and informal, occurred at many levels and with many different constituencies throughout the process. The environment in which the change was occurring was fast moving and the day to day management of change reflected that. The intensely political nature of the change process required skilled and nuanced behaviour of those engaged within it. When senior organisational members failed to display such behaviour they were quickly sidelined (the Deputy Chief Constable, for example).

The reality of 'doing change' on the ground and the day to day re-strategising reemphasises strategy as a changing and fluid process (Pettigrew 2003; Beer & Nohria 2000). One interviewee

commented at length about the situation that faced the RUC. His assessment on the strategy adopted is probably the closet to the mark:

"One point I wanted to make on that – even if the strategy wasn't right – show me the one that would have been – because I have seen nothing that could have taken on something of this magnitude – lots of academic text, but the reality of it – the blood, sweat and tears – the smell of actually doing this in such a charged political and social environment in Northern Ireland". Interviewee 6

The strategy adopted was above all, clearly focused on the needs of the organisation and reactive to problems within the organisation as they arose. This is the key point. In developing the strategic approach, the leadership of the organisation had a dual purpose: to keep the organisation together and to implement the change successfully. Their knowledge of the organisation and its particular concerns and emotional resonances was as complete as it could be, and leadership at the highest level was able and willing to act as a persuader for change, as well as an upholder of tradition. By keeping lines of communication open and a firm grasp on what was happening at the lower levels, the strategy was clear sighted. It seems difficult to imagine that another group of people and in particular another Chief Constable would have been able to formulate and keep the organisation focused to the same degree. One interviewee commented:

"I think the scale of this change is such that people have to be realistic in anticipating that not everything is going to fall right side up all the time. In fact its been quite remarkable that so many of the cards have actually fallen the right side up because , you know in many cause one wasn't able to do the detailed planning because decisions were at least quasi political in nature, lets do it now, lets not do it now". Interviewee 12

7.5 CHANGE AND CHANGING IN THE RUC

Single case analysis is necessarily limited in what it can add to general understanding about organisational change processes. The RUC case, with its extreme environmental context is a particularly unusual example. By constructing a narrative based analysis this case affords valuable opportunities to understand change within its embedded context (Pettigrew 2000; Dawson 2003a&b; Pettigrew, Ferlie et al. 1992). It is important to recognise that a decision to approach the change process in another way, or even in the same way but at another time or to

focus on other organisational levels would have resulted in different findings. The temporal significance of the point of research is also important, as elapsed time can lead to changed and perhaps matured perspectives on the process as a whole, but also to lapses in memory (Pettigrew 1990). Also important were the realities that access constraints placed on the work and in this case, the limited internal data collection pool of the Top Team. This concentration on the senior management (unavoidable as it turned out to be) sites this research within the type of processual work criticised by Dawson as being too centred on senior levels and not focused enough on what was occurring at the levels beneath (Dawson 2003a). However, by attempting to look at change over time and in context, the research goes some way towards filling Pettigrew's criteria (Pettigrew 1997) of work which attempts to see processes through conceptual lenses and explores situational complexities and the conditioned context.

Dawson's work gives particular prominence to what he calls the '*under the surface dialogue*' which sometimes represents resistance to change within organisations (Dawson 2003a). In this he feeds into the 'political' approach where power and political processes are identified as steering company change (Buchanan & Badham 1999). The RUC case is replete with situations where the power and political processes were key to how the change dynamic developed. But in contrast to the experience of Buchanan and Badham (1999), rather than being 'under the surface' resistance was apparent everywhere within the organisation and most prominently outside it. However, a dual mechanism of order enforcement (not always possible in the public and private sector organisations examined by Dawson), and participatory opportunities with the reinforcement of charismatic persuasion in the form of the Chief Constable, were used to give the process momentum. The 'post hoc' rationalisations which Dawson warns against are evident within interviewee discussions, but can be allowed for within the methodological context of multiple interview participation and the availability of some important contemporaneous documentary source material. One point of Dawson's research which does resonate clearly with the RUC case is that of change 'substance' and the significance of the change for organisational survival (Dawson 2003a). Within the RUC there was real concern that there was the potential for an even more radical (than Patten) approach which was to be avoided at all costs. Therefore, organisational survival was high on members' priorities. Also of interest in terms of Dawson's approach to change is his reflection that it is often possible to identify a period over which the

conception of the need for change occurs. This appears strikingly within the RUC material, with the organisational leadership (and evidence suggests those beneath it) really beginning to grasp the need for change as far back as 1996 and certainly by 1999. The significance of power and politics is clear from Pettigrew's perspective (Pettigrew 2003), as is the inherent truth that their can never be a '*single authentic account of change*' (Dawson 2003a). The differing perspectives on the RUC process and the difficulties that exist in pulling them together into a coherent whole, testify to that.

As much as this research does not satisfy the multi-level analysis defined by Dawson as crucial for a real analysis of 'workplace processual change', it does go some way to exploring the experiences of senior managers in managing strategic change through extreme environmental turbulence (Hambrick, Nadler & Tushman 1998). In this, its' approach is closer to that of Pettigrew with his concern for the dynamic quality of human behaviour in organisational settings and his focus on understanding change as continuity over time (Pettigrew 2003). The experience of the RUC underlines the significance of this approach and reinforces its potential to capture complexity and environment impacts on rapid change processes. By concerning itself with analysis over time, the approach also allows us to capture the complex interactions that occurred within the organisation and with its environment at a time that preceded the normal, externally determined, timeframe of the change.

Pettigrew's assertion that you can '*only fight power with power*' resonates with the RUC case and the importance of organisational leadership in its development (Pettigrew, Ferlie et al 1992). Many commentators have reflected on the significance of leadership and charismatic leadership in particular, as a facilitator of discontinuous change. Within the RUC case we can see levels of leadership that were a crucial variable in moving the organisation through the process with stability.

The four themes of 'leadership', 'resources', 'external agents' and 'pace and sequencing' appear regularly within the literature around strategy and strategising. The findings of this research underline the work of other processualists in pinpointing leadership and resources as significant concerns in the development of change processes. However, the important role of external agents

in less well covered in the literature, especially the context laden interventions of the community relations and mediation professionals in the RUC case. Yet within the case, interview respondents again and again emphasised the significance of this involvement and the role of some of these agents as 'touchstones' for the process. In this respect the RUC research adds a new dimension to our understanding of how complex and difficult change processes can be affected by the intervention of other agents acting independently but with an agenda to progress the process.

The particular interactive nature of the relationship between the police and their external environment was significant in terms of the 'pace and sequencing' of change. We have discussed above how the external environment dictated the pace of change to some degree, and how the internal strategy adopted set the tone for how the change would be realised and enacted. By not attempting to introduce a sense of urgency within the organisation as a whole, the strategy differed from that normally prescribed for those managing change (Kotter 1996; Pettigrew, Ferlie et al. 1992). This may lead to the conclusion that 'developing a sense of urgency' is not a universal requirement but something which is contextually variable and at times may even be counterproductive in particularly sensitive environments.

Perhaps the most directly applicable environment for learning from the RUC case is the development of change within other policing organisations, particularly those within environments of political instability or conflict. Hart (Hart 1996) in his analysis of change and policing asserts the need for a better understanding of how change processes interact with the particular demands of police organisations. Hart's work suggests that police organisations represent a particular context for change processes (given their particular organisational cultures and internal structures) and therefore cannot just be regarded within the general scope of public sector change. His principles of change management, including communication, management support, targets and coercive and participatory change can be seen as strategies adopted with varying degrees of success within the RUC case. In particular the use of 'coercive' change is interesting if we see it within the context of a policing command and control process. There is little doubt that 'making' change is easier within a policing or rule driven organisational environment (as one interviewee commented *'people don't often say 'no' when told to do*

something...'), but as Hart identifies, following that through with a participatory framework is vital for future success. As noted in Chapter Two, much of the research conducted into change in policing has been concerned with the introduction of community policing methodologies into previously top down structures. The Israeli example (Weisbund, Shalev et al. 2002) illustrates an instance of a weak implantation process, further hampered by weak external leadership. Interestingly, one of the motors of the unsuccessful Israeli change process was the intervention of international agents (in this case the Harvard International policing programme) that encouraged commanders to seek change, without the sufficient (and considerable) political and organisational support needed to give the programme a chance of success. Within the RUC case the role of external and international agents was a mostly positive and reinforcing one, principally because is was an 'add on' to a strong central process, rather than an instigator or lynchpin. Scarcity of resources was another example of a weak point in the Israeli experience: a situation not replicated by the RUC / PSNI case. The third and perhaps most important issue was a lack of political commitment to the Israeli project which ensured it faltered before it could properly take hold. Within the RUC case political commitment was absolute at the highest level, in terms of the two Governments, (although mixed at the level of regional political representation), and with it came resource leverage and additional support from a number of angles.

Other research which suggests that police organisations have difficulty with structural change and in particular the flattening of hierarchies, is only partially played out in the RUC case (Maquire, Shin et al. 2003). While there was certainly an issue with engaging elements of the RUC leadership in reflective practice around what change would mean, the DCU's went through a fairly straightforward process of reorganisation in which they slimed down, refocused organisational relationships and began to relate more closely to their communities and to local political representatives.

Aogan Mulcachy's (Mulcachy 2006) work on organisational memory within the RUC itself gives an interesting perspective on the role of the past in policing organisations in areas of conflict. The experience of the RUC as a policing organisation going through a process of discontinuous change is not unique but is highly unusual in its degree of success. Mulcahy,

pinpoints attempts at 'legitimisation' of the organisation through its historical experience, just as those opposed to it would use history as a de-legitimisation factor. This suggests that the issue of 'managing history' within such change processes is vital to the achievement of the change strategy's goals. Densten in his study on the interplay of police leadership roles and rank is also important in this regard. By drawing on a number of psychological studies of police and leadership he concludes that a critical issue for police organisations who are planning and implementing change programmes is 'how to lead' senior police officers (Densten 2003). His concern is to uncover the attributes of leadership through a multilevel perspective to gauge whether there are significant differences in 'leadership' at various senior police ranks. This study supports previous work which suggests that senior police officers respond positively to transformational leadership behaviours and transactional leadership behaviours of contingent reward (Lowe, Kroeck et al. 1996) However, Densten's study also suggests that rank is a factor which may be related to the hierarchical structure of the organisation. This factor is significant in the NI Police example because of the general way in which Local District Commanders were appointed: in most cases by seniority and rank. While some of those involved in the change process expressed there concern at the appropriateness of these appointments (some of the first round of DC's only stayed in post a few months before leaving on a generous voluntary severance package), the concern for rank, seniority and gravitas within the organisation seems to have been understood, consciously or unconsciously at a higher level.

The wider literature on policing and leadership also makes reference to the responses of different police ranks to particular leadership behaviours. Densten (2003) drawing on a number of psychological studies of police and leadership concludes that a critical issue for police organisations who are planning and implementing change programmes is 'how to lead' senior police officers. Morreale's work also cites the strong support for transformational leadership styles in law enforcement organisations (Morreale 2005). This is especially significant since policing itself is going through a significant process of change at present, with the downgrading of the 'old style' para-military policing function, allowing police organisations to embrace a new community policing or community safety role. This trend (most prominent in Europe and North America) has created in itself a need for the policing community to develop a significant skills base in organisational change (Greene and Mastrofsky 1988; Skogan 1995; Feltes 2002). The

experience of the RUC and the 'charismatic' leadership behaviours displayed within the case reinforce the significance of such leadership characteristics within change processes generally, and change within policing organisations in particular.

Other authors have explored the role of policing change and the impact of 'new public management', 'total quality management' as well as the introduction of strategic management processes that are specifically designed for delivery of police services (Duncan, Mouly et al. 2001; Walsh 2001; Hoque, Arends et al. 2004). The need to align vision, culture and implementation are underlined in these works, but they tend to take their lead (and their data) from police organisations operating in stable political environments with change processes that may be discontinuous but present less global challenges to the existing order than those that faced the RUC. In this the study of the RUC represents a different dimension to policing change – one which aligns the type of community policing implementation which is common although challenging with comprehensive structural change and emotion evoking symbolic change within the context of communal conflict resolution.

There is an increasing body of literature which reflects the change processes of police organisations (as the 'lynchpin' of the democratic process) within societies undergoing political upheaval and internecine conflict. Attempts to reform and rebuild the policing and military infrastructure within these contexts (Iraq, Palestine, Afghanistan, Bosnia, South Africa etc) is in general carried out by members of western police forces, themselves aware of the challenges facing modern police forces even in normalised environments. Some work has been done on policing within these 'transitional' contexts, but most of it comes from a criminology perspective, with a strong emphasis on the primacy of human rights (Levin, Ngubeni et al. 1994; Jarman 2000). The experience of the RUC suggests that there is much for management scholars to learn from such case studies in change that lies outside, and is frequently missed, by its more traditional scholarly constituency of political scientists, criminologists and anthropologists.

CHAPTER EIGHT CONCLUSION

"We are willing to play our part in this process by participating in the new policing institutions, the Policing Board and the District Policing Partnerships. We are also willing to encourage others, particularly young nationalists - to do likewise by seeking careers in the Police Service of Northern Ireland. We will not allow bullying or intimidation from any quarter to deter us," he said.

Deputy Leader of the SDLP, Seamus Mallon MP speaking to the BBC (27th January 2000)

"No-one should underestimate the great hurt that altering the title of the RUC will cause to my members, to past members, to injured members, to their families and to bereaved families. I understand the feelings of my members because I share those feelings. If we are to endure this great hurt proposed then I hope the gains envisaged are demonstrable and achievable".

Chief Constable Ronnie Flanagan speaking to be the BBC (31st October 2001)

The passages above reflect both the difficulties and the pragmatism that characterise the process of policing change in Northern Ireland. In the first Seamus Mallon, the Deputy Leader of the SDLP and the man who had characterised the RUC as '99% Protestant and 100% unionist' commits his Party to possible participation in the structures and reality of policing, providing change was implemented. In the second, Ronnie Flanagan, RUC Chief Constable, ex head of Special Branch, accepts with some difficulty the need to change and to relinquish the name which was central to pre-Patten policing identity. Both individuals were actors in the process and both ultimately needed to argue for change against the views of many of their supporters and to face down considerable opposition.

This research has attempted to make a small contribution to understanding and explaining that story of policing change which was so central to the wider political process in Northern Ireland. However, unlike much of the existing research on policing in NI, it uses the organisation as its central focus, rather than political development, legal frameworks, or the primacy of human rights. This is not to say that the limited amount of work which has been done on the RUC change process from these perspectives is not useful and illuminating, for much of it is. However, it omits the crucial internal dimension which is so important to an understanding of

this complex and multi-faceted process. Some of the reasons for such a lack of internal organisational research are obvious. As Chapter Four reflects, access to the organisation has not always been easy to achieve, and an organisation like the PSNI which is probably the most overseen police force in Western Europe, is understandably tetchy with the idea of answering yet more questions. In addition, most of those who would seek to do research on the police in NI approach it from positions which essentially reflect the historic role played by the police within the conflict: in other words, they tend to be lawyers, criminologists, sociologists, anthropologists or journalists who have an interest in the police's role as a protagonist. Research that looks at the organisation and its interaction with its external environment in relatively unusual, particularly when it brings a temporal dimension to organisational development.

A processual perspective was adopted, because this approach facilitated an enquiry into the contextual pressures which impacted upon the organisation and its actions and reactions. In order to focus the research two central questions were developed, with two different orientations. The first of these asked:

How did the Police in Northern Ireland go about conducting a process of organisational change?

The aim of this question was to describe and explain the process of change embarked upon by the RUC and to do that within the broader context of the environment in which the change occurred. Chapter Six outlines in detail the four identified phases of change: the pre-story, when change was looming on the horizon; the second stage at which the complexion of change begins to be defined; the third and most dynamic phase when change is implemented and; the forth phase when the process begins to settle down to a period of equilibrium. All of these phases contain important change 'dramas' (Pettigrew 1997). Significant 'motifs' appear, some of which are only present within a discrete phase, and others which reappear throughout the narrative as a whole. From these motifs, four important themes are isolated and explored in Chapter Seven. These are: the significance of leadership; the importance of resources; the role of external agents and; the pace and sequencing of the change process.

The second question posed is more directly concerned with decisions around change within the organisation itself. It read:

Was the change strategy adopted appropriate?

When this research considers appropriateness, it does so within the context of a strategy which was suitable or fitting for the circumstances that confronted the organisation at that time. The research boundaries were of course, circumscribed by limitations of access and the practical reality of a single researcher and a large organisation. But what is clear is that the strategy adopted by the RUC to manage the change was emergent rather than planned, and was intensely politically reactive to the environmental challenges it faced. The best assessment that can be made is that while a 'plan' for the change did exist, *before* and *after* the Patten Report, the strategy process ebbed and flowed through political and social iterations, with one underlying aim - of organisational survival within a recognisable form. This may be a case study of transformational change in a policing organisation, but it is most visibly a study of change under environmental pressure. That process was facilitated by appropriate leadership at distinct levels, by the availability of financial resources and assistance of both professional consultants of change and others who understood the political and cultural dynamics at work from an external perspective and had what Hambrick, Nadler & Tushman (1998) describe as 'referent' power. The pace and the sequencing which were not at all times within the organisation's control, were used where possible to the organisations advantage, but more through intuition than transparent knowledge or verbalised strategy. The significance of what Dawson refers to as 'inarticulate intelligence' (2003b) was enormous, as was the intensely political nature of the process and of the actions of organisational leaders at all levels. It's also fairly clear from source material and interviews that not all members of the Top Team were entirely in favour of the change, but mechanisms were developed to pull them into the process (like the reference group set up to 'test' new policing methods), or to push them out of it (in the case of the Deputy Chief Constable whose credibility was damaged almost from the outset). Being inside or outside this circle seems to have been entirely the judgement of the Chief Constable, who made clear assessments about the significance of keeping groups and individuals 'on board'. There is little question that the strategy worked, or worked well enough to keep the organisation functioning through the

transition, restructured and reinvested with new symbols, title and a new identity. These changes contributed to eventual cross-party participation on the Policing Board – an achievement in policing which was regarded as improbable in the early days of the peace process. The reality of this achievement would lead to the conclusion that the strategy adopted, while not perfect, was as appropriate as it could be in such a rapidly changing environment.

The research itself has been as iterative and challenging as the RUC's change process. Initial difficulties with access eventually gave way to extremely good quality interviews and a ready supply of internal source material. The data analysis process was an uphill struggle as the jigsaw puzzle of complex change had to be put back together in a way that made the picture discernable. Relating the intricate nature of the change back to existing research also presented a challenge because of the enormous body of research on change that already exists and the multi-dimensional nature of the RUC experience. In the end, the research concentrated on areas which stood out most clearly from the norm, or represented particularly issues of concern for the police: leadership, structure, symbols, resources and external support with internal capacity building.

This research has set out to make a contribution to the existing literature in three areas: that of the understanding of organisational change generally, and strategic change in particular; change in policing organisations; and literature on processual methodology.

In terms of the underlying motors of change (Van de Ven & Poole 1995), the research identifies two motors at work within the RUC case: that of the purposeful planning teleological motor and dialectical motor, which in this case is the environmental as a driver of change and adaptation. As such it provides an empirical example of these two change drivers interacting within an organisational context. The case also represents an example of episodic change, characterised as infrequent, discontinuous and intentional (Weick & Quinn 1999). In this it adds to Gersick's work on in importance of 'deep structure' within organisations, and how such structures can prevent adaptation and contribute to whole scale transformations (Gersick 1991). The research also adds to understanding of the role of institutional isomorphism in large organisations that look to international equivalents for validation and best practice, rather than domestic associates.

In relation to strategic change the research contributes to knowledge of the strategy process under environmental pressure, and the interactions of organisational strategies and their environment. It also underlines the significance of top-team leadership as a bridge between strategy and delivery and the significance of resources as a change lever. Mintzberg, Ahlstrand & Lampel comment that '*power relations surround organisations; they also infuse them*' (1998:235). The RUC case can be read as a distinct illustration of the use of power both within an organisation to drive through a change process and between an organisation and its environment to create the conditions in which change becomes the only option. This duality between internal and external processes is rarely focused on in strategy research, although obviously the dimension of power is a common concern. This research looks at the complex interaction between strategy internally, and the pressures that extreme external contexts represent.

In contrast, the implementation of change is a subject which has received much attention, in terms of both theory and practice. As we have seen, most guidance on implementation tends to follow the general thrust of Kotter's 'Eight Step Change Model' (Kotter 1996). However, the RUC experience illustrates that while creating a 'sense of urgency' is extremely important in general within organisational contexts, the process of change in the RUC was helped by taking an almost diametrically opposite approach. By actively seeking to calm the organisation, reiterating constantly and publicly its strength and history, Flanagan got the organisation through the most difficult and most volatile stage, while preparing for change in the top team. Maybe the lesson of the RUC experience is that when the activity of an organisation is vital to how a society operates, and the stakes are sky high, and the external environment volatile, a sense of urgency among the entire organisation (as Kotter prescribes) is not what is needed. Instead, gentle movement ahead, while taking great care to preserve the deep structure may be a better approach. The role that can be played by external agents as instigators and reinforcers within a process of change is also outlined and the potential significance of these interventions defined.

The research also adds to our understanding of the interaction between political processes and public sector organisations. Change under political pressure is not an uncommon phenomenon,

but is rarely explored. In terms of policing change, the RUC case is unusual, but not entirely alone. Recent research on change within policing contexts has centred on the implementation of 'policing with the community' strategies (Gee 1998; Maquire 2003). While community policing methodologies represented the core delivery aspect of the RUC's change agenda, the process went much further than that, encompassing a transformational change process from one organisational state to another. This is an unusually comprehensive change process for a policing organisation within stable democratic states, but one which is not without precedent. South Africa, Iraq, Palestine, Bosnia and Afghanistan all spring to mind as states within which policing organisations are at various points in transition processes. Indeed, if impartial policing is the lynchpin of democratic governance (Ellison 2007), then the reform of policing within societies under transition is a core component of institutional change. This research is the first to provide a glimpse inside a policing organisation undergoing such change, and, as such it underlines the importance of certain central themes. The first is unequivocal overarching political support. We have seen how the absence of such support in Israel fatally undermined a policing change process. In NI, the situation was the reverse, with the political infrastructure (in terms of the two governments) firmly behind the change process, and the wider political infrastructure designed to support it. These second is the importance of independent oversight both as a change lever and a quality / progress check. The Oversight Commission gave the internal change team a leverage point ('*its not us, its them..*' - even if this is only half true). It also gave those outside a firm evaluative mechanism with which to measure change – crucial for political and social buy-in. The third point is the significance of appropriate multi-level transformational leadership, and particularly leadership at the top, to act on conflict 'hot spots' and to retain organisational cohesion when change dynamics are pulling the organisation in many directions. Such leadership needs to be politically skilled and in possession of enough power to push through difficult and challenging points in the change process. The last is the need for quite significant resources both to facilitate staff turnover where necessary, and to support those remaining and those engaged in the change. Such resources may be largely financial but the significance of intellectual support and internal capacity building should not be underestimated. As the RUC case has shown, widening horizons to new possibilities of development can be a change motor in itself.

By adopting a processual approach the research adds another case study to the extensive body of process based literature which already exists. It also brings an additional perspective to the actual, processual, research process on which there is comparatively little written. It underlines the nature of the access negotiation process and the need for researchers to be clear about their objectives when conducting sensitive research. Many authors have commented on the usefulness of serendipity to the research process. Actively looking for connections that might benefit the research helps serendipity along, but so does having existing contacts within the wider organisational environment. In a research context where access is likely to be difficult, cultivating a wider network of people who can be called on to exert some referent power (Hambrick, Nadler & Tushman 1998) is invaluable.

This case study of policing change has limitations, some of which have been mentioned above. Relying on one large case rather than using of multiple cases, internally or between organisations, means that the results lack transferability to some degree. Limitations on access and in particular, the concentration on data from the top of the organisation may expose it to the legitimate criticism that it provides only an elitist perspective, and tells only part of the story. This may be partly true. However, the research methodology was settled upon through a negotiated process, and the compromises made were both unavoidable and inevitable given the highly political nature of the process and the, at times legitimate, concerns of the organisation itself. The degree of leverage which was exerted to get access in the first place was considerable, and both the interview data and case documentation reflects a candour not previously attained by research into the RUC. Every attempt has been made to obtain data from other levels and at times, this has been achieved (Jarman 2000).

However, like all research this story of policing change leaves many unanswered questions. The change in the political environment and the settling down of the policing situation since this research fieldwork was conducted may now mean that multiple level work could be possible, looking at the penetration of cultural change at multiple levels within the organisation. Even though the focus of this research was the organisation itself, the role of external individuals and organisations was very significant to the successful implementation of change. Further empirical work on the influence and utilization of external change agents in discontinuous change

processes would be useful. Comparative issues also arise in relation to public sector change 'under pressure' and also the usefulness of external, independent oversight bodies for noteworthy change processes which have a particular significance to how a sector operates or those that seek or require wider, social support. The political nature of implementing and leading change has been a major and recurring theme and one that would benefit from further empirical reflection, perhaps with an emphasis on the interaction between transformational leadership (charismatic or not) and its environmental context.

APPENDIX 1

26th March 2003

Mr Roy Toner
Head of Corporate Development and Change Management
Brooklyn

Dear Mr Toner

I am a doctoral student based in the School of Business Studies, Trinity College, Dublin, working on the subject of organisational change. Recently I met with your colleague's Joe Stewart and ACC. Stephen White to discuss the possibility of using the PSNI as a case study for my research.

Both suggested that I contact you officially to seek your support in conducting the research, to inform you of its objectives and clarify how it may be of help to you and your organisation as you continue to undergo this current change process.

As you will see from the research proposal accompanying this letter, the work seeks to explore and explain the process of organisational change undergone by the PSNI in the period from 1998 to the present day. The project will look at the experience of the PSNI within a framework of change and is specifically concerned with issues such as internal communication through ongoing change, leadership, strategic planning, the voluntary severance scheme and the role of internal and external change agents in facilitating this process.

The methodological framework consists of a case study approach, using group and individual semi-structured interviews to collect data, as well as the use of primary data from within the organisation, where available. I'm sure you will agree that the process of change undergone by the PSNI to date is a huge subject for study and as the research develops it will become clearer how many interviews should be conducted, with whom and what subjects for discussion are most relevant to the research.

The preliminary research proposal is attached for your information. I hope that you will find it interesting. I have been very encouraged to date by not only the helpfulness with which your organisation has greeted me, but also with the interest and enthusiasm its members have shown to this project.

Thank you for your time. I'm sure that you would like to discuss this proposal further, so please don't hesitate to contact me. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Joanne Murphy

jmurph13@tcd.ie

Tel 02890 286051 Mob. 07773 236227
cc. Joe Stewart, ACC Stephen White (by email)

APPENDIX 2

Case Study Protocol

1. *Overview of the project objectives*

The project objective is to collect sufficient information to be able to analyse the process of organizational change within the police in Northern Ireland. In particular the objective of the data collection is to answer the projects research questions;

How did the Police in Northern Ireland go about conducting a process of organisational change?

Was the change strategy adopted appropriate? How was the change management task defined?

What were identified as the critical factors?

How were these factors established, tracked and evaluated?

2. *Field procedures*

It is important that when attending interviewers the investigator brings **photographic ID** and ensures that she also has the following documents;

- A copy of interviewee's 'interview questions' document
- A copy of the investigators 'interview questions' document
- A copy of 'timeline' document
- A copy of updated research proposal
- A copy of original access agreement
- A copy of the 'access negotiation' letter

It is also essential that the researcher has with her a **voice recorder, spare batteries, and spare tapes**. A **notepad and pen** for use during the interview are to be used as an additional data collection method and safeguard.

It is also **essential that the investigator arrives fifteen minutes early** for each interview appointment as previous research has shown that entrance security considerably adds to travelling time.

The question of **recording interviews must be discussed with each interviewee and a commitment made to make interview transcript available if requested**.

Interviewees should be reminded that all information is **confidential** and **anonymous** and that they can request that data be **deleted from the interview record** when they receive the transcript.

3. *Questions*

Particular issues of significance in general in the study or with particular interviewee's are to be noted by hand on individual 'interviewee questions' document (Appendix ?) and recorded in the research diary.

4. *Guide for the report*

As all the interviewers are to be recorded and transcribed it is not necessary for a report 'outline' to be kept in mind at this stage.

APPENDIX 3

Map of Research Model to Interview Questions (External)

Research Model	*Corresponding Question(s)*
1. Process based	2 /
2. Longitudinal	2 /
3. Multi-method	
4. Internal Communication	4 /
5. External communication	4 /
6. Recruitment	4 /
7. Training	4 /
8. Community policing	4 /
9. Structural change	4 / 11 /
10. Leadership	11 / 12
11. Change incentives	4 /
12. External developments	7 / 8 / 10 / 18 / 19
13. Internal developments	7 / 8 / 10 / 18
14. External change agents (identification and role)	1 / 14 / 15 / 16 / 17 / 18 / 20
15. Internal change agents (identification and role)	14 / 15 / 16 / 17
16. Context	9 / 8 / 19
17. Time	7 / 9 / 19
18. Differential Outcomes	7 / 12 / 17
19. Variance of intention and outcome	7 / 13 / 17
20. Difficulties of implementation	7 / 13 / 17
21. Emergent strategy	3 / 13 / 21/ 22
22. Contradictions in strategy	10 /

Map of Research Model to Interview Questions (Internal)

Research Model	*Corresponding Question(s)*
23. Process based	2 / 3
24. Longitudinal	2 / 6
25. Multi-method	
26. Internal Communication	2 /
27. External communication	2 /
28. Recruitment	2 /
29. Training	2 /
30. Community policing	2 /
31. Structural change	2 / 8
32. Leadership	5 / 8 / 9
33. Change incentives	2 / 15
34. External developments	4 / 12 / 13
35. Internal developments	3 / 4 / 5 / 7 / 13 / 15
36. External change agents (identification and role)	1 / 6 / 11 / 12 / 13 / 14
37. Internal change agents (identification and role)	1 / 5 / 11
38. Context	3 / 5 / 6 / 17
39. Time	1 / 5 / 6
40. Differential Outcomes	3 / 8 / 16
41. Variance of intention and outcome	3 / 16 / 18 / 19
42. Difficulties of implementation	3 / 6 / 9 / 11 / 16
43. Changes in direction / emergent strategy	1 / 6 / 16 / 18 / 19
44. Contradictions in strategy	3 / 16 / 18 / 19

APPENDIX 4

RUC – PSNI: A Study in Organisational Change

Interview Questions - External

1. How would you describe your role and relationship to the PSNI change process?
2. When did your involvement in the process begin / cease?
3. From your perspective, how was the change management task defined within the PSNI? When? And by Whom?
4. Can you describe to me the process of development that characterised organisational change in the PSNI from the fundamental review in 1996 in terms of
    - Structure
    - Recruitment and training
    - Communication

      internal

      external
    - Human Resource Restructuring
    - Policing with the Community
5. Within the change process, what were the main issues that arose?
6. What internal and external factors impacted upon this change?
7. Was the timing of events significant?
8. Were there any resource issues which impacted upon the change?
9. How important was leadership within the change process, at all levels?
10. In what respects was the leadership given effective / ineffective?
11. From your perspective, how were issues that arose from the process of change managed?

12. Were specific interventionist strategies used to ameliorate the difficulties of change?

13. What kind of support did the PSNI require from external facilitators / consultants / mediators?

14. How did they come to understand that this support was necessary?

15. How well do you think that such external support was used by the PSNI throughout the process?

    How significant was this 'international' aspect of change process

16. What effect did the wider environment have on the change process?

17. In your view, how important has the role of external agents been in the PSNI change process?

18. Do you believe the strategy employed during the change process was appropriate?

19. What factors would you ascribe to its appropriateness (or otherwise)?

APPENDIX 5

RUC to PSNI: A Study in Organisational Change

Interview Questions – PSNI Internal

1. From your perspective, how was the change management task defined within the PSNI?

   When was it defined?

   And by whom?

2. Can you describe to me the process development that characterised organisational change in the PSNI from the fundamental review in 1996 in terms of

   - Structure
   - Recruitment and training
   - Communication

     internal

     external
   - Human resource restructuring
   - Policing with the community

3. Within the change process, what were the main issues that arose?
4. What internal and external factors impacted upon this change
5. Was the timing of events significant?
6. What effect did the wider environment have on the change process?
7. Were there any resource issues that affected the pace of change?
8. How important was leadership within the change process, at all levels?
9. In what respects was leadership given effective / ineffective?
10. How did you attempt to manage the issues that arose from this process of change?

11. Did you use any specific interventionist strategies to ameliorate the difficulties of change?

12. Can you describe the role of the Oversight bodies – did they facilitate or make more difficult the change process?

13. A number of external individuals and organisations were involved in the change. Was this useful? How did their involvement effect the process?

14. A number of members of the PSNI participated in international conferences during the change period (SA, Belgium etc). What role do you think such international learning played in the process?

15. Significant restructuring occurred within the organisation in terms of human resources – what effect did this have on the organisation as a whole and the change process in particular?

16. For what aspects of the organisation did change work well?

17. Why, in these contexts and not others?

18. Would you describe the strategy adopted for the change process as being appropriate?

19. Why would you regard it as appropriate / otherwise?

APPENDIX 6

ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE IN THE NORTHERN IRELAND POLICE

Timeline of Events

1996
January
February
March
April
May
June
July
August
September
October
November
December

1997
January
February
March
April
May
June
July
August
September
October
November
December

1998
January
February
March
April
May
June
July
August
September
October

November
December

1999
January
February
March
April
May
June
July
August
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October
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2000
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2001
January
February
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June
July
August
September
October
November
December

2002

January
February
March
April
May
June
July
August
September
October
November
December

2003
January
February
March
April
May
June
July
August
September
October
November
December

2004
January
February
March
April
May
June
July
August
September
October
November
December

APPENDIX 7

ILLUSTRATION OF START LIST OF CODES

INTERNAL CONTEXT		
Potential codes	**Abbreviations**	**Research Question**
Organisational Change Pre-dating Patten	(PREP)	A, D, C, E
Resistance to Change	(RC)	A
Alienation from external support	(AES)	E
Severance	(SEV)	A, E
Implementation	(IMP)	A, B
Recruitment	(REC)	A
George Cross and Legacy issues	(GCL)	A, D, E
Change Plan	(CP)	A, B, C,
DCU	(DCU)	D, E
Manage impacts of change	(MC)	A, B, E
Information Technology	(IT)	C, E
Deputy Chief Constable	(DCC)	E
Special Branch	(SB)	A, C
Symbols	(SYM)	A, C, D
Community Policing	(CP)	C
Communication	(COM)	C

Finance	(FIN)	C, D,E
Levels of Leadership	(LL)	B, D,E
Role of RUC Culture	(RUCC)	C, E
Organisational Memory	(OM)	D, E
Training	(TR)	D, E
Differential Pace of Change	(DPC)	A, B

EXTERNAL CONTEXT		
Oversight Commission	(OC)	C, D, E
Role of Nationalist Community	(NAT)	D, E
Role of Unionist community	(UNI)	D, E
Policing Board	(PB)	C, D
Patten	(P)	C
Legislation	(LEG)	C
External Change Agents	(ECA)	A, D, E
Role of external events	(EXEV)	C, D, E
International dimension	(ID)	C, E
Appropriateness of strategy	(APPS)	A, B

Appendix 8

PRIMARY AND SUB CODES - INTERNAL	
Primary codes	***Sub codes***
Organisational Change Pre-dating Patten (PREP)	Fundamental Review - (PREP-FR) HMIC reports (PREP-HMIC) CR work (PREP-CR)
Resistance to Change (RC)	
Alienation from external support (AES)	Unionism (AES-UN)
Severance (SEV)	
Implementation (IMP)	Initial stages (IMP-IS) Front ending difficult decisions (FE) Morale as Implementation factor (MI)
Recruitment (REC)	New Recruits (REC-NR)
Change Plan (CP)	Differences of opinion (CP-DO) Manage impacts of change (CP-MC)
DCU (DCU)	Training sub-code (DCU-T)
Information Technology (IT)	Capacity Issues (IT-CP)
Deputy Chief Constable (DCC)	Exclusion from Process (DCC-EP)
Special Branch (SB)	
Symbols (SYM)	Name (SYM -N) Badge (SYM -B) Crest (SYM-CR) Uniform (SYM-U) George Cross and Legacy issues (SYM- GCL)
Community Policing (CP)	
Communication (COM)	Consultants (COM-Con) Director of Communications (COM-DOC) Change Team (COM-CT)

Finance (FIN)	
Levels of Leadership (LL)	Chief Constable (LL-CC) Change Team (LL-CT) DCU (LL-DCU)
Role of RUC Culture (RUCC)	
Organisational Memory (OM)	
Training (TR)	DCU's (TR-DCU)
Differential Pace of Change (DPC)	

APPENDIX 9 EXTERNAL CODES AND SUB CODES

Primary Codes	*Sub codes*
Oversight Commission (OC)	
Role of Nationalist Community (NAT)	Moderate nationalism (NAT- M) Republicanism (NAT-R) Catholic Church (NAT – CC)
Role of Unionist community (UNI)	Political campaign (UNI-PC) Churches reaction (UNI- CR)
Policing Board (PB)	
Patten (P)	Meetings (P-M) Report (P-R) Consultation (P-C)
Legislation (LEG)	
External Change Agents (ECA)	Consultants (ECA-C) Academics (ECA-A) CR practitioners (ECA-CR)
Role of external events (EXEV)	Breakdown in ceasefire (EXEV-BC) Drumcree (EXEV-D) Omagh (EXEV-O)
International dimension (ID)	USA (ID-US) Belgium (ID-B) SA (ID-SA)

APPENDIX 10

INTERNAL – EXTERNAL INTERACTION	
Primary codes	***Sub codes***
Appropriateness of strategy (APPS)	Internal (APPS-I) External (APPS-E)
Interaction between Patten and Fundamental Review (P-FR)	
Individuals as drivers of change (IND)	Internal (IND-I) External (IND-E)
Role of Police Culture (PC)	
Clash of Cultures CR / RUC (CR-RUC)	Emergent understanding of divided society model (CR-RUC DD)
Isomorphism in policing generally (ISO)	
Succession (SUC)	

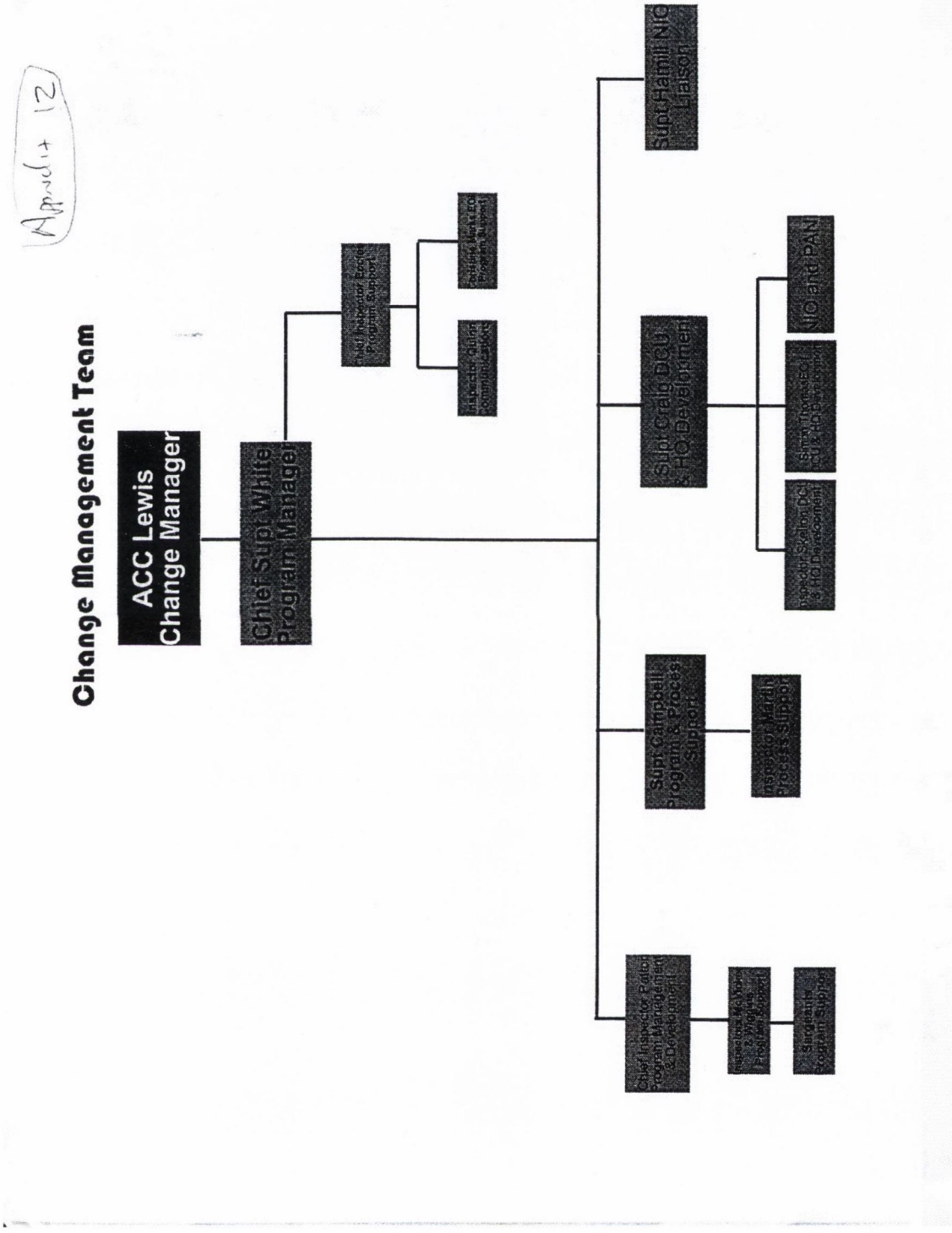
APPENDIX 11

TIMELINE

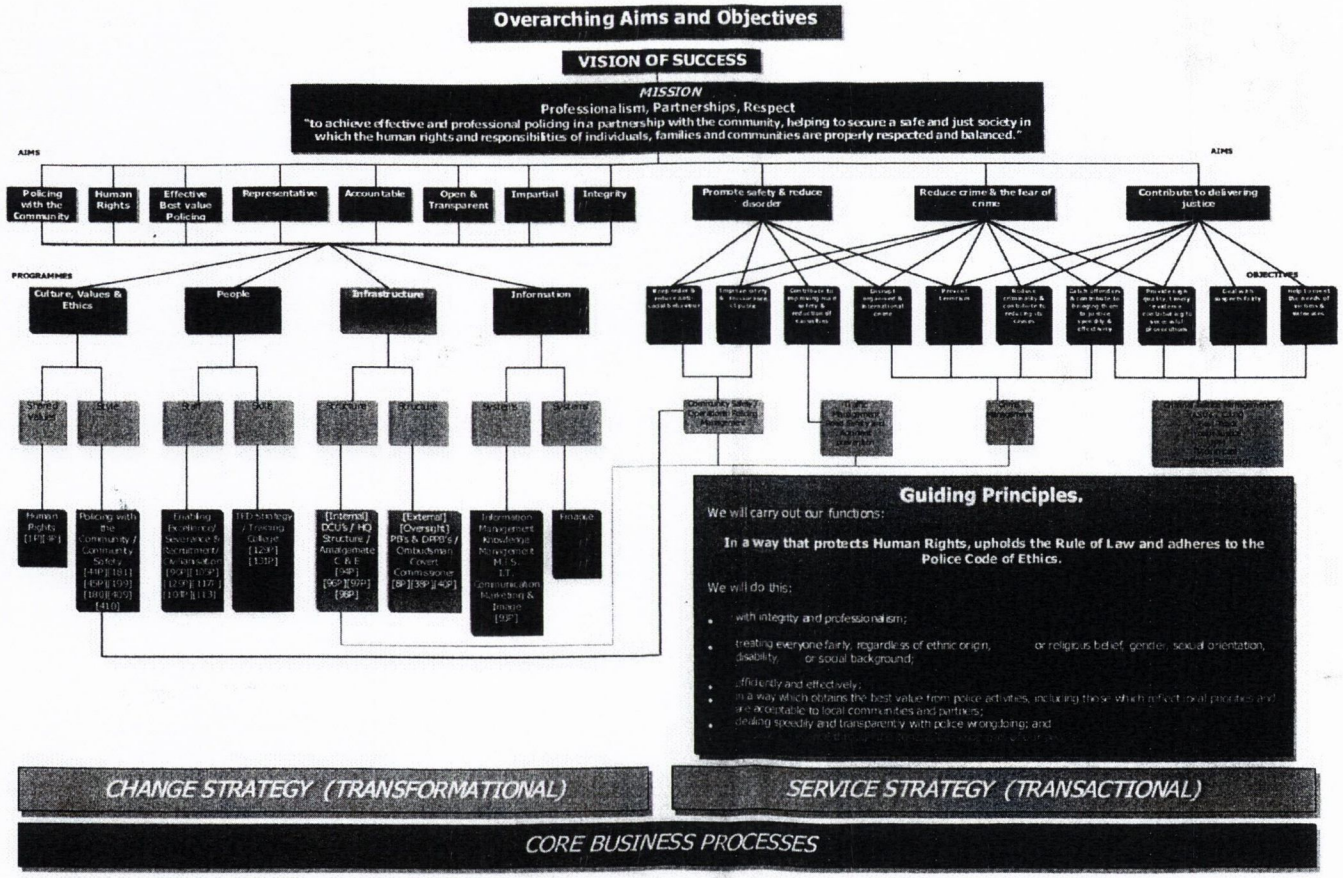
1994	
August	IRA ceasefire
October	Combined Loyalist Military Command Ceasefire
1995	
July	1st Drumcree Standoff
1996	
February	IRA ceasefire ends with bombing of Canary Wharf
	Ronnie Flanagan becomes Deputy Chief Constable RUC
April	RUC Fundamental Review
June	Policing our Divided Society Programme (PODs) suspended
July	2nd Drumcree – widespread nationalist rioting
November	Ronnie Flanagan succeeds Hugh Annsley as RUC Chief Constable
1997	
May	British Labour Party win landslide victory in UK general election
June	PODs recommences
July	3rd Drumcree widespread nationalist rioting
	Renewed IRA ceasefire
September	All Party Talks resume
1998	
April	The Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement is signed
May	Referenda in NI and RoI support Agreement

June		NI Assembly Elections are held
		The Independent Commission on Policing in Northern Ireland (Patten Commission) appointed
July		4th Drumcree with widespread loyalist rioting
August		Omagh Bomb
	1999	
September		RUC establishes Change Team under ACC Tim Lewis
		Patten Report is Published
	2000	
April		Agreement reached internally on new DCU structures
May		Tom Constantine appointed Oversight Commissioner
		Police Act 2000 published
	2001	
January		Oversight Commissioner's First Report Published
August		SDLP endorses new Police Service
November		Name changes from RUC to PSNI
		First recruits to PSNI begin training
	2002	
March		Flanagan retires
April		First recruits to PSNI graduate
September		Hugh Orde takes over as Chief Constable

APPENDIX 12

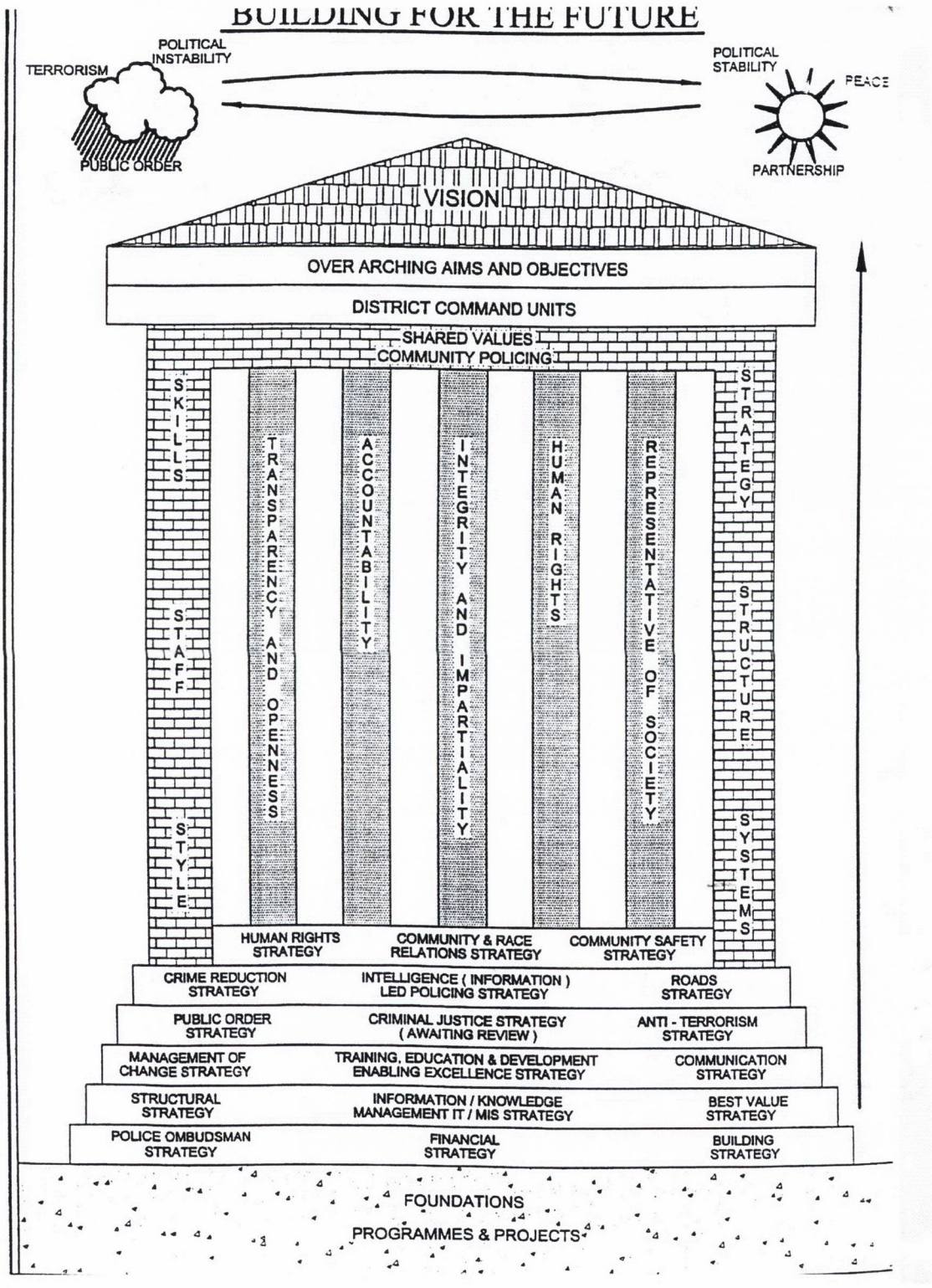

Change Management Team
ACC Lewis
Change Manager
Chief Supt White
Program Manager
Supt Hamil NIC
Liaison
Supt Craig DCU
HO Development
NIC and PAN
Supt Campbell
Program & Process
Support
Chief Inspector Patton
Program Management
& Development

APPENDIX 13



Overarching Aims and Objectives
VISION OF SUCCESS
MISSION
Professionalism, Partnerships, Respect
"to achieve effective and professional policing in a partnership with the community, helping to secure a safe and just society in which the human rights and responsibilities of individuals, families and communities are properly respected and balanced."
AIMS
Policing with the Community
Human Rights
Effective Best value Policing
Representative
Accountable
Open & Transparent
Impartial
Integrity
Promote safety & reduce disorder
Reduce crime & the fear of crime
Contribute to delivering justice
AIMS
PROGRAMMES
Culture, Values & Ethics
People
Infrastructure
Information
OBJECTIVES
Guiding Principles.
We will carry out our functions:
In a way that protects Human Rights, upholds the Rule of Law and adheres to the Police Code of Ethics.
We will do this:
with integrity and professionalism;
treating everyone fairly, regardless of ethnic origin, or religious belief, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or social background;
efficiently and effectively;
in a way which obtains the best value from police activities, including those which reflect local priorities and are acceptable to local communities and partners;
dealing speedily and transparently with police wrongdoing; and
CHANGE STRATEGY (TRANSFORMATIONAL)
SERVICE STRATEGY (TRANSACTIONAL)
CORE BUSINESS PROCESSES

APPENDIX 14


BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE
POLITICAL INSTABILITY
TERRORISM
PUBLIC ORDER
POLITICAL STABILITY
PEACE
PARTNERSHIP
VISION
OVER ARCHING AIMS AND OBJECTIVES
DISTRICT COMMAND UNITS
SHARED VALUES
COMMUNITY POLICING
SKILLS
STAFF
STYLE
TRANSPARENCY AND OPENNESS
ACCOUNTABILITY
INTEGRITY AND IMPARTIALITY
HUMAN RIGHTS
REPRESENTATIVE OF SOCIETY
STRATEGY
STRUCTURE
SYSTEMS
HUMAN RIGHTS STRATEGY
COMMUNITY & RACE RELATIONS STRATEGY
COMMUNITY SAFETY STRATEGY
CRIME REDUCTION STRATEGY
INTELLIGENCE (INFORMATION) LED POLICING STRATEGY
ROADS STRATEGY
PUBLIC ORDER STRATEGY
CRIMINAL JUSTICE STRATEGY (AWAITING REVIEW)
ANTI - TERRORISM STRATEGY
MANAGEMENT OF CHANGE STRATEGY
TRAINING, EDUCATION & DEVELOPMENT ENABLING EXCELLENCE STRATEGY
COMMUNICATION STRATEGY
STRUCTURAL STRATEGY
INFORMATION / KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT IT / MIS STRATEGY
BEST VALUE STRATEGY
POLICE OMBUDSMAN STRATEGY
FINANCIAL STRATEGY
BUILDING STRATEGY
FOUNDATIONS
PROGRAMMES & PROJECTS

APPENDIX 15

Interview list (Role and Rank)

1 Tom Constantine	Oversight Commission
2 Superintendent	PSNI
3 Chief Superintendent	PSNI
4 Assistant Chief Constable	PSNI
5 Assistant Chief Constable	PSNI
6 Assistant Chief Constable	PSNI
7 Ronnie Flanagan	PSNI
8 External Consultant	
9 Academic & Consultant	
10 Senior Official	Oversight Commission
11 Journalist	
12 Senior Personnel Manager	PSNI
13 Senior Manager	PSNI
14 Superintendent	PSNI
15 Chief Superintendent	PSNI
16 Academic & Consultant	
17 Superintendent	PSNI
18 Senior member	Policing Board
19 Staff Officer	Policing Board
20 Academic & Consultant	
21 Chief Superintendent	PSNI
22 Senior Political figure	
23 Chief Superintendent	PSNI
24 Community Relations Mediator	
25 External Consultant	
26 Community Relations Mediator	
27 Chief Inspector	PSNI
28 Senior Political Figure	

29 Academic & Consultant	
30 Assistant Chief Constable	PSNI
31 Chief Inspector	PSNI

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