



SECRETARY OF STATE FOR ENERGY  
THAMES HOUSE SOUTH  
MILLSBANK LONDON SW1P 4QJ

01 211 6402

*Cervo*

*NBAW*

CONFIDENTIAL

The Rt Hon Michael Heseltine MP  
Secretary of State for Defence  
Ministry of Defence  
Whitehall  
LONDON SW1

22 March 1985

OFFSHORE PROTECTION FORCE

When I wrote to Michael Jopling on 31 July 1984 agreeing that my officials should join in interdepartmental discussions on the future of fisheries protection arrangements, I said that we were conducting an internal review into our requirements for surveillance of offshore oil and gas installations, which the Offshore Protection Force currently undertakes on our behalf. This has been part of my general review of each of my Department's expenditure programmes to test value for money and relevance to objectives.

Our review is now complete. In considering the review I have taken into account the revised assessment of the threat of offshore installations (JIC(84)10 dated 12 October 1984). I have also borne in mind that responsibility for security operations, including the planning, co-ordination and provision of a response to the threat, rests with yourself and Leon Brittan.

My conclusion is that the offshore surveillance for which my Department at present pays makes no significant contribution to the effectiveness of the measures provided for under the Oilsafe arrangements (which have been set up since the objectives for the Offshore Protection Force were agreed in 1974). In my view no amount of random military patrols by sea, air or both would ensure the detection, let alone deterrence, of a potential aggressor.

In the circumstances I cannot authorise my Department to contribute towards the costs of the Offshore Protection Force in the future, and we will cease payment at the end of the current financial year. I clearly must end a public expenditure charge which on value for money grounds I cannot justify.

I am aware that we are still waiting for a report from the group of officials considering Michael Jopling's proposals for civilianisation





of fishery protection. My decision to withdraw from surveillance has already been conveyed at official level. I do not believe that it will affect the group's conclusions.

I am sending copies of this letter to the Prime Minister, Nigel Lawson, Leon Brittan, George Younger, Nicholas Edwards, Douglas Hurd, Norman Tebbit, Michael Jopling and Sir Robert Armstrong.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Peter Walker', with a large, stylized initial 'P'.

PETER WALKER



Fishery ~~limits~~ : FISHING IND,  
P+5.



22 MAR 1985





SECRETARY OF STATE FOR ENERGY  
THAMES HOUSE SOUTH  
MILLBANK LONDON SW1P 3BT

NBRM

01 211 6402

CDP  
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The Rt Hon Leon Brittan QC MP  
Secretary of State for the  
Home Department  
Queen Anne's Gate  
LONDON  
SW1H 9AT

4 June 1985

**OFFSHORE PROTECTION FORCE**

Thank you for your letter of 21<sup>st</sup> May.

My earlier letters explain the reasons why I believe the circumstances, which influenced decisions setting up the Offshore Protection Force in the mid-1970s, have changed. My Department's resources are now tightly squeezed. I have, therefore, had to scrutinise my expenditure programmes very thoroughly, justifying priorities on the basis of value for money.

The fencing of the key points (which were the subject of my letter to Peter Rees of 3 May) and contributing to the cost of patrolling offshore installations are not connected issues. The Offshore Protection Force, quite simply does not offer value for money, in terms of the objectives for my Department. The operational capability in respect of maritime counter terrorism is, of course, a matter for you and Michael Heseltine.

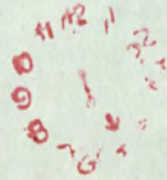
I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister, Willie Whitelaw, Nigel Lawson, Michael Heseltine, George Younger, Nicholas Edwards, Norman Tebbit, Michael Jopling, Douglas Hurd and Sir Robert Armstrong.

PETER WALKER



FISHING IND; Fishing Limits; P&S.

4 JUN 1985





CONFIDENTIAL



MBM

Treasury Chambers, Parliament Street, SW1P 3AG

Rt Hon Peter Walker MBE MP  
 Secretary of State for Energy  
 Department of Energy  
 Thames House South  
 Millbank  
 London  
 SW1P 4QJ

23 May 1985

**HIGH SECURITY FENCES/OFFSHORE PROTECTION FORCE**

Thank you for your letter of 3 <sup>was request if required</sup> May suggesting a way forward on the construction of the high security fences. Since your letter brings in the question of your continuing contribution to the Offshore Protection Force, it may also be convenient if I comment on the recent correspondence on this subject between you, Leon Brittan and Michael Heseltine, which was copied to the Chancellor.

I am grateful for your offer to find up to £18 million for the cost of the fences from within your own baseline. Whilst this is of course, in line with our agreement last Autumn at the bilateral that you would absorb the cost of all such additional bids, I recognise that it has not been easy for you to make this money available.

I think we are all agreed that the fences at the gas terminals should be the priority. My feeling is still that British Gas has a major interest in adequate protection of these terminals, given the cost to them of any disruption of supply. I would be grateful if you could consider whether the imminence of privatisation would make another approach to them worthwhile. It occurs to me that the prospect of having to answer to shareholders for the cost of disruption might make them more ready to pay than in the past.

If you conclude, however, that a further approach would not be worthwhile, I would have no objection to your paying for work on fences for the two gas terminals from the savings you have offered. From the figures in your letter it would also appear possible to construct the fences at the two Forties sites within the £2 million, £4 million and £4 million respectively that you are offering. Subject to my officials being satisfied that these savings can actually be delivered and that the costs of the fences can be contained within

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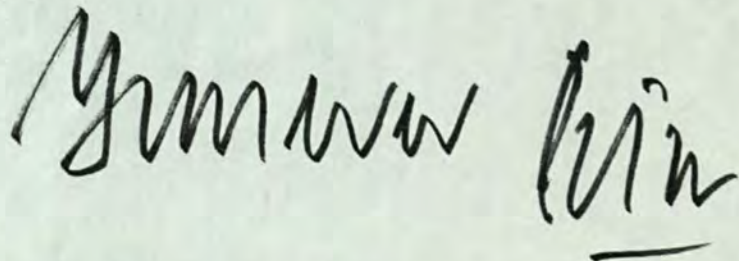
this profile I would be prepared for these fences to be constructed as well.

This leaves us with Sullom Voe and your proposal to cease your Department's contribution to the Offshore Protection Force. Whilst I have considerable sympathy with your view on the deterrent value of the OPF, I do not think it would be appropriate for you to take unilateral action in this manner. It is only reasonable in any customer/client relationship to give adequate notice of termination, but your letter to Michael Heseltine was sent barely a week before the end of the financial year. In addition your actions do have some bearing on the conclusion of the review of civilianisation of fishery protection being undertaken by officials. I agree with Michael and Leon that we should discuss your proposal when we consider the officials' report and that current arrangements should continue in the meantime. If we do decide that your role in the OPF should be ended, I shall of course, have an interest in ensuring that that takes places as speedily as possible.

At the risk of further complicating our discussions, I think we shall need to consider the need for High Security Fencing at Sullom Voe at the same time. It seems to me that neither an HSF at Sullom Voe nor the OPF are of similar priority for expenditure on the HSFs at the other sites. Sullom Voe is particularly remote, George Younger is having difficulty over its policing (without which the HSF is pointless) and the cost of fencing is relatively high. It may be that we can do without either the OPF or the force at Sullom Voe, but I am prepared to leave this until we meet. I should find it helpful for our discussion if the case for providing an HSF at Sullom Voe could be updated and compared with the case for continuing an OPF presence.

Finally, I have to say that, although I appreciate the reductions you have made elsewhere in your programme to accommodate the cost of the fences, this does not mean that your programme will be exempt from scrutiny in the forthcoming PES round. The round has already the makings of being another difficult one and I shall be pressing colleagues, including yourself, hard for savings.

I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister, Willie Whitelaw, Leon Brittan, Michael Heseltine, George Younger, Nicholas Edwards, Douglas Hurd, Norman Tebbit, Michael Jopling and Sir Robert Armstrong.



PETER REES

28 MAY 1985

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QUEEN ANNE'S GATE LONDON SW1H 9AT

21 May 1985

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*Peter,*

HIGH SECURITY FENCES

Thank you for your letter of 7 May on this subject. I have also seen your letter of 3 May to Peter Rees. I am very glad to see that you intend to go ahead with the fences at the gas installations and, in only slightly slower time, with those at the two principal oil installations as well.

While I note your views about the financing of the Offshore Protection Force, I am sure it will be necessary to consider comprehensively all the current issues relating to the Force. From my point of view, these include not only your views on the continuation of your Department's contribution, but also those of Michael Jopling and George Younger on how fisheries protection should be provided in future and the implications of any changes for the deterrent effect, and operational capability, in relation to maritime counter terrorism. Current arrangements for the Offshore Protection Force were set up by collective agreement, and I am sure it is right, as I know is being arranged, that we should discuss these matters soon. Pending that discussion I am not able at this stage to regard the fencing of the key points and the patrolling of offshore installations as alternatives: the current position is that we are collectively committed to both.

I am sending a copy of this letter to the Prime Minister, Willie Whitelaw, Nigel Lawson, Michael Heseltine, George Younger, Nicholas Edwards, Norman Tebbit, Michael Jopling, Douglas Hurd and Sir Robert Armstrong.

*Lawson*

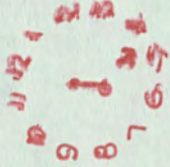
The Rt Hon Peter Walker, MP

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Fishing: Fishing Ind. P+S

21 MAY 1987







SECRETARY OF STATE FOR ENERGY  
 TRANSPORT AND TRADING  
 MILLIKEN HOUSE, 100 WHITEHALL, LONDON EC4A 3DF

01 211 6402

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 CDP  
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The Rt Hon Leon Brittan QC MP  
 Secretary of State for the  
 Home Department  
 Queen Anne's Gate  
 LONDON  
 SW1H 9AT

7 May 1985

Thank you for your letter of 16 April.

I believe that the points you raise have already been covered in my letters of 22 March and 18 April. I regard the construction of High Security Fences at super priority economic key points, particularly Bacton and St Fergus, as a far higher priority than the Offshore Protection Force in terms of my Departmental responsibilities; and in the light of the factors set out in my earlier letters I feel bound to end a public expenditure charge which I cannot justify on grounds of value for money.

I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister, Willie Whitelaw, Nigel Lawson, Michael Heseltine, George Younger, Nicholas Edwards, Norman Tebbit, Michael Jopling, Douglas Hurd and Sir Robert Armstrong.

PETER WALKER



Fishing Limits: FISHING INV. Pt 5.

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8 MAY 1985



CONFIDENTIAL



SECRETARY OF STATE FOR ENERGY  
THAMES HOUSE, 50 WHITEHALL  
LONDON SW1A 2HQ

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01 211 6402

The Rt Hon Michael Heseltine MP  
Secretary of State for Defence  
Ministry of Defence  
Whitehall  
LONDON  
SW1A 2HB

18 April 1985

OFFSHORE PROTECTION FORCE

Thank you for your letter of 29 March.

My decision to withdraw from contributing to the cost of offshore surveillance was conveyed to the group of officials, chaired by the Cabinet Office, last November in terms which made it quite clear that it was independent of the outcome of any changes in fishery protection arrangements. It is my understanding that this has been taken into account in the work of the group. I am advised that since November the group has focussed on the comparative costings of Michael Jopling's proposals and those of your Department. Whilst these assume a need by your Department to meet its obligations under the Oilsafe arrangements they do not include any financial contribution from my Department.

My view on the value of random military patrols to my Department is based on the belief that the real deterrent to terrorists is the existence of expert land based forces ready to respond in aid to the civil power. If those responsible for security remain of the view that such patrols are a necessary part of our response then, as I said in my letter of 22 March, that is a matter for Leon Brittan and yourself. I am not saying patrols should cease. But I am saying that I can no longer justify carrying expenditure for such patrols on my Department's Vote. When the arrangements for offshore protection were first agreed there were no specific arrangements for dealing with offshore terrorist threats. Your Department, together with the Home Office, have since developed the Oilsafe plan for providing aid to the civil power in the event of a terrorist attack, and successful exercises have been carried out.

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If, however, you should decide to reduce or curtail random military patrols, even though you consider they are likely to be a deterrent to terrorists, I agree we should need to handle any publicity very carefully.

I am sending copies of this letter to the Prime Minister, Leon Brittan, Nigel Lawson, George Younger, Nicholas Edwards, Norman Tebbit, Michael Jopling, Douglas Hurd and Sir Robert Armstrong.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'P Walker', written in dark ink.

PETER WALKER

CONFIDENTIAL



Fishing Industry: Fishery limits #5



1188 APR 1985



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PC



QUEEN ANNE'S GATE LONDON SW1H 9AT

16 April 1985

*The Peter,*

NBRM  
COQ  
16/4.

OFFSHORE PROTECTION FORCE

You copied to me your letter of 22 March to Michael Heseltine in which you indicated your intention to discontinue your Department's contribution to the costs of the Offshore Protection Force. I have now seen Michael's reply and I fully support what he has said.

My interest lies in my overall responsibility for counter terrorist arrangements in Great Britain and I would not wish to see any changes that would reduce the level of protection against, and response to, a terrorist attack on an offshore installation. You will understand my concern that Departments responsible for key economic installations which may be vulnerable to terrorist attack should accept a responsibility for ensuring that they are suitably protected in order to safeguard supplies which are crucial to the nation's economic and physical security.

I cannot agree with your view that military patrols have no deterrent value. The removal of a known armed presence could well, of itself, increase the threat to offshore installations. I agree with Michael Heseltine that this matter is an appropriate one for collective consideration and this can only effectively take place when we have the report of the official group considering Michael Jopling's proposals for civilianisation of the fishery protection task. I believe current arrangements should remain in the meantime.

I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister, Nigel Lawson, Michael Heseltine, George Younger, Nicholas Edwards, Douglas Hurd, Norman Tebbit, Michael Jopling, Willie Whitelaw and Sir Robert Armstrong.

*Lawson*

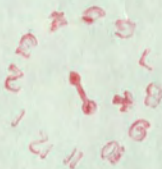
The Rt Hon Peter Walker, MP

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Fishing Ind. AS  
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116 APR 1985



A circular red stamp containing the numbers 1 through 9 arranged in a circle around a central symbol that resembles a stylized '4' or a similar character.





MINISTRY OF DEFENCE WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB

TELEPHONE 01-218 9000  
DIRECT DIALLING 01-218 2111/3

*CCP*  
*We had better see the papers*  
*OR*

MO 12/3

29th March 1985

*John P. L.*

*X Ref*

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OFFSHORE PROTECTION FORCE

Thank you for your letter of 22nd March 1985 announcing that your Department intends to cease paying towards the costs of the Offshore Protection Force at the end of this financial year.

I am aware that your officials have informed the official group chaired by the Cabinet Office, considering Michael Jopling's proposals for the civilianisation of the fishery protection task, that you proposed to withdraw from the present offshore tapestry arrangements. However, the Group has had to look at fishery protection as part of the whole structure of arrangements for offshore protection, including the protection of oil and gas installations. These arrangements were collectively agreed by Ministers precisely because the various elements are closely linked, and a decision in one area has significant implications for the other departments concerned. I therefore do not think that any unilateral decisions should be made in advance of collective Ministerial consideration of the report of the Official Group. Indeed, in my view there is a need for officials explicitly to consider the effects of your proposed withdrawal on the other offshore tasks.

The Rt Hon Peter Walker MP





I note that it is your view that random military patrols now have little or no deterrent effect. It is, I think, worth recalling that there was no agreement in either the TO(P) or the group on future fishery protection arrangements on this point; several departments considered that military patrols were likely to be a deterrent to terrorists, and that their absence would inevitably reduce the effectiveness of the response to an incident. Moreover, the existence of random military patrols around offshore oil and gas fields has been well publicised. The cessation of such patrols would become known and this in itself could create a mistaken impression of our determination and ability to defend these installations. It would also need very careful handling in view of the likely parliamentary and public criticism which would focus attention on the offshore protection arrangements as a whole. I believe these are issues on which we should take a collective view.

On the financial implications of your decision you will appreciate that your letter was despatched only a matter of days before the beginning of the Estimates year (and indeed after the interdepartmental working group had agreed a programme of operations for April). My department has, of course, budgetted on the assumption that the normal Department of Energy contribution would be available and operational plans have been made on the basis of the continuation of the oil and gas protection task. As you will be aware, it has long been agreed that the costs of civil offshore tasks should not be borne on Defence votes. The patrolling of oil and gas fields is carried out concurrently with other offshore protection tasks, and there would only be very minor savings in effort - and hence in public expenditure - if it is abandoned. Accordingly, under the financial arrangements agreed in 1979 the costs of the offshore tapestry arrangements would need to be apportioned between the remaining civil "commissioning" departments. Obviously, if we proceed on these lines, officials





of these departments will need to get together with mine and Nigel Lawson's to work out the details.

For the reasons I have outlined it seems to me to be very much better to let the current arrangements continue until the official group has completed its work, and that we should then consider the implications of any changes in the offshore protection arrangements as a whole.

I am sending copies of this letter to the Prime Minister, Leon Brittan, Nigel Lawson, George Younger, Nicholas Edwards, Norman Tebbit, Michael Jopling, Douglas Hurd and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

*Yes*  
*Michael Heseltine*

Michael Heseltine



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