

Digest of Information relating to the foundation of and running of the Coalition Information Centre 2001-2003

Line from News Department Objectives 2002/2003:

Objective 7: Demonstrate Britain's continuing commitment to the war in Afghanistan, the Middle East Peace Process and a greater dialogue with the Muslim world following the coalition's military successes against Al Qaeda and the Taliban:
Performance Measurement: "Effective Liaison with No.10, the Coalition Information Centre and Other Government Departments, in support of these aims".

Digest of reply to PQ of 16 June (Official Report, column 1454W) from Norman Baker:

"The Coalition Information Centre (CIC) was formed in October 2001 and later changed its title to the Government Communication and Operations Centre. The unit has nine to 10 staff for most of its existence, rising briefly to some 28 during the Iraq conflict, before being wound up in May 2003.

Digest : Lines from reply to PQ of 9 July (Official Report columns 816-817W) from Mr Allen:

- a) "The CIC was based in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and it was under the direction of the Prime Minister's Director of Communications. It was staffed by officials from a wide range of Whitehall Departments and, when appropriate, secondees from other Governments".

- a) "The Iraq Communications Group is comprised of senior officials from Downing Street and other Whitehall Departments".