

401. Two of the main sources were dominant, in terms of both the number of reports and influence on JIC assessments. During 2002, they provided some two-thirds of all intelligence reports that were circulated; and from summer 2002 onwards their reporting had a significant influence on intelligence assessments on Iraqi use of chemical and biological weapons. As noted in Chapter 1, however, volume is not necessarily a measure of influence; even single intelligence reports can have a significant impact. That was certainly the case with one report from one of these sources which had a major effect on the certainty of statements in the Government's dossier of September 2002 that Iraq possessed and was producing chemical and biological weapons. (This report was subsequently withdrawn.)

SIS MAIN SOURCES

402. Of the two dominant sources, the first reported accurately and authoritatively on some key issues. On production and stocks of chemical and biological weapons and agents, he could only report what he learned from others in his circle of high-level contacts in Baghdad.
403. The second dominant source remains the subject of continuing SIS validation. In 2002, SIS considered him to be an established and reliable source. His intelligence on other subjects had previously been corroborated. We therefore understand why SIS decided that it should issue a number of reports from him quoting a new sub-source on Iraqi chemical and biological programmes and intentions. Even then, they properly included a caution about the sub-source's links to opposition groups and the possibility that his reports would be affected by that. We have been told that post-war validation by SIS has raised serious doubts about the reliability of reporting from this new sub-source. We conclude that this stream of reporting that underpinned JIC assessments on Iraqi production and possession of chemical and biological weapons must be open to serious doubt.
404. In addition to these two dominant sources, SIS's post-war validation has led them to conclude that two further main sources should continue to be regarded as reliable. We have, however, noted that reports from those sources tended to present a less worrying view of Iraqi chemical and biological weapons capability than that from the sources whose reporting is now subject to doubt.
405. Finally, in mid-September 2002 SIS issued a report, described as being from '*a new source on trial*', on Iraqi production of chemical and biological agent. Although this report was received too late for inclusion in the JIC assessment of 9 September, it did provide significant assurance to those drafting the Government's dossier that active, current production of chemical and biological agent was taking place. A second report from the

new source, about the production of a particular chemical agent, was received later in September 2002. In July 2003, however, SIS withdrew the two reports because the sourcing chain had by then been discredited. SIS also interviewed the alleged sub-source for the intelligence after the war, who denied ever having provided the information in the reports. We note, therefore, that the two reports from this source, including one which was important in the closing stages of production of the Government's September dossier, must now be treated as unsafe.

LIAISON SERVICE SOURCES

406. As noted above, one source provided the vast majority of the intelligence that suggested that Iraq had developed mobile facilities for the production of biological agent. In oral evidence to our Review in May, the Chief of SIS said that this source's reports had been received through a liaison service and that he had not therefore been under the control of SIS. SIS had been able to verify that he had worked in an area which would have meant that he would have had access to the sort of information he claimed to have. But they had not been able to question him directly until after the war.

407. Following this initial post-war debrief of the source, SIS told us that:

It has become apparent that significant detail did not appear in the original liaison reports . . . But based on the information derived from the limited access to [the source] to date we continue to judge that it is premature to conclude . . . that all the intelligence from the source must be discounted.

408. SIS also noted, however, that their own debriefing of the source had led them to conclude that the product from the mobile facilities would have been in slurry form, which would have had a shorter life than would dried agent. As a result, SIS concluded that:

This indicates that the concept for use of the [mobile facilities] was not to produce material to stockpile . . . Whilst further work needs to be done, at the moment it appears that the most likely function of the trailers was to provide a breakout production capability and not the continued production of material for stockpiling.

409. SIS have informed us that they will continue to debrief the source. But, for the purposes of our Review, we conclude that there must be some doubts about the reliability of all the reports received from this source via the liaison service. We also conclude that intelligence reports received in 2000 which suggested that Iraq had recently-produced biological agent were seriously flawed. We therefore also conclude that the grounds for the JIC assessments drawing on those reports that Iraq had recently-produced stocks of biological agent no longer exist.

SUMMARY OF MAIN SOURCES

410. The overall picture therefore is that, of the main human intelligence sources described above:

- a. One SIS main source reported authoritatively on some issues, but on others was passing on what he had heard within his circle.

- b. Reporting from a sub-source to a second main SIS source that was important to JIC assessments on Iraqi possession of chemical and biological weapons must be open to serious doubt.
- c. Reports from a third SIS main source have been withdrawn as unreliable.
- d. Reports from two further main SIS sources continue to be regarded as reliable, although it is notable that their reports were less worrying than the rest about Iraqi chemical and biological weapons capabilities.
- e. Reports received from the liaison service on Iraqi production of biological agent were seriously flawed, so that the grounds for JIC assessments drawing on those reports that Iraq had recently-produced stocks of biological agent no longer exist.

OTHER SOURCES

411. A handful of other sources, and liaison reporting, comprised the remaining quarter of the human intelligence base reporting on Iraqi nuclear, biological, chemical and ballistic missile programmes in 2002. Very few of their reports were judged by the JIC to be material to the judgements reached in its assessments, although some were seen as providing some additional confidence to reporting from the sources described above, including a single report received from a reliable and established source quoting a new sub-source on the mobile biological agent production facilities.
412. In addition to seeking to validate after the war the sources described above, SIS told us that they had planned to interview scientists associated with Iraqi chemical and biological weapons programmes but that this operation had had to be suspended because of practical and legal difficulties in Iraq. We understand those constraints.