

MD, SMC

## Stephen Mitchell

From: zzStephen zzWhittle  
Sent: 05 June 2003 06 23 PM  
To: Greg Dyke-and-Assistant, Mark Damazer, Mark Damazer, Stephen Mitchell  
Cc: Richard Sambrook-internal  
Subject: The Giligan report

Importance: High

Greg

In response to your questions This is the sequence of events:

About a month ago the programme was picking up signals that elements within the security services had doubts about the way in which the intelligence had been presented and was being used. Then Andrew Gilligan came up with the very specific allegation about the 45 minutes angle.

For a reporter with a story, in this case Gilligan, the routine first contact is with an output Editor responsible for putting together first thoughts for the following days programme or, if it is a slower burn, to the Planning Editor .. if it involves very complex and controversial issues he/she goes directly to Programme Editor, Kevin Marsh.

Day/Planning Editor is the first filter on veracity and strength of story, early legal reference if necessary, operational contact and obvious further lines of inquiry plus deployment of extra effort if needed, also first trip wire for significant issues, legal, political or policy, connected with the story. In the case of Gilligan's dossier story, the source spoke to Gilligan late night. He did checks and came to the day editor last Wednesday afternoon (May 28th) with a proposition for the following days programme. The day editor immediately referred Gilligan up to the Programme Editor.

With the Dossier story Kevin Marsh's conversation was about the strength of the source (not the name) and about whether the Gilligan story was consistent with the separate Intelligence sources we were aware of who had expressed concern about the handling of intelligence before the Iraq war.

the Programme Editor thinks the story of sufficient significance, potentially controversial, carries high legal risks etc he contacts Stephen Mitchell. In the case of the Dossier, Head of Radio News was tipped off in general terms about the nature of the Gilligan piece (and another programme exclusive ready for the following day about the use of cluster bombs in Iraq) and there was a general discussion about source and wider context.

If Head of Department considers it necessary for instance if a agree a cross News approach to a difficult legal or policy issue is needed, then Director/Deputy Director of News will be brought in .. It was not considered necessary in this instance

The live two way at 0610 was discussed in general terms by the programme with Gilligan while John Humphrys had a brief, written overnight, to work from. The 0700 bulletin piece was scripted by Andrew Gilligan and checked by the Newsroom's Output team, the 0730 illustrated package was scripted but played in live, the script would have been seen by the programmes overnight Output Editor, and the 0810 sequence of a scripted reporter piece by Ian Watson outlining the issues around WMD and the other story of the morning about cluster bombs, was followed by the live interview of Defence Minister Adam Ingram. Ingram had been booked by a programme producer the night before and the outline of the Gilligan story and the Cluster Bomb story outlined to his office and a brief for the interview had been written by the programme team including input from the reporters

Events often move on during a three hour programme such as TODAY, in the case of the Giligan story Downing

Street called at around 0715 with their "denial" (as we know, not actually denying what the piece said) the inclusion of this and fielding of complaints is in the hands of the senior output editor .. sometimes such developments require work by the overnight production team, new interviews booking checks etc who have a reporter in the office if they need it. this wasn't the case with the Gilligan story.

So the report resulted from two separate but related information sources

Today, the programme did approach the Government for a spokesman but they declined.

As you can see, a strong and well sourced story

Stephen