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Mark Kennedy and Operation Pegasus

First mention of mysterious undercover police spy programme. Can you help us work out what it means?

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One of the most interesting nuggets from [yesterday's quashing of the Ratcliffe convictions](#) concerns something called Operation Pegasus which we had not heard of before.

It sounds like something from a spy thriller where people are chased around by spooky men, and jump in and out cars at high-speed a lot.

Back in the real world, there is a short description of Operation Pegasus in the legal documents which were considered by the Court of Appeal judges before they came to their judgement.

In those papers, the purpose of Operation Pegasus is described as "to infiltrate extreme left wing groups in the United Kingdom". According to the papers, Mark Kennedy was authorised to join Operation Pegasus in 2003 – [the year in which he started his deployment](#).

That's all there is to go on at the moment, but from that limited information, it sounds as if Operation Pegasus is some sort of over-arching operation to spy on the left in Britain run by the [National Public Order Intelligence Unit](#) (the unit Kennedy worked for).

If anyone knows any more about this mysterious operation, we would appreciate it if you could let us know. The questions which spring to mind at the moment are - how long has Operation Pegasus been running, why was it set up, who authorised it to be set up, which groups were penetrated, and what is the legal basis for it?
