Security Service (MI5)
My oversight of MI5 in 2013 occurred as follows:
Pre-reading days: 4 July and 27 - 28 November
Inspection Days: 11 July and 5 December
'Under-the-bonnet' visit: 6 December

Open:
My inspection visit to MI5 began with a general update from the Deputy Director General regarding current threats to the UK and subsequent priorities of MI5.

(July: The DDG began with a formal threat assessment nationally and internationally and event since my last inspection)

Notes of Inspection, Action Points and/or Closed Report
COVERT HUMAN INTELLIGENCE SOURCE

CHIS Participation in Criminality

CHIS participate in criminality. For example,

We discussed the difficult decisions that MI5 make.

I was briefed about a case where participation in criminality

As part of my oversight, I am not concerned if CHIS go ahead with criminal activity. Instead I am looking at the public interest of (using CHIS who participate in criminality)
I was provided with a copy of their official guidance: "Guidance on the use of Agents who participate in Criminality".
CHIS Participation in Criminality
I am now required to conduct oversight of this in MI5 ie:

- Is it reasonable to authorise [participation in criminality where authorisation has the effect set out in paragraph 9 of the Guidelines?]
- [A balance needs to be struck between the objectives and the criminality, as set out in paragraph 8 of the Guidelines.]
Some of the cases I saw looked very broad but MI5 explained as well as the necessity and proportionality for the cases.

Future of Oversight

Talking to people in the business is also important. MI5 agreed and suggested inviting observers in future.