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D/CDS 3/6/1

16 May 2007

INQUIRY INTO THE APPREHENSION OF 15 RN/RM PERSONNEL FROM HMS CORNWALL BY IRANIANS ON 23 MAR 07 – OPERATION DEACON

INTRODUCTION

1. At 0445Z on 23 March 2007 a team of 15 RN/RM personnel departed HMS CORNWALL in 2 Rigid Hulled Inflatable Boats (RHIB) to conduct a boarding operation of a merchant vessel in the North Arabian Gulf (NAG). During this operation the boarding team was intercepted and apprehended by men of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corp Navy (IRGCN) in gunboats. The RN/RM personnel were released on 4 April 2007 and returned to UK.

2. The Inquiry was set up on 19 April 2007 to establish the circumstances and to examine the policy, strategy and operational frameworks within which boardings were conducted and the way that these were given effect through coalition and national command and control arrangements. The full Terms of Reference are at Annex A.

BACKGROUND

3. The Royal Navy has operated in the NAG for many years. Their presence in this particular area has acquired a new importance in light of Iraq's dependency on the 2 oil platforms for economic survival. The RN operate under command of Commander Naval Forces, US Central Command (NAVCENT), acting as the Coalition Force Maritime Component Commander (CFMCC) to protect the oil platforms, to detect, deter and deny terrorist operations and to contribute to the security of maritime commerce, in addition to a range of tasks designed to build longer term security capacity.

4. It is important to understand that the NAG is a constrained and complex maritime area, constantly busy with merchant traffic moving to and from the two waterways which are the transport arteries of Kuwait, Iraq and Iran. Here the border between Iranian and Iraqi territorial waters is, in some places, established by treaty but neglected whilst in others it has never been established, leaving it open to multiple interpretations. In this difficult area, IRGCN activity has been continuous for some time. In 2004 they established an observation post on a sunken crane very close to the border which has commanding views of the area and IRGCN crossings of the various borders are an almost daily occurrence. It is worth stressing at the outset that, by any of the interpretations of the border line, there is no doubt that the incident on 23 March 2007 took place inside Iraqi territorial waters.

5. A narrative map of the action on 23 March 2007 is at Enclosure 1. Although the sequence of events is relatively straightforward and the facts are not in doubt, the origins, causes and effects of this incident are both more complex and, in some cases, less certain. It is clear that the UK forces involved were surprised by the Iranian

actions and the IRGCN were able to achieve what we assume to have been their immediate objectives.

6. A significant number of circumstances and factors contributed to this and no single one was decisive. Most of the people involved at every level could have done more to ensure that the conditions allowing the Iranian success were eliminated but I consider that no one was individually culpable or negligent in any of the series of actions, decisions and events that set the context for the boarding operation in question or in the conduct of it.

7. The implementation of the measures outlined in this Inquiry Report would deter, although not necessarily prevent, the IRGCN from trying a similar incident but they would ensure that the outcome was not the same.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

8. ██ It is clear however that approaches on both sides of the Atlantic have changed over the past year and they continue to do so – ██ This is not an argument for certainty, constancy or consistency, however desirable that might be, but it does argue strongly for recognition of the inherent ambiguity and for close consideration of its implications. It requires the most rigorous analysis and increased emphasis on indicators and warnings wherever the coalition confronts Iran.

9. The implications of some parts of the coalition seeking to take action against Iran and its proxies, and of the UK increasing its pressure all across the front with Iran needed to be considered with care. In September 2006 ██. Whilst clearly identifying the risk of an Iranian stage-managed seizure, it is equally clear on the risk of escalation of a minor incident – and the overall risk of both was low.

10. The work in MoD and the Permanent Joint Headquarters (PJHQ), both before and after this Paper, had considered, in a limited forum, the nature and extent of Iranian responses to coalition actions, █████████████████████████████████████ PJHQ concluded that there were sufficient assets in theatre to protect the oil platforms in the NAG and identified the Straits of Hormuz as the main area of concern[2]. Within the maritime environment the most likely act was █████████████████████████ against the oil facilities and shipping.

11. Meanwhile the coalition has been acting in an ambivalent manner. ████████████
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███ is self evident that a skilled opponent will choose to respond where he sees opportunity.

12. The oil platforms in the NAG are critical to the economic development of Iraq – more than 80% of Iraq's oil flows through them[4]. The terrorist threat is therefore real and has always been seen as the greatest risk to the platforms. In fulfilling their principal task of defending the oil platforms, and against the background of their █████████████████████████████, coalition forces see Iranian forces, including the IRGCN, as part of the maritime context, not what they are preparing against. Only if the situation were to deteriorate into open confrontation or conflict would the threat from the Iranian Navy (IRN) or IRGCN increase.

13. These are, however, disputed waters and this is discussed in more detail below. Whilst it is clear that the incident took place in waters that would be accepted under international law as Iraqi, there may be evidence of a longer strategic game. All the indicators point to Iranian recognition that this action was not the legitimate arrest of boats that were in Iranian waters as they saw them – █████████████████████████████
███████████████████████████████ By operating with impunity in Iraqi waters whilst the Iraqis themselves do not, Iran establishes a strong position for any future resolution in law.

14. Against this background, the motive for the incident is impossible to determine with precision and certainty. One knowledgeable commentator sees a carefully timed, asymmetric strategic response to coalition actions. Others see a reckless, opportunistic attack by an IRGCN Commander acting semi-independently to create a situation subsequently exploited strategically. ████████████████████████████████
████████████████████████████████. These are not mutually exclusive and the truth probably contains elements at least of the first two. For the purpose of this Inquiry, the motives and trigger are material only in so far as it either was, or was not, reasonable to have foreseen the incident. Notwithstanding the lack of clarity in our overall posture, a more robust analysis at every level of command of the implications

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[2] PJHQ/J5/Iran/Interim report/001 dated Jun 06
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[4] The consequences of a successful attack would be both economically and environmentally disastrous; economically for Iraq and environmentally for all the other states in the Gulf since the oil platform infrastructure lacks the normal safety measures to limit spillage.

of that ambiguity, combined with a ███████████████████████████ ██████████would have sparked the imagination of tactical commanders to include the possibility of such an incident in their planning. This did not happen.

INTER-DEPARTMENTAL AND INTER-GOVERNMENT PROCESSES

15. The processes for handling tasks across departmental boundaries and between governments seem, in general, to work well. There were however aspects of this situation that conspired to weaken the application of those processes. Most have been referred to above. ██ ██████████████████████████For similar reasons, the subject was also kept to a smaller circle across Whitehall than might otherwise have been the case.

16. Furthermore, maritime operations in the Gulf were neither new nor topical. Inter- departmental and inter-governmental processes work well for issues that either need to be raised or, by force of circumstance, impose themselves on the agenda. Until 23 March, maritime operations in the NAG did neither and, at the time, the focus of effort was on operations on land in Iraq and in Afghanistan. Much attention has been given to examining the impact of the changing situation on land forces and clearly that is where the priorities lay; the Gulf slipped to the margin.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

17. UNSCR . Maritime security operations are carried out in accordance with UNSCR 1723 passed in November 2006 and at the invitation of the Government of Iraq to coalition units to conduct operations on its behalf in Iraqi territorial waters and the approaches. There are no concerns about the overall legality of the operations conducted by CTF 158 and HMS CORNWALL.

18. Rules of Engagement. The Rules of Engagement (ROE) provided to CTF 158 and those under his command provide an appropriate level of guidance for the conduct of their operations. Importantly the Political Policy Indicator (PPI) - Status Quo - is designed to frame the intent of the command and captures the design of both UK and NAVCENT. These were, and are, sufficient to provide for the protection of the boarding teams.

DELINEATION OF SOVEREIGN WATERS

19. The delineation of sovereign waters is much more complex. The Algiers Accord of 1975 is the only formal definition of the water boundary between Iraq and Iran, and it covers only the Shatt al Arab waterway. That Accord drew a line down the centre of the navigable channel (technically known as the 'thalweg') as far as the mouth of the river at the astronomical lowest low water line, and made provision for 10 yearly reviews to account for silting. Although the subject was discussed in a letter exchange between the two Presidents in 1990 as a starting point for negotiations, no such reviews have taken place. Since 1975 the navigable channel has clearly moved south which, if examined, would support an argument for the boundary to be moved towards Iraq.

20.   At no stage has any agreement been reached beyond the mouth of the Shatt al Arab. There are however a number of ways in which the boundary might be drawn from there. UNCLOS requires states not to extend their territorial sea beyond the median line with neighbouring states, unless historic title or other special circumstances exist which justify a departure from the median line – the line every point of which is equidistant from the nearest points on the baselines from which the breadth of the territorial seas of the neighbouring states is measured. If no maritime boundary exists and neither state has published details of its territorial sea (and neither has done so) it is not unreasonable for third states to treat the median line as a *de facto* boundary. However, the coastline is unstable and there may be a legitimate dispute over the respective low water lines and hence of the median line. Furthermore, Iran seeks to measure its territorial seas from straight baselines (ie ignoring coastal indentations). Although this is questionable, it potentially complicates the respective countries' views of the ownership of the waters.

21.   There is further scope for confusion since Iran is not party to UNCLOS. Iran might argue that it is therefore not bound by the provisions of the Convention. However, if the provisions have become customary international law (and that is widely considered to be the case) they would be binding on Iran.[5]

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██████████████████he Buffer Zone on the coalition side reflects the desire to avoid accidental confrontation. Operations conducted by the command ████████████████████████) are designed to indicate the presence of the line to the Iranians although it has never been published or communicated to them. The Iranians have never formally published their version of the border.

23.   It is important to note that, notwithstanding the existence of a boundary line, Iran has, under UNCLOS, freedom of navigation in all these waters, including Iraq's territorial waters. This does however require 'continuous and expeditious passage'. The presence of IRGCN boats in these waters on both sides of the various lines is an almost daily occurrence. Whether these are incursions or legal passage is a matter of interpretation, but the majority of them do not follow 'continuous and expeditious passage'. It is clear to coalition forces in the area that there is a concerted Iranian attempt to establish themselves in waters currently considered to belong to Iraq. ███
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[5] Notes on the Iran-Iraq maritime boundary. International Boundaries Research Unit, Durham University.

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COMMAND AND CONTROL

24. The CFMCC in theatre, NAVCENT, is based in Bahrain. The current incumbent took up his post on 27 February 2007. He has a UK Deputy who is also the UK MCC and an important part of the coalition command structure. Commander Task Force 158 (CTF158) commands maritime forces in the NAG; the appointment rotates between members of the coalition and is currently held by UK. His immediate subordinate, Commander Task Group 158.1 (CTG158.1), is responsible for the local protection of the 2 oil platforms. HMS CORNWALL is assigned to CTF158.

25. The NAG is a highly complex area, hence the deployment of a comparatively 'rich' command structure – the Commodore (CTF158), in addition to a RN Captain (CTG 158.1) commanding HMS CORNWALL and other coalition assets.

CTF 158

26. CTF158 Mission is: "to set the conditions for security in the NAG in order to facilitate Iraq's economic development and transition to independent protection of Iraq's territorial waters and critical energy infrastructure". In addition to the protection of the oil platforms and local maritime security, which he delegates to CTG 158.1, his tasks include the development of Iraqi capability through training, building wider regional security through active co-operation with other Gulf states and improving co-operation between adjacent commanders in theatre (notably the land component in Baghdad and Basra). This gives him a problem of deciding on the best command location; embarked is not ideal and gives the command a 'top heavy' appearance, but the alternatives are no better.

27. He has an ad hoc staff formed by the Fleet HQ and broadly overseen by the Commander UK Maritime Force (based in UK). Whether this is an appropriate task for an ad hoc staff has to depend on competing priorities at the time. In this case the demands of simultaneously providing the NATO High Readiness Force (Maritime) HQ did not help. Pressures of time and the ▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆ ▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆ and CTG were adequately prepared for the task, although conspicuously lacked a detailed understanding of how (and from where) they would exercise command on arrival in theatre.

28. CTF 158 suffers from the effects of poor linkage between land and maritime components. As the protector of one end of the key to Iraq's economic survival, there are arguments for him to transfer to command from Baghdad or Basra. Equally there are arguments for coherence across the maritime component. ▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆ ▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆▆ ▆▆▆▆▆ The result is that CTF 158 does not share the same view of the situation as the UK Commander in Multi-National Division (South East), his land neighbour and the intelligence centre of gravity in the south, who has a different perspective on Iran.

CTG 158.1

29. CTG158.1 is the tactical level commander responsible for the defence of the 2 oil platforms, for detecting, deterring and denying terrorist operations and for contributing to the security of maritime commerce. He is based on a converted barge alongside one of the oil platforms where he is central to the task and has very good situational awareness and communications. He orders patrols and authorises boarding operations, including the one on 23 March.

OPERATIONAL AND TACTICAL DIRECTVES

30. Appropriate directives were issued to CTF 158 and HMS CORNWALL on deployment; these were supported by the Fleet N2 CO's Handbook and supplemented by briefings on arrival in theatre. The Initiating Directive to CTF158 was issued by CJO in February 2007[6]. Directives from Commander in Chief Fleet[7] and the UK MCC[8] to HMS CORNWALL were issued in December 2006. Of necessity, these are very generic documents covering the whole range of tasks and conditions affecting HMS CORNWALL throughout her deployment. Nevertheless, Iraq and the Global War On Terrorism are the dominant themes.

31. The Initiating Directive for CTF 158 is focussed on Iraq. ███████████ ███████████ It was clear on the need for Force Protection, instructing that the risk of asymmetric and conventional attack should be considered at all times. It is then for the UKMCC to set the local policy for UK forces in theatre in accordance with the CF MCC's intent.

32. The most significant and influential directive was the guidance from the new CF MCC to CTF 158 on 9 March 2007[9]. Noting that interaction between the IRGCN/ IRN and the coalition occurs on a near daily basis in a very constrained maritime environment, ███████████████████████████ misinterpretation of coalition actions. A tactical mis-step could have dire consequences. This falls squarely in line with the ███████████████

33. Part of the task in the NAG is to conduct a series of Interaction Patrols to board vessels in the AOR to provide insight into maritime activities, make available a channel of communication with merchant vessels, promote trust and perhaps give forewarning of threats. Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for boarding are owned by CTG 158.1. A review of these SOPs is underway but, although perhaps overly complex, they are coherent and intelligible. ███████████████

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[6] D/PJ HQ/5/12/1102 dated 9 Feb 07
[7] Fleet/n3/3/250/11 dated 16 Dec 06
[8] UKMCC/200/5 dated 14 Dec 06
[9] CFMCC CENT 091037Z MAR 07

████████████████████████████ The boarding on 23 March was an Interaction Patrol and was initiated in accordance with the SOPs.

34. Nevertheless, SOPs, although essential and invaluable, can lead to difficulty if applied too rigidly. Firstly, frequent patrols conducted in accordance with SOPs and under observation from the opposition tend to set observable and predictable patterns. The IRGCN observation post on the sunken crane had ample opportunity to study coalition operating procedures and predict our actions. Secondly, SOPs should not become rigid drills; they have to be applied in a way sensitive to the situation – threat-based not geography-constrained. ████████████████████████████

████████████ Had the implications of the ambiguity of the strategic context been translated and passed to those at the front line, they would have been better placed to consider adapting SOPs to the local situation.

INTELLIGENCE

35. Such an assessment is dependent on intelligence as well as on an understanding of the strategic context. Operational intelligence should reach CTF 158 from NAVCENT and should be supplemented by the intelligence branch (J2) at PJHQ in Northwood.

36. ████████████████████████████ To CTF/CTG/ CORNWALL, IRGCN craft were an accepted part of the scenery and were not considered a threat. The most notable gap in the awareness of CTF/CTG/ CORNWALL was their ignorance of a previous incident involving Australian forces in the NAG. The Shatt al Arab incident involving the UK in 2004 was very different to that involving HMS CORNWALL, yet well known to all; the lessons from that are discussed below. The key incident in the NAG occurred in December 2004 when the IRGCN surrounded and threatened to arrest the boarding party from HMAS ADELAIDE whilst they were searching a vessel (MV SHAMS). In that incident the Australians withdrew onto the merchant vessel, whence they were extracted by coalition helicopters, leaving their boats behind. Other lesser confrontations had also been experienced by HMS BULWARK and a US Coastguard vessel, and in June 2006 HMS ST ALBANS had to interpose herself when IRGCN opened fire on a merchant ship. ████████████████████████████

37. The key to this omission is the lack of the continuity that would provide a corporate base of historical knowledge and the associated sensitivity to change as time passes. Continuity is made more difficult by the rotation of command between nations with its associated changes in style and personnel. At present, briefings in UK and on arrival in theatre have to suffice, but work is now in hand at Fleet HQ to provide continuity staff to bridge the handovers. The existence of such incidents was included in the brief given by the Defence Intelligence Staff to CTF158 and his staff before deployment, yet perhaps without the clarity and emphasis that would have unequivocally flagged their significance to those deploying. With hindsight this is very surprising, yet it must be borne in mind that the principal threat ████████████

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███ Nonetheless, there are also other ways in which those deployed could have been better informed.

38. Although the responsibility for operational intelligence lies principally with the CFMCC and UKMCC, ███████████████████████████ ██████ A Joint Intelligence Cell (J2) with no maritime component sits close to a maritime intelligence cell (N2), the latter still in its infancy ████████████████ ███████████████████████████████ . There is therefore an unhelpful boundary over which subtle changes of situation on land and sea must pass.

39. Most intelligence has traditionally reached deployed naval forces via broadcast or signal 'pushed' from above ██████████████████████████ ██████████████████████████████████████ ██████████████████████████████████ The role and importance of the deployed intelligence staff officer on land (G2) allied to the teaching at all levels of Army command of the importance of searching for information and intelligence is in marked contrast to the level and importance of N2 within a deployed naval force. The littoral nature of this area of operations underlines the need to prise information from land sources as well as from traditional maritime ones.

40. This contrast is magnified as intelligence moves towards the web based presentation of intelligence to be 'pulled' instead of broadcast and signal 'push'. As the need for an active approach becomes more important, the Army G2 culture, training and experience of 'being in the commander's mind' and the systematic search for information (to construct the picture the commander needs) provide a better foundation. In this case CTF 158 and his people 'did not know how much they did not know', yet a more positive and enquiring search by experienced staff, who understood what the commander needed to know and why, would certainly have revealed the past history.

COMMAND AND CONTROL AT THE INCIDENT

41. The boarding operation of 23 March followed a similar one in roughly the same area on the previous day. That patrol had discovered a significant amount of trans-shipping activity and believed that it should be followed up. This was not a straightforward decision since there had also been some IRGCN interest but, after discussion on the night of 22 March, it was authorised by CTG158.1 since it fell within the parameters of the task and limitations given to him by NAVCENT and CTF 158. Based on what he knew at the time there was no reason for him not to authorise the patrol.

42. In seeking authority from CTG158.1 to conduct the task and subsequently authorising the deployment of the boarding team, CO HMS CORNWALL has the responsibility to assess the task, its potential benefits and its risks. He was not content that the operation should be pursued the previous night (22 March) but was content for it to go ahead on the morning of 23 March. In the event, the final decision to

deploy was taken by the XO in accordance with the criteria set out for him by the CO – the proximity of the boarding to the ship, the proximity to the buffer zone, the levels of IRGCN activity and the sea state. The sea state gave no cause for concern, no IRGCN activity was apparent, the target was sufficiently far from the buffer zone and the distance was about 7 miles from HMS CORNWALL. This distance is within what were then considered acceptable limits but I believe that those limits should be reviewed since it is impossible under those circumstances to consider the operation as a single tactical activity comprising the ship, the helicopter and the boats themselves.

43.   The helicopter was tasked to support the operation until the boarding team were established on board. There is an inconsistency in the planning here. The helicopter was requested by the Officer Commanding the RM detachment (OCRM) in excess of the normal SOPs for such a boarding in such a location because of the additional interest that had apparently been shown by IRGCN in operations on 22 March. On the other hand, supporting the boarding team until they were on board is in line with the perception that the principal risk came from the target boat itself.

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Helicopter safety requires routine maintenance and, whilst administration should not drive operations, there is a clear difference between the conduct of routine patrols in an operational theatre and an operational imperative. The former is a prudent use of available logistic resources; the latter is a reason to override administrative constraints. The command decision to allocate the helicopter for only one part of the operation is the clearest indication that the various levels of command did not see further risk to the operation once the team was established on board.

45.   Boarding tasks were very much part of the ship's routine and were not seen as demanding tactical operations in their own right. There was too little differentiation between administrative tasks, constituting the majority of boat work, and boarding operations. Furthermore the latter were not considered as operations to be conducted as a single tactical unit working together – yet this is the only way that the vulnerability of the small boats can be mitigated without raising the overall profile. Overall command remained with CO HMS CORNWALL; as such the onus rested with the Ship to ensure that a full briefing took place attended by all the component parts of the operation together. This would have eliminated any doubts about the respective roles to be played by each element.

46.   The command of the boat team was unclear. The briefing to and from the Ship was conducted by the OC RM but there are also those who believe that the RN officer was in charge for parts of the task. Command of an operation such as a patrol cannot be shared and includes the responsibility to plan, brief, rehearse, inspect and ensure that all those taking part know what is expected of them and of everyone else. The officer in command can delegate responsibility for particular specialist tasks within the operation but he retains overall responsibility – and everyone knows it. This battle procedure is well established elsewhere and it works; it was not applied here.

47. The presence in HMS CORNWALL of a BBC team and a journalist from The Independent has been raised with us and we have examined this to establish whether this in any way influenced any of the actions or decisions made by any of those involved. The BBC team had filmed a boarding task earlier on 22 March, but I am satisfied that they played no part in the lead up to, or conduct of, the operation on the 23 March.

MILITARY CAPABILITY

DOCTRINE

48. UK forces conduct boarding tasks and boarding operations as elements of many military tasks around the world. These are variously described as compliant, non-compliant and opposed, ████████████████████████ and is not considered further. The others are carried out by elements of the RN and RM. Terminology (such as compliance/non-compliance), troops to task and practice is clearly focused more on the target vessel than on the circumstances in which the boarding is to be conducted. ████████████████████████████████ Command and control will form an important part of this doctrine and above all, it must set them in a tactical context which is where they will be most demanding.

MANPOWER

49. HMS CORNWALL had no significant manpower gaps when deploying from UK. Manpower for boarding operations was drawn from a pool of those who could be made available by departments in the Ship. A limited selection process from this pool was possible in theatre when the total number required was reduced. The list of those who would fulfil the role had not been finalised by the time the ship deployed from UK and no training was conducted after leaving UK until arrival in the Joint Operational Area. This is an unsatisfactory way to approach a difficult and demanding tactical operation away from the normal environment for which the personnel had been trained.

TRAINING

50. HMS CORNWALL undertook Basic Operational Sea Training after leaving refit in 2006 designed, as for all RN ships, to provide a generic sea and warfighting capability appropriate to her class. BOST is widely admired for the quality of its training and is used as the benchmark by many other navies who also seek to have their ships trained there. HMS CORNWALL returned to Flag Officer Sea Training (FOST) in December 2006 for Directed Continuation Training (DCT) to be focused on her forthcoming deployment and lasting 2.5 weeks before deploying. At the end of that period HMS CORNWALL was considered to have had more time under FOST guidance than most ships – a circumstance of the programme rather than a reflection on the Ship. It is clear that FOST training has developed in recent years – ships when deployed can request training en route and in theatre, ships provide feedback after deployment, they are met on return from deployments and these lessons are put into the formal lessons programme.

51.   Nevertheless there are important weaknesses. Manpower turbulence is a continual factor.   Between BOST and DCT, 25% of the officers and 7% of the Senior Ratings had changed. After DCT further changes continued including, for example, the XO who had therefore benefited from neither training package.

52.   The Directed Continuation Training is intended to be task focused but is still insufficiently representative of the actual tasks that will be conducted, and the way they will be conducted, in theatre. It is right that there should be an emphasis on safety but the tactical context and the associated decision making at all levels is as important. In the case of HMS CORNWALL, the boarding training was interrupted by bad weather but no provision was made to re-schedule it. Whilst it may be impractical, for rotational reasons, to conduct the training with the RM team that will be used in the NAG[10], it is essential that a RM team is provided to allow all the tactics, techniques and procedures as well as command and control to be fully exercised.

53.   Although HMS CORNWALL would have to operate with an embarked CTF and/or CTG together with their staffs in theatre, this was not included in her preparation. Her first experience of balancing the requirements came when entering the Joint Operational Area on 6 March. An embarked Flag Officer does affect the way a ship operates and also makes demands on, for example, helicopter hours. This was compounded by the uncertainty prevailing in the minds of CTF and CTG over the best place from which each could exercise command in the NAG. Although this was not a decisive factor in the events of the 23 March, it did not help HMS CORNWALL to focus all her attention on the task she had just taken over.

54.   Overall the training received by HMS CORNWALL seems to have been as well structured as any for the generic tasks of a warship, but it compared unfavourably with the highly focused, theatre specific training and mission rehearsal conducted by an Army battalion deploying to Iraq or Afghanistan. The list of tasks and relative priorities expected of a ship is markedly different to the singular focus of a land unit – yet we owe it to our people to ensure that each is as well prepared as the other.

EQUIPMENT

55.   It is axiomatic that the strategy and posture drive the equipment requirement and the opposition will in turn interpret the posture from the physical entities they see, even more than from the way they are employed. A hard edge to our capability risks misinterpretation just as much as a soft one. The CF MCC reiterates that he is content with the number and style of capabilities deployed by the UK. That said, it is equally clear that a hardening of the posture, whether driven by this incident or by other imperatives, would require different equipment.

56.   Those who have conducted this task hitherto have done so, adapting the available equipment to the task in hand. Some equipment has evolved and additions have been made, for example the Xeres communication and positioning system which has proved invaluable. Until this incident, our people have conducted the task very

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[10] RM teams from the Fleet Protection Group deploy direct to theatre and transfer from ship to ship

satisfactorily with the equipment available. There is no doubt however that the continued pressure on resources reduces the ability to insure positively against all risks. Key to future success will be a clear understanding of what we are trying to achieve, what message we want to send and what risks we seek to insure against.

57. Ship. The Batch 3 Type 22 is as well suited to the task in the NAG as any ship in the RN. The ability to embark the Flag Officer provides flexibility and the capacity for 2 helicopters provides additional capability if required. Although the waters are constrained and shallow, size of the ship is not an issue; HMS BULWARK was a very successful platform in those waters and her ability to deploy Landing Craft in formed sub-units away from the ship extended the range she could cover. Nonetheless the LPD is not the complete answer either since a frigate was still required to fulfil the oil platform security task.

58. Boats. The current RHIB is definitely 'non-escalatory' in style but ███████ ████████ It can however be carried and launched using existing davits ███

The key to reducing this vulnerability whilst retaining the non-escalatory front is the close linkage between the RHIBs and the other tactical components – the ship and the helicopter. Hardening the edge to incorporate, for example, the Royal Marines' recently acquired Offshore Raiding Craft could be interpreted as raising the stakes, with concomitant risk of misinterpretation.

59. Communications. ███ ███ ███ ███████████████████ The Xeres system, procured and fitted as an Urgent Operational Requirement, provides a good ability to █████ communicate with the ship and boats respectively, ███████████ ███ ███ ██████████ For the ship, helicopter and boats to operate as a single tactical unit, a single tactical net ███████████████████████) is essential.

60. Helicopters. The Lynx provides situational awareness, improves communications, acts as a deterrent and is capable of providing machine gun fire support if required. As such it is adequate for the task. The embarkation of a second Lynx would improve coverage of boarding operations by guaranteeing the availability of one and by adding additional hours – but an analysis of current tasking should precede a decision to deploy 2 aircraft. Logistic support, Flag visits and other administrative tasks currently compete with operations for scarce flying hours. Furthermore boarding tasks are important but each is discretionary – and a high number of tasks is not a virtue in itself.

61. <u>Weapons</u>. The boarding team are currently armed with personal weapons for self-defence and some personnel do feel vulnerable. HMS CORNWALL has asked for the deployment of sniper teams for the helicopter to provide the capability to disable Fast Attack Craft; ███████████████████████████. Whilst such a capability is deployed elsewhere by the Royal Navy to counter smuggling operations, it would not have been able to help in this instance since the helicopter had departed the scene. There are however, currently under trial for ███████████████████ ████ more sophisticated ways of achieving the same result which should be further investigated. The question of whether the boarding craft should be routinely armed with heavier weapons returns to the deterrence/de-escalation dilemma; the present posture is unequivocally de-escalatory. Nevertheless the incorporation of a heavier weapon would, if nothing else, provide greater reassurance to our own forces.

PREPAREDNESS

62. Force Generation, the responsibility of the Commander in Chief, covers all aspects of preparedness[11] to produce focused military capability for the gaining operational commander, whether CJO or the Component Commander in theatre. It is clear that a ship such as HMS CORNWALL deploying to an operational theatre will not have everything that everyone on board would like to have under ideal circumstances. It is equally clear that the 'can do' approach fostered in all the Services, and of which we are justifiably proud, does sometimes lead to 'make do'. There are dangers in this since it can lead to a culture in which people accept the unacceptable, because they believe that resources will not be made available. The judgement has to lie with the chain of command but it has to be made on the basis of knowledge of the capability available and its limitations.

63. FOST certifies that the ship is ready for operational tasking on completion of the Directed Continuation Training. Sometimes this certification may contain caveats and in the case of HMS CORNWALL, FOST had drawn attention to the manpower required for the boarding task and the conflicting priorities. That certification takes place before the ship departs UK.   Six to eight weeks elapse before the ship arrives in the Joint Operational Area and during that time a number of changes of manpower, some in key appointments, have taken place and the training edge will have been lost in some areas. I am aware that the RN is examining ways in which operational demands and harmony guidelines can be balanced and I have no doubt that the maintenance of operational capability will be a key factor in assessing the merits of the various options.

64. Whilst I do not doubt that the ship that FOST certifies is well trained for the widest possible range of maritime tasks, it does not seem to me that HMS CORNWALL and her people were in reality as well trained as they should have been for the actual tasks and conditions they would face in the NAG and this was compounded by the changes in personnel.

65. There is always a fine line to be drawn between agencies such as FOST providing training assistance to the CO and conducting training of the CO and his

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[11] Doctrine, Manpower, Training, Equipment, Sustainability

command. Responsibility for readiness should lie with the CO yet I am not wholly convinced that, in this case, he had the opportunity to own that responsibility. His Army counterpart would have visited the theatre at least once during the preparation for the deployment and would have had a major say in the way the pre-deployment training was conducted. A Naval CO is also at the mercy of programmers who, in the case of HMS CORNWALL, allowed little or no time for en route training.

66.   I see a need for the Commander in Chief to bring the constituent parts of a fighting unit together in order to assure the gaining operational commander of the full military capability on handover of command on entry to the Joint Operational Area. This depends on CJO and the gaining operational commander (in this case the UK MCC) making their requirements known to the Commander in Chief - 'Command Pull' – yet this cannot be passive. It places on the force provider an equal responsibility to go and find out what the operational commander needs, and if necessary provide advice on options available. This will also ensure that any deficiencies, for example in levels of training, are positively identified and appropriate mitigation planned.

67.   Some have questioned the potential for distraction inherent in the multiplicity of a ship's task, even inside the Gulf. Port visits, including social events, and capacity building with foreign navies are on the one hand an integral part of defence diplomacy and on the other a diversion from what might be considered the main task. Others describe this as the RN equivalent of the US '3 Block War'. This may not have been a cause in this case, yet the fact remains that HMS CORNWALL needed further training after leaving UK and had no time to conduct it.

LESSONS OF THE SHATT AL ARAB WATERWAY INCIDENT

68.   On 21 June 2004 the Royal Navy Training Team, under command of 1 Mechanised Brigade in Basra, was conducting a routine administrative move between Um Qasr and Basra in 2 Combat Support Boats and 1 Boston Whaler. During the course of the transit, they were intercepted and surrounded by 4 armed Iranian craft and ordered into Iranian waters. This incident also took place at a time of heightened tension over Iran's nuclear programme. That and the involvement of the IRGCN apart, the circumstances were different. Furthermore, immediately before the 2004 seizure, one of the RNTT boats had gone to investigate suspicious activity by a civilian fast boat further out into the channel. In the opinion of the Land Force Commander at the time, this manoeuvre was likely to have been construed by the Iranians as a border incursion. He surmised that the Iranians therefore decided to conduct an arrest operation based on their perception of our actions.[12]

69.   Nevertheless, the incident was well known to all in CTF 158 and HMS CORNWALL. The lessons identified were:

> Communications. The problem was the inadequacy of personal mobile radios then in use on land. The solution was the purchase of Iridium telephones which would not be appropriate for boarding operations in the NAG.

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[12]   HQ 1 Mech Bde DCOS/G1/02 dated 4 Jul 04

Maps and Charts. Concerns were expressed at the delineation of the international boundary. The solution was to adjust operating procedures to provide a buffer zone, which exists in the NAG.

Radar Station and Coverage. There were gaps in the situational awareness in the waterway. In the NAG, situational awareness is as good as it can be from the CTG position on the oil platform.

Al Faw Forward Operating Base. A requirement had been identified for a Forward Operating Base in the area. Such a base is not required in the NAG.

Diplomatic Relations and Force Profile. Following transfer of sovereignty, it was considered essential that all patrols be led by Iraqis. Whilst one of the roles of CTF 158 is to develop Iraqi maritime capability, that was not an issue for the incident on the 23 March.

RESISTANCE TRAINING FOR CONDUCT AFTER CAPTURE

70. The current SERE[13] policy was endorsed by Chiefs of Staff on 8 May 2006[14]. An extract from the Paper that sets out the Policy is at Annex D.

71. The paper is reasonably clear, broadly sound and well understood by those responsible for its delivery. It does not need substantive changes to the levels of operational need and training identified. The mechanism for adjusting the PTCE list is in the form of a letter by MoD/Director Joint Capability. This is well understood by practitioners but is not clearly identified in the policy paper. The letter should be subsumed within a revised paper.

72. The media section mixes advice on handling questions about our policy with guidance on how to handle the media in times of emergency, tension, conflict or war. Although both involve the media, they are different subjects and this section requires reworking to deal with them separately.

73. The paper should:

Clarify the respective responsibilities of MoD/Director Joint Capability, Front Line Commands, PJHQ and Defence SERE Training Organisation (DSTO).

Identify the purposes and participants of procedural activities such as the Customer Executive Group (CEG), SERE WG, PTCE prioritization meeting.

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[13] SERE Survive, Evade, Resist, Escape.
[14] MoD DJtCap/20/05 dated 4 May 06

Rework the media section.

Review the policy annually at 1* level by the CEG.

74. There have been variable levels of adherence to the policy by Front Line Commands. Figures maintained by the DSTO show that Land and Air Commands have complied with the spirit and letter of the policy; Fleet needs to do more. PJHQ had identified the requirement to address a number of issues before the HMS CORNWALL incident and work to rectify them is ongoing. As the subject matter expert, DSTO provides a *de facto* lead in this sphere.

75. Resources. DSTO is effective as the lead agency for SERE training but it is hampered by resource constraints.

> DSTO is dispersed at a number of sites which does not allow the best use of limited resources. The organisation would be more efficient if concentrated on a single site.

> The original Level 'A' DVD was produced to support preparations for general war and to support the 'Big 6' Resistance policy. DSTO has however been unable to produce an entirely new Level 'A' film to support the development of the policy. The result is an adaptation of the original that briefs personnel on the threat of exploitation but does not provide sufficient guidance on their own conduct. Since this is an area of rapid change, it is important that DSTO are able to keep briefing material up to date with current policy and provide relevant guidance.
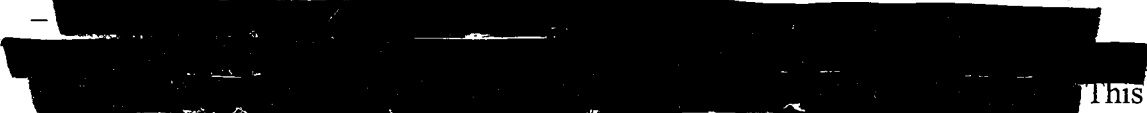
CONCLUSIONS

76. Against an ambiguous policy background, the requirement to understand and analyse the implications of a changing situation, especially on extant operations, is all the greater. Whilst those working at the strategic and operational level must cope with ambiguity, they owe it to the front line to translate this into clear and consistent guidance. Long running operations, in particular, need re-assessment in light of changed circumstances. Whilst this rests with PJHQ, Front Line Commands also have an active role to play. Had this been a new operation, there are robust processes to conduct the rigorous analysis and assessments necessary, to understand the full range of risks and to devise appropriate responses for translation into tactics, training and preparation of the units and people involved. Something similar should be undertaken periodically for long running operations.

77. ███

78. The legal basis for the operations and the ROE were satisfactory for the tasks to be carried out, given that they were in Iraqi waters. The legal status of the waters where the incident took place is not in doubt, but the delineation of Iraq's territorial

waters is murky. Any concern at the erosion of her territorial waters is an issue for Iraq rather than the coalition, but the intent of Iran to establish her presence south and west of her original boundary appears credible.

79.   Command and control is clearly delineated albeit with many layers of command. The task to protect the oil platforms is well expressed and understandable; the responsibility to contribute to the security of maritime commerce is harder since the threats to it are more diffuse. The intent of the CF MCC towards Iran is unambiguous ██ This undoubtedly contributed to the manner in which the boarding team was able to be surprised by the IRGCN.

80.   Boarding operations were not seen as the demanding tactical tasks that they are under such circumstances. Preparation for, and conduct of, the operation indicates a significant lack of cohesion and mutual understanding by all the participants. The roots of this go back to the doctrine for such operations, the selection of the individuals to take part, the work-up training and the command arrangements. The equipment for such operations is dependent on the task itself, on where the balance of risks lies and on the message the coalition wishes to send to those it wants to influence. The important lesson to draw is the need for the constituent parts of the operation to work together to provide mutual support. The maritime posture can retain a soft edge (the RHIBs), if desired, provided that there is support from the helicopter, the ship or another coalition asset to watch, to deter and to engage if necessary.

81.   HMS CORNWALL was prepared for generic maritime tasks but less ready to conduct operations in the NAG. Not only had some aspects of her tasks in the NAG not been covered adequately during training in UK waters but changes of personnel had diluted the training benefit.

82.   Superficially, the incident in the Shatt al Arab waterway in June 2004 seems similar but the tactical differences outweigh the contextual similarities. Nonetheless the lessons of that incident had been applied. The more significant gap was in the lack of understanding amongst those deployed of the series of incidents that had not resulted in the seizure of coalition personnel, most notably the Australian incident in December 2004.

83.   Resistance Policy for conduct after capture is well set out in MoD policy but needs to be updated, in particular to take account of the likelihood of exploitation through the media. Implementation of training has varied across Defence and needs a consistent approach by all Commands. DSTO is well placed to act as the subject matter expert and could do more with its limited resources if located on a single site.

RECOMMENDATIONS

84.   A periodic stocktake of all current operations should be conducted, including a structured risk assessment. (PJHQ).

85.   PJHQ/J2 and UK MCC should take responsibility to ensure the passage of UK Operational Intelligence to UK forces is complete. (PJHQ/UKMCC)

86.   ███
(MoD/DIS, PJHQ and Fleet)

87.   The division between J2 and N2 at Northwood should be reviewed (PJHQ and Fleet)

88.   RN participation in PJHQ should be reviewed together with other Joint opportunities at various levels to grow the right people for higher appointments.

89.   A mechanism is required for the Commander in Chief to assure the gaining operational commander of the military capability of the unit on its arrival in the JOA. This should include a process to ensure that the requirement is actively pulled from the gaining commander (CJO and the component commander) and incorporated into realistic scenarios in FOST training. Mission rehearsal should become part of the mind-set of trainers so that Directed Continuation Training develops theatre specific situational awareness. (Fleet)

90.   Training and integration should be programmed into a ship's operational deployment. Programmers should be prepared to adjust ships programmes if the CO identifies a requirement for further training en route to the Joint Operational Area. (Fleet)

91.   The integration of a CTF/CTG into the ship should be part of training if one is to be embarked during operations. (Fleet)

92.   Continuity staff, particularly intelligence, should be appointed to cover gaps between tours of deployed HQs. (Fleet)

93.   The tasking, selection, training and validation of ad hoc staffs should be formalised. (Fleet, with PJHQ if necessary).

94.   The process of collecting and exploiting operational knowledge should be actively pursued. (Fleet)

95.   Command estimates, tailored appropriately, should form part of training at all levels in the RN.

96.   Analytical intelligence staff work should be included in command and battle staff training to help commanders identify intent as well as capability (Fleet)

97.   The development of ██████████████████████████ should be pursued, including battle procedure, command and control, intelligence support and tactical constraints in order to provide a basis for subsequent work on the selection and training of people to conduct them. (Fleet)

98. A Fighting Instruction for boarding operations should be produced. (Fleet)

99. A Directive for RM training for boarding should be issued which should include the requirement for joint training and rehearsal. (Fleet)

100. The boats and equipment for boarding operations in the NAG should be reviewed in light of a confirmatory statement of requirement by CF MCC. As a minimum the communications for ships conducting boarding operations should be made fit for purpose. (MoD/DCDS(EC))

101. The balance between administrative, command and tactical tasking of ships' assets in the operational theatre needs detailed analysis. (Fleet)

102. RMs need to be more closely integrated into deploying ships for both training and operational phases. This may require a change to current rotation practice. (Fleet)

103. The Resistance Policy paper should be updated and reviewed annually. (MoD/DJtCap)

104. The application of the Resistance Policy should be improved (Fleet)

105. The location of DSTO at a single site should be investigated. (MoD)

WIDER APPLICABILITY OF LESSONS

106. The issues that deserve wider consideration across Defence are:

The Effect of the Ambiguous Policy Context. The translation of the ambiguous policy context into clear direction to deployed forces is principally a matter for CJO and component commanders, yet he has a finite capacity for risk assessments and there is an active role for Front Line Commands to play as subject matter experts.

The Selection Training and Validation of ad hoc Staffs. There is already a body of experience in the Army on the formation of ad hoc single Service staffs. As this practice becomes more frequent there is a need to share experience on roles, selection of individuals, collective training and validation. Although principally a matter for the Front Line Commands, there is also a role for PJHQ either to advise, assist with training or with validation.

The Selection, Training and Testing of People to Conduct Operational Tasks Outside Their Normal Experience. As individual training becomes more focussed whilst the range of tasks we ask our people to conduct grows wider, greater care in selection, training and testing is needed before we place junior people (officers and other ranks) in positions and situations for which they are simply unprepared. Time allows COs to develop the capability of individuals – but time is a very scarce commodity between operational commitments.

Cross Component Linkages. In spite of our Joint focus, we are, I suggest, not as good as we think we are at working across component and environment boundaries when deployed and between Commands in UK. ████████████ ████████████████████. In confined areas and against agile opposition, our intelligence sharing sideways across boundaries in particular needs to be improved. Access to common web pages may assist – but see below.

The Push and Pull of Intelligence. As the use of web based systems to post intelligence to be sought and 'pulled' by users becomes the norm, we will have to train our people accordingly. There is a real danger of missing important information amongst the mass available, because 'we don't know how much we don't know' and because we don't know whether we have the most up to date information. The commander owns the intelligence requirement and must ensure that he has the systems and processes in place to fulfil his needs.

'Can Do'. The 'Can Do' attitude of our people is laudable and needs to be preserved at all costs. In return we have to ensure that we do not allow them to believe that they must always 'make do' because the resources will never be made available so there is no point in asking. Resources will always be finite but decisions on priorities must be based on a structured risk assessment by the chain of command.

R H G FULTON
Lt Gen

Col

Capt

Annexes:

A. Terms of Reference
B. List of Personnel Interviewed
C. List of Documents Consulted
D. Extract from DJtCap/20/05 dated 4 May 06: United Kingdom Resistance Policy

Enclosure:

1. Map OPERATION DEACON 230430Z – 230702Z [REDACTED IN FULL]

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The extract below is the Terms of Reference supplied by CDS under D/CDS/3/5/2 dated 19 Apr 07, titled *"Inquiry Into The Apprehension Of 15 RN/RM Personnel From HMS Cornwall By Iranians On 23 Mar 07"*.

1. At 0745C on 23 Mar 07 a team of 15 RN/RM personnel departed HMS Cornwall in 2 RHIBs to board and sweep MV HANIN in the North Arabian Gulf. During this evolution the boarding party was intercepted and apprehended by IRGCN personnel in Iranian gunboats. PJHQ instituted a Learning Account Team to investigate the incident. The Team's key recommendation was that, in light of the complexity and range of issues, a more broad-ranging investigation was needed. With the agreement of the FCO you are appointed to conduct that investigation. PUS FCO, PUS MOD and I have issued instructions that serving military and civilian staff should help you with your inquiry in all possible ways.

2. I should like you to:

 a. Establish the circumstances of the incident in a broader strategic context than was possible for the Learning Account findings.

 b. Review the effectiveness of the operational and tactical directives under which the crew of HMS Cornwall was operating, and their relevance to the political and strategic environment.

 c. Examine the way in which command and control was exercised by CTF 158 and CTG 158.1, and the basis on which the respective headquarters reached judgement on the threats before authorising boarding operations.

 d. Consider whether the legal framework under which HMS Cornwall's crew was operating, including the UNSCR, delineation of soverign waters and ROE, was appropriate and effective.

 e. Review the training, doctrine, preparedness and equipment of HMS Cornwall's crew in the context of;

  (1) The operational and tactical directives and ROE, extant at the time of the incident.

  (2) The lessons identified following the apprehension of RN/RM personnel by Iranians in the Shatt al Arab waterway in 2004.

  (3) The operational and legal posture that you consider appropriate to the political and strategic environment, where different from 2d(1).

f.   Review the efficacy of inter-Departmental, inter-Governmental and Coalition procedures for maintaining the relevance of military directives and ROE in a dynamic political and strategic environment.

g.   Review the effectiveness of military training in conduct after capture, particularly in the context of hostage-taking scenarios and the possibilities of political/media exploitation.

h.   Make recommendations to address any shortcomings you identify.

i.   Consider whether your findings and recommendations may have applicability or implications more widely across the full spectrum of military capability.

LIST OF PERSONNEL INTERVIEWED

Ser (a)	Appt/Personality (b)	Date (c)	Location (d)	Interviewer (e)	Remarks (f)
1	Legal Advisor Martin Hemming	23 Apr 07	MOD	Gen Fulton & ███	
2	DCDS (Pers) Air Vice Marshall Pocock				
3	DJtCap Air Cdre Bates				
4	Policy director Desmond Bowen				
5	DCINC Fleet Vice Admiral Bolssier				
6	DGIC Maj Gen Rose	24 Apr 07	MOD	Gen Fulton & ███	
7	DG Def and Int David Richmond		FCO		
8	Iraq Coord ███		MOD		
9	DEC AWE Cdre Van Beek				
10	DG Op Pol Martin Howard				
11	CJO Lt Gen Houghton CBE	25 Apr 07	PJHQ	Gen Fulton & ███	
12	DCJO Ops Sp Sp Air Vice Marshall Walton CBE				
13	DCJO Ops Maj Gen Dutton CBE				
14	ACNS Rear Admiral Massey		MOD	Gen Fulton	
15	ACDS J2 Cdre J Westbrook	26 Apr 07	PJHQ	Gen Fulton & ███	
16	ACOS J3 Brig D A Capewell				
17	Comd Sec Dr Sarah Beaver				
18	███ ₁ RM DACOS Plans		Fleet	███	
19	███	27 Apr 07	Devonport	███	RN elements of boarding party
20	███				
21	███				
22	███				
23	███				
24	███				
25	CINC Fleet Admiral Sir James Burnell-Nugent KCB CBE	30 Apr 07	Fleet	Gen Fulton	
26	COS (T) R Adm G Zambellas	1 May 07	Fleet	Gen Fulton & ███	
27	Dir MWC ███ RN				
28	Fleet Navigating Officer ███				
29	Fleet Legal ███				
30	COS (CAP) R Adm Wilcocks	2 May 07	Fleet	Gen Fulton & ███	
31	ACOS (LMM) Brig Noble				
32	FOTR R Adm Borley				
33	CO FPGRM ███				
34	FOST R Adm Rix				
35	SO2 NTE ███				
36	DACOS Commitments ███				

Ser (a)	Appt/Personality (b)	Date (c)	Location (d)	Interviewer (e)	Remarks (f)
37	COMUSNAVCENT DJAG ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮	6 May 07	UKMCC Bahrain	Gen Fulton & ▮▮▮▮▮	
38	CFMCC Vice Admiral K Cosgriff				
39	DCFMCC/UKMCC Cdre K Winstanley				
40	CTF 158 Cdre Lambert		Ocean 6		
41	CTF 158 COS ▮▮▮				
42	CTG ▮▮▮				
43	CTG SOO L ▮▮▮				
44	Legal Advisor L ▮▮▮				
45	CO (▮▮▮	7 May 07	HMS Cornwall	Gen Fulton & ▮▮▮▮	
46	XO ▮▮▮				
47	Ops Offr ▮▮▮				
48	PWO (U) ▮▮▮				
49	Flt Comd ▮▮▮				
50	NO ▮▮▮				
51	Officer of the Watch ▮▮▮				
52	Deputy Wpn Engr Offr ▮▮▮				
53	Flight Observer ▮▮▮				
54	Current OCRM ▮▮▮				
55	Bridge Comms Rating ▮▮▮				
56	Xeres Specalist ▮▮▮				
57	1SL Admiral Sir Jonathon Band KCB ADC	8 May 07	MOD	Gen Fulton	
58	CDS Air Chief Marshall Sir Jock Stirrup KCB				
59	CDI Air Marshall S peach CBE			Gen Fulton & ▮▮▮▮	
60	COMOPS R Adm D J Cook			Gen Fulton	Phone Call
61	CO ▮▮▮▮	9 May 07	HQ DSTO	▮▮▮▮	
62	XO ▮▮▮				
63	SO2 Trg ▮▮▮				
64	SO3 J5 ▮▮▮				
65	OC SERE TC HMS Sultan ▮▮▮				
66	Rear Admiral Morisetti	10 May 07	Fleet	Gen Fulton	
67	CO FPGRM ▮▮▮		FPGRM Faslane	▮▮▮▮	
68	2IC FPGRM ▮▮▮				
69	▮▮▮				RM elements of boarding party
70	▮▮▮				
71	▮▮▮				
72	▮▮▮				
73	▮▮▮				
74	▮▮▮				

Ser (a)	Appt/Personality (b)	Date (c)	Location (d)	Interviewer (e)	Remarks (f)
75	2SL Vice Admiral Adrian J Johns CBE ADC	11 May 07	Fleet	Gen Fulton	
76	SO2 DJtCap-JM3 ▮▮▮▮▮		MOD	▮▮▮▮▮	
77	DGIC Gen Rose	14 May 07	MOD	Gen Fulton	Phone Call
78	Capt . ▮▮▮▮▮			▮▮▮▮▮	OCRM

LIST OF DOCUMENTS CONSULTED

Ser (a)	Reference (b)	Title (c)	Classification (d)	Remarks (e)
		UK Directives		
1	SP/03/16/1/5 dated 26 May 05	Director of Individual Training capability Individual Pre-Deployment Training Study	Restricted	
2	Fleet 173/1/2 dated 20 Nov 06	Information Operations Op TELIC	UK Confidential	
3	UKMCC/200/5 dated 14 Dec 06	UKMCC Mission Directive HMS Cornwall Middle East Deployment	Secret UK Eyes Only	
4	Fleet/n3/3/250/11 dated 16 Dec 06	Mission Directive – HMS Cornwall's Op TELIC Deployment Jan – Aug 07	Confidential	
		J2/N2		
5	███████████	███████████	███████	███████
6	F102/DCSA/DSG/J2 SYSTEMS/005/830	Gulf CO's Handbook	Secret	CD
7	███████████	███████████	███████	
8	███████████	███████████	███████	
		Pre Incident/Conditions		
9	S/RES/1637 dated 11 Nov 05	UN Security Council Resolution 1637 (2005)	NA	
10	S/RES/1723 dated 28 Nov 06	UN Security Council Resolution 1723 (2006)	NA	
11	DCOS/G1/02 dated 29 Jun 04	Learning Account into the RNTT Border Incident – SAAW 21 Jun 04	Confidential – REL MNFI	1 Mech Bde
12	DCOS/G1/02 dated 4 Jul 04	Learning Account into the RNTT Border Incident – SAAW 21 Jun 04 - Supplementary	Confidential – REL MNFI	1 Mech Bde
13	D/PJHQ/3/300/90/3/6 dated 12 Jul 04	Briefing note for CJO on Resumption of RNTT Riverine Ops	Secret	
14	MBS/520/1/2 dated 22 Jul 04	RNTT Border Incident – Investigation Report	Confidential - Staff	

Ser (a)	Reference (b)	Title (c)	Classification (d)	Remarks (e)
15	Fleet 520/1/2C dated 23 Jul 04	RNTT Border Incident – Full Command Investigation	Confidential Senior Management	
16	Washington Institute dated 28 Jun 04	Incident in the SAAW	NA	
17	Unreferenced dated 28 Sep 06	Iran	Confidential	DOP
18	Unreferenced dated 17 Nov 06	Iran in the Region	Confidential	DOP
19	Unreferenced and undated	Notes on the Iran/Itaq Maritime Boundry	NA	Durham University
20	FPGRM/225/02 dated 11 Oct 06	Trip Report – HMS Kent/UKMCC Bahrain – 3-5 Oct 06	Restricted	
21	D Strat Plans Including PJHQ/J5/Iran/Interim report/001 dated Jun 06	Iran Correspondence	SUKEO LIMDIS	"Red File"
22	20070508-R-Brief-RN dated 8 May 07	Point Brief for CO DSTO's Meeting with ▉▉▉▉ May 07	Restricted	Flag A: DSTO Training Task Proposal Flag B: DSTO Programme 06-07 Flag C: DIN SERE Trg Prog Flag C1: DSTO Cse Summary Flag D: DSTO Cse Summary Flag E: Fleet SERE Requirements
23	200/05 dated 22 Nov 06	Boarding Team Training Report	Unclassified	
		Post Incident		
24	6 Apr 07 0810	Interview Transcript Admiral Sir Jonathan Band	NA	The Today Programme Radio 4

Ser (a)	Reference (b)	Title (c)	Classification (d)	Remarks (e)
25	9 Apr 07 0740	Interview Transcript ▉▉▉▉▉▉	NA	Breakfast BBC 1
26	9 Apr 07 1330	Interview Transcript Vice Admiral Adrian Johns	NA	BBC News 24
27	MX DEACON 11/04/07/001 dated 11 Apr 07	Op DEACON Debrief Report	Confidential Intelligence	
28	DEACON 11/04/07/001 dated 11 Apr 07	Iranian Forces Detention of UK Military Personnel	Secret UK Eyes Only	
29	520/1 dated 29 Mar 07	HMS Cornwall Ship's Investigation into the Arrest of Boarding Teams by IRGCN on 23 Mar 07	UK Secret – RELUS/AUS	
30	Unreferenced and undated	RMBT 7 PDR for Op DEACON	Confidential	
31	CJO/D/LM (20/07) dated 13 Apr 07	UK Boarding Operations by CTF 158 in the NAG	Secret UK Eyes Only	
32	D/PJHQ/DEACON/1 dated 4 Apr 07 Including D/PJHQ/5/12/1102 dated 9 Feb 07 and CFMCC CENT 091037ZMAR07	Op DEACON Learning Account Team Report	UK Secret Staff REL US	PJHQ Docs
33	Unreferenced email dated 20 Apr 07	Op DEACON Recovery Actions	Unclassified	Email Commander Dodd
34	Unreferenced and undated	Op DEACON Emerging Lessons v7.6	UK Secret	
35	BDS/7100 dated 10 Apr 07	RN15 – Damage to UK Reputation	Restricted	
36	Unreferenced and undated	Recommencement of Boarding Ops in the GULF and Reviews of procedures following the Seizure of British Service Personnel by Iranian Revolutionary Guard	Protected until Tue 24th	Written Ministerial Statement
37	Unreferenced Interview Notes ▉▉▉		Confidential Staff	Electronic Copy
38	Unreferenced Interview Notes ▉▉▉		Confidential Staff	Electronic Copy
39	Unreferenced Interview Notes ▉▉▉		Confidential Staff	Electronic Copy
40	Unreferenced Interview Notes ▉▉▉		Confidential Staff	Electronic Copy
41	Unreferenced Interview Notes ▉▉▉		Confidential Staff	Electronic Copy
42	Unreferenced Interview Notes ▉▉▉		Confidential Staff	Electronic Copy
43	Unreferenced Interview Notes ▉▉▉		Confidential Staff	Electronic Copy

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Ser (a)	Reference (b)	Title (c)	Classification (d)	Remarks (e)
		Resistance Training Policy Documents		
44	Unreferenced and Undated	UK Joint SERE Resistance Training Governance Framework	Restricted	Electronic Copy
45	DjtCap/20/05 Dated 4 May 06	UK Resistance Policy	Secret CANAUSNZUKUS Eyes Only	Electronic Copy
46	UK Resistance Policy	The Captive Estimate Annex A to UK Resistance Policy	Secret CANAUSNZUKUS Eyes Only	Electronic Copy
47	D/DAO24/5 dated 4 Apr 03	Combat Recovery Operations: The UK Concept of Operations	Restricted	UK Resistance Policy
48	DO26/03	Survive Evade Resist Extract	Restricted	BDFL CD
49	DO37/07	Survive Evade Resist Extract	Restricted	BDFL CD
		Documentation from HMS Cornwall		
50	Unreferenced and undated	Current Boarding Net Diagram	Unclassified	Electronic Copy
51				
52				
53				
54				
55				

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Ser (a)	Reference (b)	Title (c)	Classification (d)	Remarks (e)
56	███████	███████	███████	███████
57	███████	███████	███████	███████
Miscellaneous				
58	D/CDS/3/5/2 dated 19 Apr 07	Inquiry into the Apprehension of 15 RN/RM Personnel from HMS Cornwall by Iranians on 23 Mar 07	Secret UK Eyes Only	"Terms of Reference"
59	Comd UKTF/1/04/07 dated 11 Apr 07	Op HERRICK 5 Comd UKTF Hauldown Report	Secret UK Eyes Only	
60	UKTF/H5/POR dated 11 Apr 07	3 Cdo Bde Op HERRICK 5 POR	Secret UK Eyes Only	