



Ministry
of Defence

Navy Command FOI Section
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2016-08273

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27 September 2016

Dear [REDACTED]

Release of Information

Thank you for your correspondence dated 5 September 2016 requesting the following information:

'Under the Freedom of Information Act, I am asking for copies of the Reports of Proceedings for 824 NAS in Operation Corporate and det. GIB (1982), deposited Naval Historical Branch, please.'

Your enquiry has been considered to be a request for information in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

I can confirm that the Department holds some of the information within the scope of your request. Enclosed with this letter are the Reports of Proceedings (RoPs) associated with 824 Naval Air Squadron (NAS) for Operation Corporate.

You will see that personal information of individuals has been withheld under section 40(2) of the FOI Act (personal data).

Section 40(2) applies to personal data relating to third parties. The release of personal information relating to other individuals would contravene the principles of the Data Protection Act 1998, namely Principle 1 – personal data shall be processed fairly and lawfully and not unless certain specified conditions are met, and Principle 2 – personal data shall be obtained and processed only for specified and lawful purposes and not further processed in a manner incompatible with the purposes. In this instance, data has been provided for internal purposes and not with the expectation that it would be made public.

With respect to the RoPs for the 824 NAS detachment to Gibraltar these are not held by the Department, however, the following repository of historic naval information may hold the information you seek:

Fleet Air Arm Museum

Website: <http://www.fleetairarm.com/>

Post: Fleet Air Arm Museum, RNAS Yeovilton, Ilchester, Somerset, BA22 8HT UK

If you are not satisfied with this response or you wish to complain about any aspect of the handling of your request, then you should contact me in the first instance. If informal resolution is not possible and you are still dissatisfied then you may apply for an independent internal review by contacting the Information Rights Compliance team, 2nd Floor, Zone N, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (e-mail CIO-FOI-IR@mod.uk). Please note that any request for an internal review must be made within 40 working days of the date on which the attempt to reach informal resolution has come to an end.

If you remain dissatisfied following an internal review, you may take your complaint to the Information Commissioner under the provisions of Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act. Please note that the Information Commissioner will not investigate your case until the MOD internal review process has been completed. Further details of the role and powers of the Information Commissioner can be found on the Commissioner's website, <http://www.ico.org.uk>.

Yours sincerely

Navy Command Secretariat – FOI Section

226/1/A

824 Naval Air Squadron
A Flight
RNAS CULDROSE
Cornwall

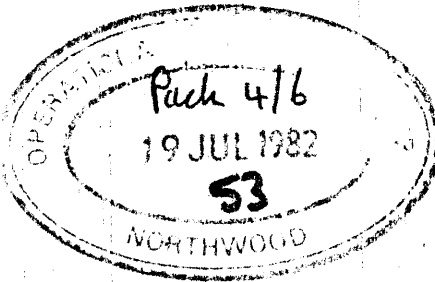
12 July 1982

See Distribution

824 SQUADRON A FLIGHT ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS - OPERATION CORPORATE

Reference:

- A. FOF3's Signal I9F/IAG/KAG 281627Z JUN 82.
- 1. Enclosure forwarded in accordance with Reference A.



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C/T OEG

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
 XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
 XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
 Lieutenant Commander Royal Navy
 Flight Commander

Enclosure:

- 1. 824 Squadron A Flight Administrative Report of Proceedings - OPERATION CORPORATE.

Distribution:

Action:

The Flag Officer Third Flotilla

Information:

Commander in Chief Fleet (FAWO)

The Flag Officer Naval Air Command

The Commanding Officer RNAS CULDROSE

The Master RFA OLMEDA

~~COVERING SECRET UK EYES BRAVO~~

ENCLOSURE 1 TO
824 A FLIGHT'S LETTER 226/
DATED 12 JUL 82

226/1/A

824 Naval Air Squadron
 A Flight
 RNAS CULDROSE
 HELSTON
 Cornwall

10 July 1982

See Distribution

824 SQUADRON A FLIGHT ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS - OPERATION CORPORATE

CHRONOLOGY

1. April 02 - Flight placed at 4 hours notice to embark, ship unknown.
 04 - Embark RFA OLMEDA alongside YONDERBERRY JETTY, DEVONPORT.
 05 - Sail DEVONPORT.
 06 - Rendezvous with HMS HERMES.
 18 - Off ASCENSION ISLAND.
 23 - Shift into Defence Watches.
- May 01 - Enter the Exclusion Zone. Conduct operations throughout May.
- June 03 - With 5 hours notice, take both aircraft, two crews, AEO and nine maintainers ashore to SAN CARLOS to assist COMAW in unloading signal stores. Intention to remain ashore overnight.
 06 - Return from SAN CARLOS.
 11 - XV649 suffers accessory drive failure. Port ECU and main gearbox change starts.
 16 - Transfer 1 aircraft (XV660) to HMS INVINCIBLE, RFA OLMEDA detached to SOUTH GEORGIA for OPERATION KEYHOLE.
 18 - Embark M Company 42 Commando RM at SOUTH GEORGIA. XV 649 now serviceable.
 20 - Assault on SOUTH THULE.
 21 - Signal received releasing ship from OPERATION CORPORATE.
 23 - Disembark M Company 42 Commando RM and POWs to SOUTH GEORGIA. OLMEDA detaches from South Atlantic.
 27 - Recover XV660 from HMS INVINCIBLE.
 30 - Arrival ASCENSION ISLAND. Disembark advance leave party.
- July 01 - Sail ASCENSION ISLAND for UK.
 10 - Disembark to RNAS CULDROSE.

NARRATIVE

2. Two days after returning from a four week detachment to HMS GANNET for GRENADA PATROL the Flight was placed on four hours notice to embark. Later that day it was confirmed that the Flight would embark in RFA OLMEDA, steaming south to enter DEVONPORT sometime during the afternoon of Saturday 3 April. Arrangements were made for heavy baggage and all stores to go by road party that Saturday, to be at DEVONPORT Dockyard where they were placed on a lighter and swung aboard RFA OLMEDA by floating crane. The two aircraft and remainder of the aircrew and maintainers embarked on Sunday 4 April at 1000 whilst RFA OLMEDA was alongside YONDERBERRY JETTY. After embarking a multitude of stores, weapons and full car on Monday 5 April RFA OLMEDA sailed for OPERATION CORPORATE at 1630.

1 of 7

~~SECRET UK BYES BRAVO~~

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3. RFA OLMEDA joined the Carrier Battle Group (CBG) and proceeded in company to ASCENSION ISLAND. During the transit the Flight carried out the minimum amount of flying and weapon training commensurate with remaining in current deck practice and night qualified. At ASCENSION ISLAND a possible periscope was spotted by the Chief Engineer Officer from RFA OLMEDA and the Flight launched both aircraft in the ensuing scramble to maintain contact. Contact was eventually lost 30 miles south west of ASCENSION ISLAND. After a marathon pumlover with RFA PEARLEAF lasting 30 hours in the ASCENSION ISLAND areas, RFA OLMEDA rejoined the CVBG and continued south to the Exclusion Zone preparing for war.

4. By 0001 23 April RFA OLMEDA and the Flight had changed into a rough equivalent of Defence Watches and the ship had been secured for action. Three RAS rigs were always available, at 15 minutes notice by day (30 minutes by night) and the flight deck open 24 hours with the HIFR gear permanently rigged. One aircraft was at 20 minutes notice and the other at one hour notice; four Mk 46 torpedoes were prepared as well as both GPMG's. From then on all flying, except for test flight was as tasked in the Opgen Foxtrot.

5. The CVBG entered the Exclusion Zone 01 May and commenced sea and air operations to control the area. The Flight were involved in ASW, ASV and HDS in approximately equal ratios during this period; both aircraft were airborne in support of HMS SHEFFIELD, one as dip boss of the screening helicopters, the other engaged in casevac duties.

6. The Flight detached both aircraft, two crews and ten maintainers to the SAN CARLOS area at 0700 03 June, to join with 4 aircraft from 826 Squadron in assisting COMAW by unloading urgently needed stores from ships anchored in SAN CARLOS WATER. This detachment, intended for an overnight stop, eventually lasted 3 nights and 4 days and after allowing for the many problems and total loss of suitable equipment, was thoroughly enjoyed by all involved in it.

7. Having returned to the relatively humdrum flying in the CVBG the Flight continued flying as tasked by the Opgen Foxtrot. However, on the morning of 15 June the Flight was directed to transfer one aircraft and one crew to HMS INVINCIBLE for a prolonged stay and prepare to swap the remaining aircraft, aircrew and maintainers with RFA REGENT's Wessex 5 Flight. RFA OLMEDA would then sail with HMS ENDURANCE and HMS YARMOUTH for OPERATION KEYHOLE (repossession of SOUTH THULE).

8. In the event, although the transfer to HMS INVINCIBLE was carried out, the swap with RFA REGENT's Flight did not materialise. This was because one of the Wessex 5's was transferred to HMS ENDURANCE who sailed 1½ days early. The remaining Wessex 5 then required an engine change which could not be carried out as insufficient maintainers were left behind on RFA REGENT, thus one Seaking, 1 crew and all the Flight maintainers remained onboard RFA OLMEDA.

9. The Flight assisted in the embarkation of M Company 42 Commando RM by transferring ammunition and stores from GRYPVIKEN, whilst the RM personnel were embarked by tug. No bunks were available for the embarked force, but camp beds were in plentiful supply and RM Commandoes were littered around the ship in all available spaces, including the forward half of the hangar. After consultation with OC Troops and concluding that the submarine threat was virtually nil, it was decided to attempt to land a complete Troop at one go i.e. 24 combat ready marines. All the cabin seats, except the Observer's seat, and approximately half of the sonar equipment was removed from the aircraft. The resulting space being sufficient to pack 12 marines in through the cargo door and 12 marines through the person door. The assault took place in a blizzard, fortunately the Argentinians surrendered very quickly, the aircraft was then used as a troop and prisoner ferry for the rest of the day.

10. At 2000 21 June a very welcome signal was received by RFA OLMEDA, directing the ship to return to the UK once released from OPERATION KEYHOLE. M Company and prisoners were disembarked at SOUTH GEORGIA on 23 June and at 1600 both ship and Flight were detached from OPERATION CORPORATE for return to the UK. RFA OLMEDA arrived at ASCENSION ISLAND on 30 June for an overnight stop and to disembark an advance leave party. The Flight disembarked to RNAS CULDROSE 0830 10 July in MOUNTS BAY.

OUTLINE STATISTICS

11. The following statistics cover the period 04 Apr - 23 Jun 82:

<u>MISSION</u>	<u>DAY</u>	<u>NIGHT</u>		
ASW	95:25	47:55		
ASV	74:55	32:05		
HDS/LOAD LIFT/VERTREP	123:15	3:55		
TROOPING	2:35	NIL		
SAR	4:05	0:50		
TRANSIT	11:35	7:55		
TRAINING	9:45	5:45		
CTF	10:50	0:35		
<u>TOTALS</u>	<u>332:25</u>	<u>90:00</u>	<u>GRAND TOTAL</u>	422:25
<u>SORTIES</u>	134	38	<u>GRAND TOTAL</u>	172

AVERAGE CREW FLYING TIME 140 Hrs 48 Mins.

12. The following types and numbers of weapons were dropped:

Mk 11 Depth Charge x 4
Mk 46 Torpedo x 1

NOMINAL LISTS

13. The Flight suffered no casualties. The Flight nominal list for OPERATION CORPORATE is as follows:

Lt CdrXXXXXXXXXXXXX - Flight Commander
Lt XXXXXXXXXXXX - Senior Observer
Lt XXXXXXXX XX - Senior Pilot
Lt XXXXXXXXXXXX - Air Engineer Officer
Lt XXXXXXXXXXXt
Lt XXXXXXXXXXX'
Lt XXXXXXXXXXXX
S/Lt XXXXXXXXXXXXX
S/Lt XXXXXXXXXXXX.
S/Lt XXXXXXXXXXXX

AEA (M) 1 XXXXXXXXXXXX - SMR
CAEM (M) XXXXXXXXXXXX
AEMN (R) 1 XXXXXXXXXXXX - Watch Controller
AEA (L) 1 XXXXXXXXXXXX
AEMN (M) 1 XXXXXXXX - Watch Controller
CAEM (R) XXXXXXXXXXXX
AEMN (L) 1 XXXXXXXXXXXX
CPO (AH) XXXXXXXXXXXXX - FDO
CPO (OPS) (R) XXXXXXXXXXXX - HCO
POAEM (W) XXXXXXXX
POA CMN XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

AEA(L)2 XXXXXXXXXXXXX
AEA(R)2 XXXXXXXXXXXXX
POAEM(M) XXXXXXXXXXXXX
POSA XXXXXXXXXXXXX

LAEM(R) XXXXXXXXXXXXX
LAEM(M) XXXXXXXXXXXXX
LAEM(M) XXXXXXXXXXXXX
LACMN XXXXXXXXXXXXX
LACMN (XXXXXX)
LA(SE) XXXXXXXXXXXXX
LMA XXXXXXXXX
LSA XXXXXXXXXXXXX
LAEM(L) XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
AEM (M) XXXXXXXXXXXXX
AEM(M) XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
AEM(M) XXXXXXXXX
AEM(M) XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
AEM(R) XXXXXXXXXXXXX
AEM(W) XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
AEM(L) XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
AEM(L) XXXXXXXXX
AEM(R) XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
NA(AH) XXXXXXXXXXXXX
STWD XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
STWD XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
STWD XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

PROBLEMS MET

14. COMPLEMENT, QUALIFICATIONS AND TRAINING

a. Throughout OPERATION CORPORATE there was only one qualified helicopter controller (HC) available on RFA OLMEDA. The second HC (unqualified RFA transit controller) was also a watch keeper and therefore was unavailable for HC duties. The ship's flight deck was available 24 hours a day; frequently the Flight was tasked to fly throughout the night and the ship tasked to receive HDS through the day, it can therefore be seen that continuous HC coverage was desirable, but unfortunately not available. Furthermore, with only three crews it was found to be impractical to provide a duty officer, thus during rest periods and in the early hours of the morning there was no suitable point of contact between the Flight, the communications department and the OOW/Command team. Thus signals were delayed in being actioned, interdepartmental 'feathers' were ruffled unnecessarily, command decisions were delayed and an overall picture of events missed for the lack of someone to compile the picture and smooth the 'feathers'. Had the Flight been complemented with a second HC for this operation, the problems mentioned above could have been immensely reduced. Continuous HC coverage would have been available by working watches, and when not actually engaged in controlling duties the HC could have acted in an operations capacity.

b. The Flight is complemented in peacetime with an LMA. It is considered that in a state of war an LMA would not have sufficient expertise to cope with the potentially very serious first aid requirements arising from a missile hit upon the ship. It is therefore suggested that, under wartime conditions, he be replaced by at least a POMA.

c. As mentioned in paragraph 16b, when the Flight took over the running

the flight deck a small penalty in aircraft maintenance was incurred. Aircraft rectification suffered as maintainers were required to operate the deck both for aircraft movements and vertrep. To alleviate the problem it suggested that, under wartime conditions, four extra aircraft handlers (2 watch) be added to the Flight complement.

15. OWN SUPPORT

a. Detailed comments on the embarked mobile workshops and air stores are contained at Annex A and B respectively.

b. The Flight embarked with no charts of the operational area. Whilst on passage a small but inadequate number of 1:250,000 scale charts of the FALKLANDS and SOUTH GEORGIA plus one set of 1:50,000 scale maps of the FALKLANDS were acquired from ships in company. The Flight were unable to order any further maps as no catalogue is held by either the Flight or the ship. Furthermore, when ordered ashore to support the land forces no grid 1:50,000 were available thus finding a six figure grid reference position was rather a matter of luck. Initially there were no overlays available, but it is known that some overlays were produced and forwarded for the Flight. They have not been received and are believed to be still somewhere in HMS HERMES.

c. This conflict has demonstrated the extraordinary flexibility demanded from helicopter crews and that it is quite feasible for ASW helicopters to be required to operate ashore. When the Flight was ordered ashore, albeit for an overnight stop, it was not equipped to support itself. It was found that the Flight was deficient in both operating experience in a land as opposed to a sea environment, and equipment to operate in a military role. It is recognised that operating ashore is an infrequent occurrence for ASW aircrew nevertheless the necessary equipment is easily available in UK and should be made available where any assault involvement is likely. Also training both theoretical and practical should be made possible, especially more frequent small-arms drills.

16. PARENT SHIP SUPPORT

a. On embarking it was discovered that the ship was unable to supply the Flight with once only suits and it is recommended that Flights are issued with sufficient once only suits and anti-flash gear to support themselves.

b. On going into Defence Watches the ship effectively was split into two departments, the RFA personnel operating the RAS rigs whilst the Flight operated the flight deck. In volunteering to operate the flight deck it was realised by the Flight that a penalty would be paid in aircraft maintenance but this was accepted so that the maximum could be offered by the ship ie 3 rigs always available and 24 hour flight deck availability. However, an attitude developed that any defects in the flight deck area should be rectified by the Flight personnel and whilst ship engineering support was, on the whole, satisfactory there were some shortcomings.

c. The junior RFA Officers on the bridge team were unable to assist in a facet of helicopter operations due to their lack of training and inexperience. The potential RFA helicopter controller arrived onboard two years after his controller's course, never having operated with a live helicopter.

17. UK SUPPORT. UK support was considered to be generally good, most items arrived in a short time scale. It should be noted that urgent responses could be achieved by the use of the telex facility which most RFA's have. It is, however,

only suitable for unclassified information

18. CLEARANCES, MODIFICATIONS AND NEW EQUIPMENT. Once issued, the Flight planned to use the 120% torque extension for all sorties. It was particularly useful for the assault on SOUTH THULE. The troop step (Mod No 3053) was found to be a useful, simple and easily fitted accessory, again invaluable for the assault on SOUTH THULE. The aircraft mounted GPMG could have been more useful in the defence role had they been pintle mounted rather than the current mounting arrangement. The strake (NSM Seaking 3271) was not fitted due to inadequate manufacturing facilities.

19. TASKING, FATIGUE AND MORALE

a. No undue fatigue was suffered by any of the Flight, only the cumulative fatigue which would be expected after two months in Defence Watches. This was due in some part to the Flight's tasking which generally took account of fatigue problems and the weather affecting flight deck movement and operations.

b. The Flight's morale was generally good although, at times there were one or two troughs. It would appear that one of the most important factors is the assurance that news and mail is reaching NOK back in the UK. Throughout the Flight the general concern was more for families at home rather than the fear of Exocet (although at times running a close second). The familygram was a most useful asset in reassuring people and could have been sanctioned earlier.

c. Another significant morale problem was the lower morale of the RFA ratings, who, living cheek by jowl with RN ratings inevitably dragged the Flight's morale downwards. This low RFA morale was primarily due to a lack of information, sometimes necessarily so. Nevertheless the Flight's ratings were informed as much as possible of what was going on, whereas RFA policy appeared to be 'Release as little as possible'. This tended to depress RFA ratings who then 'pumped' all Flight personnel, from the Flight Commander down, for information.

20. WELFARE. The inordinate delay in informing LAEM(M) xxxxxxxxx of the death of his mother was a potential welfare problem. Although it had been expected, as the Flight had made arrangements for the message to be passed as quickly as possible it still took 14 days for the information to reach xxxxxxxx. When compared with the time taken to inform the Flight Commander of the birth of his child (24 hours) some ill feeling could have been caused. Fortunately this was not the case.

WEAPONS RELEASED

21. After the attack on HMS SHEFFIELD, in the ensuing chaos, the Flight dropped two Mk 11 Depth Charges and one Mk 46 Torpedo. All were released at 200ft at 1000 and all appeared to function normally. On 17 May two Mk 11 Depth Charges were dropped whilst investigating a possible one. The first resulted in a surface burst whilst the second functioned normally, again both were released from 200ft at 1000. A total of 21 skillets of CHAFF HOTEL were uneventfully deployed.

OPERATIONAL EMPLOYMENT

22. Due to the deteriorating weather conditions the Flight was tasked on two occasions to operate from the deck of HMS HERMES. Whilst this was reasonable on an infrequent basis, the cumulative effects can be quite significant. Deploying an aircraft and two crews at very short notice away from parent ships should not be programmed without considering very carefully the effect on aircraft

serviceability and aircrew fatigue.

23. Whilst it is possible to safely fly and operate the Seaking in very poor visibility, as was done during OPERATION CORPORATE, it must always be borne in mind that with PVA recoveries being the only method of returning to the deck, any kind of emergency, especially one requiring a rapid recovery, leaves no margin for error. This must be considered by authorising officers.

24. The variety of employment was a strong factor in keeping the aircrew from becoming bored and complacent. The 'surprises' of the SAN CARLOS detachment and SOUTH THULE assault were treated as a great test of adaptability and professionalism. It is recommended that this aspect of helicopter tasking is borne in the minds of those writing the Opgen Foxtrot.

PEACETIME RULES AND OPERATIONAL REALITY

25. Simply stated there is little relationship between peacetime rules and wartime reality. If lives depend on modifying peacetime or safety constraints then this must be done. The overriding principle was 'Does the end justify the means?' Assuming the answer to be 'Yes' and having considered other factors like aircrew ability, fatigue, aircraft capability, the task was attempted. Peacetime rules in wartime, be replaced by commonsense and decisive leadership.

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Lieutenant Commander Royal Navy
Flight Commander

Annexes:

- A. Effectiveness and shortcomings of the mobile workshops embarked in RFA OLMEDA
- B. The air stores and Matconoff organisation in RFA OLMEDA during OPERATION CORPORATE.

Distribution:

Action:

The Flag Officer Third Flotilla

Information:

Commander in Chief Fleet (FAWO)

The Flag Officer Naval Air Command

The Commanding Officer RNAS CULDROSE

The Master RFA OLMEDA

7 of 7

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EFFECTIVENESS AND SHORT COMINGS OF THE MOBILE WORKSHOPS EMBARKED IN RFA OLMEDA

1. General

- a. The effectiveness of these workshops has not been previously tested in the prolonged maximum aircraft availability/sonar environment, and conclusions drawn from an ARMILLA type deployment are not comparable and may be invalidated by experience gained during OPERATION CORPORATE.
- b. The one man per workshop meant a maximum sustained working day of 14 hours before fatigue negated fruitful effort. This could be a limiting factor during continuous operations, but the spare equipment held in the flyaway pack provided an interim supply of serviceable items.
- c. Both workshops were in poor condition when both maintainers took them over in January 1982, having been fitted to RFA OLMEDA during an ARMILLA deployment, and had no subsequent maintenance. The majority of test equipment required calibration and spares held as serviceable subsequently proved to be unserviceable.

2. Electrical/Mechanical Workshop

- a. On joining RFA OLMEDA, PO xxxxxxxx previous experience and training for the job of running a semi-autonomous workshop, both technically and as a senior rating, were limited, which resulted in his ability being rapidly swamped and his confidence, which was already low, suffered accordingly and took him a considerable time to regain. It was therefore some time before he was able to project himself and his workshop facilities as a 'v' concern. Better preparation at PFE stage and/or a more 'bench' experienced technician and senior rate is recommended.
- b. As with the Radio technician, xxxxxxxx was employed in fitting out a mobile workshop at RNAS CULDROSE during the period allocated for him to learn the various relevant equipments in the Electrical Workshop, leaving him with a large and unsupported OJT task when he embarked.
- c. The handover from the previous Electrical technician comprised a permanent loan handover and little else. A properly structured, and long handover period is recommended.
- d. Test equipment has been bolted to the racking in an illogical order, with the most used set being the least accessible. The workshops would benefit from standardisation after careful analysis of experience so far accrued.
- e. The air conditioning plants for both workshops and the issue centre a high defect arising rate, with a disproportionate amount of xxxxxxxx being expended in their rectification. The provision and substitution of more suitable and reliable plant is recommended.
- f. The welding equipment has never been used and either the workshop technician should complete a welding SAMCO to enable its use, or the equipment removed to make space for a more useful item, such as a small metal folding/bending machine.
- g. xxxxxxxx has put a lot of hard work and determination into learning

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job and maximising his workshop facilities. He was reluctant to admit or discuss his problems with the Flight AEO, but has since found that by doing so a simple solution can often be obtained. He managed to integrate himself with the Flight and helped on several aircraft jobs, it was noticed that his confidence and attitude improved when he felt himself to be a member of the team. These workshop technicians should be briefed to integrate with a Flight as much as possible and communicate early any problems which may arise.

3. Avionics Workshop

a. POxxxxxxx was ill prepared for the task of running the workshop and his knowledge and experience, both in his equipment and what the Flight was trying to achieve, was poor. He had not attended the Radar/Doppler/Sonar SAMCO which had been waived in favour of bench experience, this was also waived in order for him to prepare another workshop's sonar second-line test set, his only bench experience having been Blue Orchid doppler.

b. xxxxxxxx was sent to HMS INVINCIBLE radio workshops during OPERATION CORPORATE with a range of defective LRUs in an attempt to bring his competence and confidence to a higher level and teach him a more logical approach to fault diagnosis. The visit was of some benefit to him.

c. Defective equipment was also transferred, on several occasions, to HMS INVINCIBLE for rectification. This was necessary when the defects were beyond xxxxxxxx ability to diagnose or repair. Frustration was felt that the facilities carried could not be used to their full potential, which would have been possible, had an experienced and well prepared diagnostician been drafted to the workshop.

d. As with the Electrical technician xxxxxxxx would have benefitted from a properly structured handover. His workshop was a shambles when he took over and much of his initial effort was expended putting this to rights. His early work suffered because of inaccuracies in both his standard and digital AVOs of up to a third, and many of his test sets were defective and had leads missing.

e. Every chance should be taken, whilst a workshop is in UK, to overhaul and calibrate equipment.

f. The shortcomings of the Avionics workshop were more noticeable due to the higher defective equipment input rate and equipment complexity. Despite the considerable effort xxxxxxxx put into his tasks he did not achieve the degree of tangible results that he deserved in the form of serviceable equipment.

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THE AIR STORES SYSTEM AND MATCONOFF ORGANISATION IN RFA OLMEDA
DURING OPERATION CORPORATE

1. The mobile issue centre was effective in meeting many of the Flight requirements for air stores, the range of stock and holding levels were very good.
2. The manning of the issue centre by a POSA and an LSA was ideal as each was attached to a Flight watch providing 24 hour coverage for all stores requirement. The POSA was directly accountable to the AEO and all signals of a stores nature were released only by the AEO, this led to a high degree of control being exercised over the system and due to the lack of multi and potentially conflicting managerial inputs the system ran simply and effectively.
3. A subdist of all stores signals was run from the radio room and the 'on - watch' storeman cleared his bin at frequent intervals. This again led to simplification and early action on the MATCONOFF requirements of other ships. This separate stores signal dist was considered to be essential for the efficient working of the MATCONOFF organisation.
4. No MATCONOFF existed in the ship prior to the establishment of the Flight organisation and the Flight also ran MATCONOFF for the ship, but to avoid confusion, used separate identifying codes.
5. No formal stores accounting procedure existed within the ship for non flight stores, if stores were not claimed by the deck, engine room or catering store keepers at their point of embarkation they would disappear into the depths of the ship with no record of location or stockholding/taking system. A system could easily be installed to match demands made, for all departments, with demands met and their location.
6. The above made the Flight storemen's task in checking for MATCONOFF requirements very difficult and time consuming.
7. MATCONOFF available and demand signals were grouped whenever possible to reduce the overall signal traffic in accordance with the minimise instructions and the efficiency of the system did not suffer because of it.
8. The ship would benefit by holding a scaled allowance of aircraft inflams, this would reduce the overstocking situation that results when each Flight has to embark with their own, invariably leaving the unused residue behind.
9. Air stores which arrive on an RFA after the Flight has disembarked should be forwarded by the ship to the parent Air Station rather than be held pending the arrival of the next Flight as happens at present. If this was to become standard operating procedure the air stores system would benefit as it would be relieved of the duplication of demand, and tying up of assets that exists at present.

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824 Naval Air Squadron
A Flight
RNAS CULDROSE
HELSTON
Cornwall

The Commanding Officer
824 Naval Air Squadron
RNAS CULDROSE
HELSTON
Cornwall

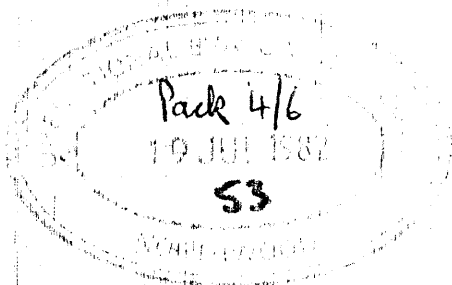
12 July 1982

824 SQUADRON A FLIGHT REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS - OPERATION CORPORATE

References:

- A. 824.Squadron Flight Orders Section 2 para 200-9.
- B. FOF3's Signal I9F/IAG/KAG 281627Z JUN 82.

1. Enclosure forwarded in accordance with Reference A.
2. Copies of the enclosure, without Annex A (Engineering Report of Proceedings), have been forwarded to FOF3 and information addressees in accordance with Reference B.



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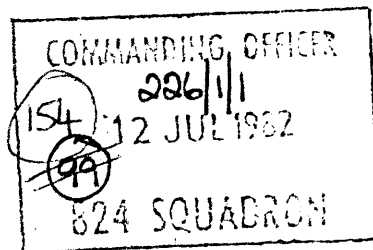
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Lieutenant Commander Royal Navy
Flight Commander

Enclosure:

1. 824 Squadron A Flight Report of Proceedings - OPERATION CORPORATE.

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824 Naval Air Squadron
A Flight
RNAS CULDROSE
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The Commanding Officer
824 Naval Air Squadron
RNAS CULDROSE
HELSTON
Cornwall

10 July 1982

824 SQUADRON A FLIGHT REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS - OPERATION CORPORATE

CHRONOLOGY

1. April 02 - Flight placed at 4 hours notice to embark, ship unknown.
- 04 - Embark RFA OLMEDA alongside YONDERBERRY JETTY, DEVONPORT.
- 05 - Sail DEVONPORT.
- 06 - Rendezvous with HMS HERMES.
- 18 - Off ASCENSION ISLAND.
- 23 - Shift into Defence Watches.
- May 01 - Enter the Exclusion Zone. Conduct operations throughout May.
- June 03 - With 5 hours notice, take both aircraft, two crews, AEO and nine maintainers ashore to SAN CARLOS to assist COMAW in unloading ships. Intention to remain ashore overnight.
- 06 - Return from SAN CARLOS to RFA OLMEDA.
- 11 - XV649 suffers accessory drive failure. Port ECU and main gearbox change starts.
- 16 - Transfer 1 aircraft (XV660) to HMS INVINCIBLE, RFA OLMEDA detaches to SOUTH GEORGIA for OPERATION KEYHOLE.
- 18 - Embark M Company 42 Commando RM at SOUTH GEORGIA. XV649 now serviceable.
- 20 - Assault on SOUTH THULE.
- 21 - Signal received releasing ship from OPERATION CORPORATE.
- 23 - Disembark M Company and POWs to SOUTH GEORGIA. RFA OLMEDA detaches from South Atlantic.
- 27 - Recover XV660 from HMS INVINCIBLE.
- 30 - Arrival at ASCENSION ISLAND. Disembark advance leave party.
- July 01 - Sail ASCENSION ISLAND for UK.
- 10 - Disembark to RNAS CULDROSE.

NARRATIVE

2. Two days after returning from a four week detachment to HMS GANNET for GRENADA PATROL the Flight was placed on four hours notice to embark. Later that day it was confirmed that the Flight would embark in RFA OLMEDA, steaming south to enter DEVONPORT sometime during the afternoon of Saturday 3 April. Arrangements for heavy baggage and all stores to go by road party that Saturday, to be at DEVONPORT Dockyard where they were placed on a lighter and swung aboard RFA OLMEDA by a floating crane. The two aircraft and remainder of the aircrew and maintainers embarked on Sunday 4 April at 1000 whilst RFA OLMEDA was alongside YONDERBERRY JETTY. After embarking a multitude of stores, weapons and a full cargo on Monday 5 April RFA OLMEDA sailed for OPERATION CORPORATE at 1630.

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proceeded in company to ASCENSION ISLAND. During the transit the Flight carried out the minimum amount of flying and weapon training commensurate with remaining in current deck practice and night qualified. At ASCENSION ISLAND a possible periscope was spotted by the Chief Engineer Officer from RFA OLMEDA and the Flight launched both aircraft in the ensuing scramble to maintain contact. Contact was eventually lost 30 miles south west of ASCENSION ISLAND. After a marathon pumpover with RFA PEARLEAF lasting 30 hours in the ASCENSION ISLAND areas, RFA OLMEDA rejoined the CVBG and continued south to the Exclusion Zone preparing for war.

4. By 0001 23 April RFA OLMEDA and the Flight had changed into a rough equivalent of Defence Watches and the ship had been secured for action. Three RAS rigs were always available, at 15 minutes notice by day (30 minutes by night) and the flight deck open 24 hours with the HIFR gear permanently rigged. One aircraft was at 20 minutes notice and the other at one hour's notice; four Mk 46 torpedoes were prepared as well as both GPMG's. From then on all flying, except for test flights, was as tasked in the Ogen Foxtrot.

5. The CVBG entered the Exclusion Zone 01 May and commenced sea and air operations to control the area. The Flight were involved in ASW, ASV and HDS in approximately equal ratios during this period; both aircraft were airborne in support of HMS SHEFFIELD, one as dip boss of the screening helicopters, the other engaged in casevac duties.

6. The Flight detached both aircraft, two crews and ten maintainers to the SAN CARLOS area at 0700 03 June, to join with 4 aircraft from 826 Squadron in assisting COMAW by unloading urgently needed stores from ships anchored in SAN CARLOS WATER. This detachment, intended for an overnight stop, eventually lasted 3 nights and 4 days and after allowing for the many problems and total lack of suitable equipment, was thoroughly enjoyed by all involved in it.

7. Having returned to the relatively humdrum flying in the CVBG the Flight continued flying as tasked by the Ogen Foxtrot. However, on the morning of 15 June the Flight was directed to transfer one aircraft and one crew to HMS INVINCIBLE for a prolonged stay and prepare to swap the remaining aircraft, aircrew and maintainers with RFA REGENT's Wessex 5 Flight. RFA OLMEDA would then sail with HMS ENDURANCE and HMS YARMOUTH for OPERATION KEYHOLE (repossession of SOUTH THULE).

8. In the event, although the transfer to HMS INVINCIBLE was carried out, the swap with RFA REGENT's Flight did not materialise. This was because one of the Wessex 5's was transferred to HMS ENDURANCE who sailed 1½ days early. The remaining Wessex 5 then required an engine change which could not be carried out as insufficient maintainers were left behind on RFA REGENT, thus one Seaking, two crews and all the Flight maintainers remained onboard RFA OLMEDA.

9. The Flight assisted in the embarkation of M Company 42 Commando RM by transferring ammunition and stores from GRYTVIKEN, whilst the RM personnel were embarked by tug. No bunks were available for the embarked force, but camp beds were in plentiful supply and RM Commandoes were littered around the ship in all available spaces, including the forward half of the hangar. After consultations with OC Troops and concluding that the submarine threat was virtually nil, it was decided to attempt to land a complete Troop at one go i.e. 24 combat ready marines. All the cabin seats, except the Observer's seat, and approximately half of the sonar equipment was removed from the aircraft. The resulting space being sufficient to pack 12 marines in through the cargo door and 12 marines through the personnel door. The assault took place in a blizzard, fortunately the Argentinians surrendered very quickly, the aircraft was then used as a troop and prisoner ferry for the rest of the day.

10. At 2000 21 June a very welcome signal was received by RFA OLMEDA, directing the ship to return to the UK once released from OPERATION KEYHOLE. M Company and prisoners were disembarked at SOUTH GEORGIA on 23 June and at 1600 both ship and Flight were detached from OPERATION CORPORATE for return to the UK. RFA OLMEDA arrived at ASCENSION ISLAND on 30 June for an overnight stop and to disembark an advance leave party. The Flight disembarked to RNAS CULDROSE 0830 10 July in MOUNTS BAY.

OUTLINE STATISTICS

11. The following statistics cover the period 04 Apr - 23 Jun 82:

<u>MISSION</u>	<u>DAY</u>	<u>NIGHT</u>		
ASW	95:25	47:55		
ASV	74:55	32:05		
HDS/LOAD LIFT/VERTREP	123:15	3:55		
TROOPING	2:35	NIL		
SAR	4:05	0:50		
TRANSIT	11:35	7:55		
TRAINING	9:45	5:45		
CTF	10:50	0:35		
<u>TOTALS</u>	<u>332:25</u>	<u>90:00</u>	<u>GRAND TOTAL</u>	<u>422:25</u>
<u>SORTIES</u>	<u>134</u>	<u>38</u>	<u>GRAND TOTAL</u>	<u>172</u>

AVERAGE CREW FLYING TIME 140 Hrs 48 Mins.

12. The following types and numbers of weapons were dropped:

Mk 11 Depth Charge x 4
Mk 46 Torpedo x 1

NOMINAL LISTS

13. The Flight suffered no casualties. The Flight nominal list for OPERATION CORPORATE is as follows:

Lt Cdr xxxxxxxxxxxxxx	- Flight Commander
Lt xxxxxxxxxxxxxx	- Senior Observer
Lt xxxxxxxxxxxxxx	- Senior Pilot
Lt xxxxxxxxxxxxxx	- Air Engineer Officer
Lt xxxxxxxxxxxxxx	
Lt xxxxxxxxxxxxxx	
Lt xxxxxxxxxxxxxx	
Lt xxxxxxxxxxxxxx	
S/Lt xxxxxxxxxxxxxx	
S/Lt xxxxxxxxxxxxxx	
S/Lt xxxxxxxxxxxxxx	
AEA (M) 1 xxxxxxxxxxxxxx	- SMR
CAEM (M) xxxxxxxxxxxxxx	
AEMN (R) 1 xxxxxxxxxxxxxx	- Watch Controller
AEA (L) 1 xxxxxxxxxxxxxx	
AEMN (M) 1 xxxxxx	- Watch Controller
CAEM (R) xxxxxxxxxxxxxx	
AEMN (L) 1 xxxxxxxxxxxxxx	
CPO (AH) xxxxxxxxxxxxxx	- FDO
CPO (OPS) (R) xxxxxxxxxxxxxx	- HCO
POAEM (W) xxxxxxxx	
POA CMN xxxxxxxxxxxxxx	

AEA(L)2 XXXXXXXXXXXX
AEA(R)2 XXXXXXXXXXXX
POAEM(M) XXXXXXXXXXXX
POSA XXXXXXXXXXXX

LAEM(R) XXXXXXXXXXXX
LAEM(M) XXXXXXXXXXXX
LAEM(M) XXXXXXXXXXXX
LACMN XXXXXXXXXXXX
LACMN XXXXXXXXXXXX
LA(SE) XXXXXXXXXXXX
LMA XXXXXXXX
LSA XXXXXXXXXXXX
LAEM(L) XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
AEM(M) XXXXXXXXXXXX
AEM(M) XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
AEM(M) XXXXXXXXXXXX
AEM(M) XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
AEM(R) XXXXXXXXXXXX
AEM(W) XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
AEM(L) XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
AEM(L) XXXXXXXX
AEM(R) XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
NA(AH) XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
STWD XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
STWD XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
STWD XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

PROBLEMS MET

14. COMPLEMENT, QUALIFICATIONS AND TRAINING

a. Throughout OPERATION CORPORATE there was only one qualified helicopter controller (HC) available on RFA OLMEDA. The second HC (unqualified RFA transit controller) was also a watch keeper and therefore was unavailable for HC duties. The ship's flight deck was available 24 hours a day; frequently the Flight was tasked to fly throughout the night and the ship tasked to receive HDS through the day, it can therefore be seen that continuous HC coverage was desirable, but unfortunately not available. Furthermore, with only three crews it was found to be impractical to provide a duty officer, thus during rest periods and in the early hours of the morning there was no suitable point of contact between the Flight, the communications department and the OOW/Command team. Thus signals were delayed in being actioned, interdepartmental 'feathers' were ruffled unnecessarily, command decisions were delayed and an overall picture of the events missed for the lack of someone to compile the picture and smooth the 'feathers'. Had the Flight been complemented with a second HC for this operation, the problems mentioned above could have been immensely reduced. Continuous HC coverage would have been available by working watches, and when not actually engaged in controlling duties the HC could have acted in an operations capacity.

b. The Flight is complemented in peacetime with an LMA. It is considered that in a state of war an LMA would not have sufficient expertise to cope with the potentially very serious first aid requirements arising from a missile hit upon the ship. It is therefore suggested that, under wartime conditions, he be replaced by at least a POMA.

c. As mentioned in paragraph 16b, when the Flight took over the running of

the flight deck a small penalty in aircraft maintenance was incurred in the aircraft rectification suffered as maintainers were required to operate the deck both for aircraft movements and vertrep. To alleviate the problem it suggested that, under wartime conditions, four extra aircraft handlers (2 watch) be added to the Flight complement.

15. OWN SUPPORT

a. Detailed comments on the embarked mobile workshops and air stores are contained at Annex A.

b. The Flight embarked with no charts of the operational area. Whilst on passage a small but inadequate number of 1:250,000 scale charts of the FALKLANDS and SOUTH GEORGIA plus one set of 1:50,000 scale maps of the FALKLANDS were acquired from ships in company. The Flight were unable to order any further maps as no catalogue is held by either the Flight or the ship. Furthermore, when ordered ashore to support the land forces no grid 1:50,000 were available thus finding a six figure grid reference position was rather a matter of luck. Initially there were no overlays available, but it is known that some overlays were produced and forwarded for the Flight. They have not been received and are believed to be still somewhere in HMS HERMES.

c. This conflict has demonstrated the extraordinary flexibility demanded from helicopter crews and that it is quite feasible for ASW helicopters to be required to operate ashore. When the Flight was ordered ashore, albeit for an overnight stop, it was not equipped to support itself. It was found that the Flight was deficient in both operating experience in a land as opposed to a sea environment, and equipment to operate in a military role. It is recognised that operating ashore is an infrequent occurrence for ASW aircrew nevertheless the necessary equipment is easily available in UK and should be made available where any assault involvement is likely. Also training both theoretical and practical should be made possible, especially more frequent small-arms drills.

16. PARENT SHIP SUPPORT

a. On embarking it was discovered that the ship was unable to supply the Flight with once only suits and it is recommended that Flights are issued with sufficient once only suits and anti-flash gear to support themselves.

b. On going into Defence Watches the ship effectively was split into two departments, the RFA personnel operating the RAS rigs whilst the Flight operated the flight deck. In volunteering to operate the flight deck it was realised by the Flight that a penalty would be paid in aircraft maintenance but this was accepted so that the maximum could be offered by the ship i.e. 3 rigs always available and 24 hour flight deck availability. However, an attitude developed that any defects in the flight deck area should be rectified by the Flight personnel and whilst ship engineering support was, on the whole, satisfactory there were some shortcomings.

c. The junior RFA Officers on the bridge team were unable to assist in a facet of helicopter operations due to their lack of training and inexperience. The potential RFA helicopter controller arrived onboard two years after his controller's course, never having operated with a live helicopter.

17. UK SUPPORT. UK support was considered to be generally good, most items arrived in a short time scale. It should be noted that urgent responses could be achieved by the use of the telex facility which most RFA's have. It is, however

18. CLEARANCES, MODIFICATIONS AND NEW EQUIPMENT. Once issued, the Flight planned to use the 120% torque extension for all sorties. It was particularly useful for the assault on SOUTH THULE. The troop step (Mod No 3053) was found to be a useful, simple and easily fitted accessory, again invaluable for the assault on SOUTH THULE. The aircraft mounted GPMG could have been more useful in the ship defence role had they been pintle mounted rather than the current mounting arrangement. The strake (NSM Seaking 3271) was not fitted due to inadequate manufacturing facilities.

19. TASKING, FATIGUE AND MORALE

a. No undue fatigue was suffered by any of the Flight, only the cumulative fatigue which would be expected after two months in Defence Watches. This was due in some part to the Flight's tasking which generally took account of fatigue problems and the weather affecting flight deck movement and operations.

b. The Flight's morale was generally good although, at times there were one or two troughs. It would appear that one of the most important factors is the assurance that news and mail is reaching NOK back in the UK. Throughout the Flight the general concern was more for families at home rather than the fear of Exocet (although at times running a close second). The familygram was a most useful asset in reassuring people and could have been sanctioned earlier.

c. Another significant morale problem was the lower morale of the RFA ratings, who, living cheek by jowl with RN ratings inevitably dragged the Flight's morale downwards. This low RFA morale was primarily due to a lack of information, sometimes necessarily so. Nevertheless the Flight's ratings were informed as much as possible of what was going on, whereas RFA policy appeared to be 'Release as little as possible'. This tended to depress RFA ratings who then 'pumped' all Flight personnel, from the Flight Commander down, for information.

20. WELFARE. The inordinate delay in informing LAEM(M) of the death of his mother was a potential welfare problem. Although it had been expected, and the Flight had made arrangements for the message to be passed as quickly as possible it still took 14 days for the information to reach LAEM(M). When compared with the time taken to inform the Flight Commander of the birth of his child (24 hours), some ill feeling could have been caused. Fortunately this was not the case.

WEAPONS RELEASED

21. After the attack on HMS SHEFFIELD, in the ensuing chaos, the Flight dropped two Mk 11 Depth Charges and one Mk 46 Torpedo. All were released at 200ft at 1000 and all appeared to function normally. On 17 May two Mk 11 Depth Charges were dropped whilst investigating a possible one. The first resulted in a surface burst whilst the second functioned normally, again both were released from 200ft at 1000. A total of 21 skillets of CHAFF HOTEL were uneventfully deployed.

OPERATIONAL EMPLOYMENT

22. Due to the deteriorating weather conditions the Flight was tasked on two occasions to operate from the deck of HMS HERMES. Whilst this was reasonable on an infrequent basis, the cumulative effects can be quite significant. Deploying an aircraft and two crews at very short notice away from parent ships should not be programmed without considering very carefully the effect on aircraft

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seviceability and aircrew fatigue.

23. Whilst it is possible to safely fly and operate the Seaking in very poor visibility, as was done during OPERATION CORPORATE, it must always be borne in mind that with PVA recoveries being the only method of returning to the deck, any kind of emergency, especially one requiring a rapid recovery, leaves no margin for error. This must be considered by the authorising officer.

24. The variety of employment was a strong factor in keeping the aircrew from becoming bored and complacent. The 'surprises' of the SAN CARLOS detachment and the SOUTH THULE assault were treated as a great test of adaptability and professionalism. It is recommended that this aspect of helicopter tasking is borne in the minds of those writing the Opgen Foxtrot.

PEACETIME RULES AND OPERATIONAL REALITY

25. Simply stated there is little relationship between peacetime rules and wartime reality. If lives depend on modifying peacetime or safety constraints then this must be done. The overriding principle was 'Does the end justify the means?' Assuming the answer to be 'Yes' and having considered other factors like aircrew ability, fatigue, aircraft capability, the task was attempted. Peacetime rules must in wartime, be replaced by commonsense and decisive leadership.

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Lieutenant Commander Royal Navy
Flight Commander

Annexes:

A. 824 Squadron A Flight Engineering Report of Proceedings - OPERATION CORPORATE.

824 SQUADRON A FLIGHT ENGINEERING REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS - OPERATION CORPORATE

LEAD UP AND PREPARATIONS

1. On 31 Mar 82 the final GRENADA Patrol was carried out and the Flight arrived back at RNAS CULDROSE late PM on that day, having left for JMC 821 and OPERATION GRENADA 14 Jan 82.
2. It was intended that the Flight had 9 days leave and then embark in RFA TIDESPRING on 19 April 82. The 'Flyaway' pack had been drawn and checked by an advance team detached from HMS GANNET and was in 824 Squadron hangar awaiting transportation to RFA TIDESPRING.
3. 01 April 82 a 4 hour standby to detach was initiated as the FALKLAND ISLANDS situation developed. XV698, which had been damaged by a submersible unit strike during an OPERATION LARDER in the last week of the OPERATION GRENADA detachment, was replaced with XV649 from 824 Squadron C Flight.
4. The Ground Party, Squadron mobile equipment and stores were embarked in RFA OLMEDA 03 April 82. The embarkation was trouble free as a result of the recently completed detachment to RFA OLMEDA and the advance preparations, which had been made for the RFA TIDESPRING detachment. The aircraft and aircrew embarked 04 April 82 and the ship sailed from DEVONPORT at 1630 05 April 82.
5. The Flight settled quickly and efficiently into the ship that they had left only 5 weeks previously. The familiar surroundings, equipment stowages and operating procedures helped to boost morale during this period of uncertainty. The Aviation Spaces required to be cleaned to bring them back to the standard at which they had been left on disembarkation 26 Feb 82.
6. 24 x Mk 46 Torpedoes were embarked and stowed in the magazine with FOF3 giving clearance for its use.
7. The hangar roller door, which had been placed unserviceable in the Aviation Facilities Log during the previous detachment, was still prone to jamming solid at times and the range of operation had to be restricted to 2 feet from the upper and lower extremities due to defective limit switches. The Flight manufactured a black out curtain which was fitted to the bottom of the door.

PASSAGE TO THE FALKLAND ISLANDS

8. Regular briefings on the situation and intentions were carried out for the non-aircrew Flight personnel. These briefings had a beneficial effect on morale and improved self motivation.
9. During passage south the Aviation Space offices and Able Rate's mess were not supplied with conditioned air, this, combined with the lack of external ventilation due to total black-out conditions caused men to report for work in a stupified state. The effect of turning to into similar conditions constituted a Flight Safety hazard and had to be carefully monitored. Men were noticeably 'sharper' working and living in conditioned air on the return passage, the system defects having been rectified.
10. The flight and hangar deck coefficient of friction was low, due to grease impregnation, particularly when wet. In the later stages of the operation it was found that ARDROX Aircraft Surface Cleaner was an effective deck degreasant.

11. The running of the flight deck, including all fire fighting responsibilities lashings numbers and vertrep handling teams was taken over by the Flight to release the RFA personnel to increase the RAS capability and also to counter the lack of sense of purpose, aviation awareness and questionable reliability displayed by the RFA deck crew during the previous detachment.

12. A maintenance programme for the Aviation Space's fire fighting equipment was installed. This resulted in the equipment being brought up to the required standard and maintained at that level.

13. A MATCONOFF organisation was initiated and run within the ship by the Flight. Appendix 1 refers.

14. The Radio and Electrical workshops had some shortcomings, Appendix 2 refers.

15. Lectures were given to familiarise all personnel with the hazards associated with air weapons. Aircrew were encouraged to attend static loading drills to acquaint themselves with the loading procedures and problems. The initial apprehensions of the loading teams and aircrew to handling warshot rounds were dispelled by repeated static loading drills.

16. Weapons holdings were transferred between RFA OLMEDA and RFA RESOURCE so the RFA OLMEDA then held 12 x Mk 46, 6 x Mk 44 Torpedoes and 6 x Depth Charge Mk 11 Mod 2. Scalloped wooden cradles were manufactured by the Flight to locate and support the Depth Charges in the torpedo racks, as the distance between the torpedo supports was greater than the length of a Depth Charge (an A and A has been raised for a permanent modification).

17. Extra ring bolts are required in the TBR and TMR decks to enable weapons to be securely lashed (an A and A has been raised).

18. No weapons ditching ramp was available on the ship and one was manufactured and installed by the Flight.

19. Torpedo handling was difficult in the TBR due to space limitations, but a bulkhead removal as detailed in a FOF3 approved A and A will alleviate this problem.

20. The APs and BRs relevant to the Mk 44 and Mk 46 Torpedoes and the DC Mk 11 Mods 2 and 3 were not all available and the list of holdings for the Flight and ship should be increased to cover this deficiency.

21. No Depth Charge preparation box or Mk 44 Torpedo 'no volts' test lead (Ref 5C 1984256) were available and it is suggested that they are scaled for the ship of Flight.

22. An OTTO fuel spillage team was set up and exercised using the equipment provided by RNAD ERNESETTLE. Instructions for the use of the 'sniffer' were neither comprehensive nor lucid.

23. The Flight maintenance crews were worked in a 12 hours on 12 hours off watch system, with a midday/midnight changeover. After the initial fatiguing effects of the routine being established, and exhaustion, evident during particularly active periods, it is concluded that this was the best system of providing a continuous coverage in this environment.

24. War paint schemes were applied to both aircraft 11 April 82.

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26. CommanderXXXXXXXXXXXX RN, Squadron WEO taking passage in RFA OLMEDA to HMS ARROW, was extremely helpful in advising on the preparation of the magazines for war.

27. When EMCON policy dictated total emitter silence the MATCONOFF organisation was confused and its efficacy partially negated. Aircraft serviceability was affected as a consequence.

28. The Flight AEO was transferred to RFA RESOURCE, following the ditching of a Seaking Mk 4, in the evening of 23 April 82, as salvage co-ordinator, returning to RFA OLMEDA 24 April 82.

29. A MARTSU EDR team visited and imparted useful information on their subject and distributed notes.

OPERATIONS WITHIN THE EXCLUSION ZONE 01 MAY - 16 JUNE

30. Operational weapons loading (which was normally 1 x Mk 46 Torpedo and 2 x DC for the duration of the operation did not produce one load which could be claimed in accordance with Fleet Aviation Memoranda. Loads were invariably carried out static. All three weapon loading teams were used and performed to a good standard throughout.

31. 2 inch wide x 2 feet long strips of clear 'Fablon' were fitted to all main rotor blade leading edges and proved effective, during the severe weather encounter in protecting the black polyurethane tape. The 'Fablon' was easily checked and replaced as an AFS concurrent item and the Flight has adapted to its use since its introduction in Jan 82. A MF 704 entry warning pilots of the possible vibration that could result from a damaged or lifting strip has been recorded.

32. During the SAN CARLOS detachment both aircraft were supported by the AEO plus 9 maintainers with a small package of high usage spares. No major problems were encountered, but 'Fablon' blade strips were extensively damaged in the torrential rain and hail and could not be renewed because of the conditions. This led to damage of the polyurethane leading edge tape.

33. A main gearbox change was carried out on XV649 following an accessory drive chain failure. Due to a fortunately low sea state, potential problems were not encountered and the change was carried out in good time.

SOUTH THULE - OPERATION KEYHOLE

34. XV660 was transferred to HMS INVINCIBLE on 16 Jun 82 to 'sit out' the SOUTH THULE operation.

35. XV649 was partially stripped internally in preparation for the assault. The sonar winch, strain cable, submersible unit, CI, 2 x sonar transmitters, doppler and sector receivers with mounting frame, pyro box and all troop and aircrewman's seats were removed. A wooden support frame was manufactured and installed to support the forward feet of the pithead gear. The weight saving was in the region of 850lbs and the space released enabled 24 Commandoes per stick to be transferred. The strip was achieved in 4 hours and reversion to the sonar role in 10 hours.

36. Because of the Antarctic temperatures (-9°C) and blizzard conditions, prior to the assault, the aircraft was ranged and the blades immediately spread with a double ECU ground run being carried out with the blanks fitted on shutdown, until the aircraft was scrambled, to retain the heat for maximum duration.

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37. Both aircraft were maintained ready to fly until leaving ASCENSION ISLAND. One watch of maintainers was landed at ASCENSION ISLAND, for air transportation to UK, as an advance leave party.

38. North of ASCENSION ISLAND both aircraft had a husbandary survey and a rectification programme was carried out. During operations within the Exclusion Zone the aircraft were foamwashed on an opportunity basis to negate long term effects of funnel efflux and salt water spray. Other husbandry defect rectification was deferred, until the return journey, to maximise aircraft availability.

Appendices:

1. The Air Stores System and MATCONOFF Organisation in RFA OLMEDA during OPERATION CORPORATE.
2. Effectiveness and Shortcomings of the Mobile Workshops Embarked in RFA OLMEDA.

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THE AIR STORES SYSTEM AND MATCONOFF ORGANISATION IN RFA OLMEDA
DURING OPERATION CORPORATE

1. The mobile issue centre was effective in meeting many of the Flight requirements for air stores, the range of stock and holding levels were very good.
2. The manning of the issue centre by a POSA and an LSA was ideal as each was attached to a Flight watch providing 24 hour coverage for all stores requirements. The POSA was directly accountable to the AEO and all signals of a stores nature were released only by the AEO, this led to a high degree of control being exercised over the system and due to the lack of multi and potentially conflicting managerial inputs the system ran simply and effectively.
3. A subdist of all stores signals was run from the radio room and the 'on - watch' storeman cleared his bin at frequent intervals. This again led to simplification and early action on the MATCONOFF requirements of other ships. This separate stores signal dist was considered to be essential for the efficient working of the MATCONOFF organisation.
4. No MATCONOFF existed in the ship prior to the establishment of the Flight organisation and the Flight also ran MATCONOFF for the ship, but to avoid confusion, used separate identifying codes.
5. No formal stores accounting procedure existed within the ship for non flight stores, if stores were not claimed by the deck, engine room or catering store keepers at their point of embarkation they would disappear into the depths of the ship with no record of location or stockholding/taking system. A system could easily be installed to match demands made, for all departments, with demands met and their location.
6. The above made the Flight storemen's task in checking for MATCONOFF requirements very difficult and time consuming.
7. MATCONOFF available and demand signals were grouped whenever possible to reduce the overall signal traffic in accordance with the minimise instructions and the efficiency of the system did not suffer because of it.
8. The ship would benefit by holding a scaled allowance of aircraft inflams, this would reduce the overstocking situation that results when each Flight has to embark with their own, invariably leaving the unused residue behind.
9. Air stores which arrive on an RFA after the Flight has disembarked should be forwarded by the ship to the parent Air Station rather than be held pending the arrival of the next Flight as happens at present. If this was to become standard operating procedure the air stores system would benefit as it would be relieved of the duplication of demand, and tying up of assets that exists at present.

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EFFECTIVENESS AND SHORT COMINGS OF THE MOBILE WORKSHOPS EMBARKED IN RFA OLMEDA

1. General

- a. The effectiveness of these workshops has not been previously tested in the prolonged maximum aircraft availability/sonar environment, and conclusions drawn from an ARMILLA type deployment are not comparable and may be invalidated by experience gained during OPERATION CORPORATE.
- b. The one man per workshop meant a maximum sustained working day of 14 hours before fatigue negated fruitful effort. This could be a limiting factor during continuous operations, but the spare equipment held in the flyaway pack provided an interim supply of serviceable items.
- c. Both workshops were in poor condition when both maintainers took them over in January 1982, having been fitted to RFA OLMEDA during an ARMILLA deployment, and had no subsequent maintenance. The majority of test equipment required calibration and spares held as serviceable subsequently proved to be unserviceable.

2. Electrical/Mechanical Workshop

- a. On joining RFA OLMEDA, PO xxxxxxxxx previous experience and training for the job of running a semi-autonomous workshop, both technically and as a senior rating, were limited, which resulted in his ability being rapidly swamped and his confidence, which was already low, suffered accordingly and took him a considerable time to regain. It was therefore some time before he was able to project himself and his workshop facilities as a viable concern. Better preparation at PFE stage and/or a more 'bench' experienced technician and senior rate is recommended.
- b. As with the Radio technician, xxxxxxxx was employed in fitting out a mobile workshop at RNAS CULDROSE during the period allocated for him to learn the various relevant equipments in the Electrical Workshop, leaving him with a large and unsupported OJT task when he embarked.
- c. The handover from the previous Electrical technician comprised a permanent loan handover and little else. A properly structured, and longer, handover period is recommended.
- d. Test equipment has been bolted to the racking in an illogical order, with the most used set being the least accessible. The workshops would benefit from standardisation after careful analysis of experience so far accrued.
- e. The air conditioning plants for both workshops and the issue centre have a high defect arising rate, with a disproportionate amount of xxxxxxxxx time being expended in their rectification. The provision and substitution of a more suitable and reliable plant is recommended.
- f. The welding equipment has never been used and either the workshop technician should complete a welding SAMCO to enable its use, or the equipment removed to make space for a more useful item, such as a small sheet metal folding/bending machine.
- g. xxxxxxxx has put a lot of hard work and determination into learning his

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job and maximizing his time. He did not admit or discuss his problems with the Flight AEO, but has since found that by doing so a simple solution can often be obtained. He managed to integrate himself with the Flight and helped on several aircraft jobs, it was noticed that his confidence and attitude improved when he felt himself to be a member of the team. These workshop technicians should be briefed to integrate with a Flight as much as possible and communicate early any problems which may arise.

3. Avionics Workshop

a. PO (XXXXXXX) was ill prepared for the task of running the workshop and his knowledge and experience, both in his equipment and what the Flight was trying to achieve, was poor. He had not attended the Radar/Doppler/Sonar SAMCO which had been waived in favour of bench experience, this was also waived in order for him to prepare another workshop's sonar second-line test set, his only bench experience having been Blue Orchid doppler.

b. XXXXXXXX was sent to HMS INVINCIBLE radio workshops during OPERATION CORPORATE with a range of defective LRUs in an attempt to bring his competence and confidence to a higher level and teach him a more logical approach to fault diagnosis. The visit was of some benefit to him.

c. Defective equipment was also transferred, on several occasions, to HMS INVINCIBLE for rectification. This was necessary when the defects were beyond XXXXXXXXXX's ability to diagnose or repair. Frustration was felt that the facilities carried could not be used to their full potential, which would have been possible, had an experienced and well prepared diagnostician been drafted to the workshop.

d. As with the Electrical technician XXXXXXXX would have benefitted from a properly structured handover. His workshop was a shambles when he took over and much of his initial effort was expended putting this to rights. His early work suffered because of inaccuracies in both his standard and digital AVOs of up to a third, and many of his test sets were defective and had leads missing.

e. Every chance should be taken, whilst a workshop is in UK, to overhaul and calibrate equipment.

f. The shortcomings of the Avionics workshop were more noticeable due to the higher defective equipment input rate and equipment complexity. Despite the considerable effort XXXXXXXX put into his tasks he did not achieve the degree of tangible results that he deserved in the form of serviceable equipment.

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