

60. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the United Kingdom¹

Washington, April 4, 1982, 2309Z

089910. Military Addressee Treat as Specat Exclusive. Subject: UK Transit of Ascension.

1. S—Entire text.

2. The UK Embassy provided Department afternoon of April 4 with the following message received by the Embassy an hour earlier. It outlines plans for and likely UK requirements on Ascension Island.

Begin text: (A) Ships: Royal fleet auxiliary *Fort Austin* is arriving at 0800Z 6 April with stores and passengers for transfer to HMS *Endurance*.

(B) Air: 13 Hercules flights are planned for 3–6 April transporting 3 helicopters, support personnel and equipment, coms equipment and a Royal Marine blow-pipe detachment.

A chartered Belfast will arrive night of 5–6 April with two Lynx helicopters.

Hangar space is needed for all five helicopters, 15 tons of stores and ammunition and accommodation for some 146 all ranks between 4–6 April until departure in *Fort Austin*.

(C) Operational support: The island is expected to be the forward operating base for 3rd Commando Brigade with 3 para under command—accommodation required for 25 personnel and 4,000 sq meters of storage. A satellite coms terminal operated by seven men is required to operate there from 6 April. End text.

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¹ Source: Department of State, Central Foreign Policy File, D820177–0932. Secret; Immediate; Exdis. Sent for information Immediate to Buenos Aires and the Department of Defense. Drafted by Pendleton; cleared by Service; approved in S/S–O.