

CONFIDENTIAL



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

29 April 1982

Prime Minister.

*MF*

*HR 29/4.*

*Dear John,*

Falkland Islands: Position on Medical Emergencies

The Prime Minister has asked for a note on medical facilities on the Islands and on what might happen if, following imposition of the TEZ, Islanders in the Camp faced a medical emergency.

There is a 35-bed hospital in Port Stanley which, on our latest information, continues to function normally in dealing with Islanders' medical requirements. It remains staffed by two British doctors (including an anaesthetist), one dentist and two nurses (all recruited by the ODA under OSAS terms); one doctor paid by the Falkland Islands Government as a locum; and about nine local nurses. The hospital can undertake routine surgery. Before the Argentine invasion, complicated emergency cases were flown either to Argentina (on normal payment terms) or to the UK. Islanders requiring treatment in the Camp have either been brought to Port Stanley or visited by doctors, using the Islander or two Beaver aircraft operated by the Falkland Islands Government Air Service (FIGAS).

Our present information is that the FIGAS aeroplanes have been taken over by the Argentines and that the Islander is being used under LADE colours to maintain communications with outlying settlements. It is not clear whether the Beavers are yet being used.

In the event of a medical emergency in the Camp, Islanders will therefore be reliant on the Argentines arranging transport to Port Stanley or a visit by a doctor. We have had no reports of emergency cases since the Argentine occupation. Once the TEZ is implemented, we can only speculate on Argentine willingness to use internal air services to deal with medical emergencies. However, provided that the Islander or Beaver aircraft were clearly seen as being used for local internal flights, not

/for purposes

CONFIDENTIAL





for purposes of military supply, they should not be at risk under present ROEs. Although LADE is run by the Argentine Air Force, it is distinctively marked. We are informing the MOD of the need to take this aspect into account.

If the Port Stanley runway is out of action, the Islander can land on short grass strips and the Beaver aircraft are seaplanes.

*Yours ever*  
*J E Holmes*

(J E Holmes)  
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq  
10 Downing Street



29 APR 1982



Vertical red stamp, possibly a post office name or location, oriented vertically.

Faint blue circular stamp or mark, possibly a library or archival mark.

