

55A

STATEMENT MADE BY MOD SPOKESMAN 21.4.82 1200 HRS

"There are two other matters you may find of interest. One is that as you are aware, the Sea Harrier has side winder missiles to enhance the air defence capability of RAF Harriers for use in support of the Task Force. The RAF aircraft are now being modified to carry the naval side winder missile. As a further measure, these RAF Harriers, GR3s, are also being equipped to carry the naval 2 inch rocket pod, air to ground. They will have side winder, air to air missile, infra-red homing head and all these will give the RAF Harriers an increase in their capability for the air defence role.

The Stingray light weight anti submarine torpedo is in a late stage of acceptance trials. In the normal course we would have waited until after all the acceptance trials were over and it would have become operational sometime in the future. The acceptance trials, however, have gone very well indeed and we are, therefore, taking some of the limited production order of Stingray so that RN ships and aircraft in the Task Force can have these Stingray torpedoes. I think both the side winder decision and the stingray decision should be interpreted as the MOD and Defence Forces using all their flexibility to increase the number of options open to it".

Sturford -

DP0 (N)

1330 2/4

55A

STATEMENT MADE BY MOD SPOKESMAN 21.4.82 1200 HRS

"We are aware that from before the time that the maritime exclusion zone was announced, there were some vessels in Port Stanley harbour. These vessels we now know include an Argentinian naval auxiliary. There may be one or two other smaller vessels as well. We have no authoritative reports that these vessels have left the harbour area and therefore our previous statements still stand that we have no authoritative reports that the maritime exclusion zone has been breached. The majority of the Argentinian fleet, as I previously indicated, have left port. There have been and continue to be some changes in its disposition but in general they are still believed to be in their own 200 mile operational zone along the Argentinian coast. I am not able to go any further in any detail than that. I have gone as far as I can".

Slack
21/4
138