

BRIEF FOR S OF S  
ARGENTINE AIR POWERAircraft Carrier and Air Group

The Argentine Navy's only Aircraft Carrier is currently in the vicinity of the Falkland Is. Her assets are believed to be:

- a. 10 A-4s capable of delivering bombs on sea and land targets within 450 miles, by day only. They have a very limited air-to-air capability confined to guns.
- b. 11 helicopters equipped with AS 11/12, which is a short range light missile and can be used against ships and land targets. They do not have an ASW capability.

Land Based Air AssetsOffensive Aircraft

Canberra Light Bombers. 9 Canberras based at PARANA with a radius of action of some 800 miles, which is 400 miles short of the Falkland Is, capable of delivering bombs and light air-to-surface missiles. Forward deployment could bring these aircraft within range.

A-4. There are 57 aircraft based at RIO GRANDE capable of delivering bombs, rockets and Bullpup anti surface ship missiles. Their current deployment allows their use in the vicinity of the Falkland Is.

Mirage III & V. There are 44 aircraft based at MORENO and TANDIL, equipped for the ground attack role, and limited anti surface shipping operations but with a good Air Defence capability. Its radius of action is 650 miles, but its current deployment precludes use in the vicinity of Falkland Islands but deployment to SANTA CRUZ could place them within range.

Pucara. This is a short range counter insurgency aircraft which could be deployed to the Falkland Islands, although this is considered unlikely.

SUPER-ETENDARD. We have no information where 14 aircraft are located. It is possible that it is fitted with Exocet air to surface missiles which would give it a good anti-ship capability

### Air Defence

F86-SABRES. 12 aircraft are based at MENDOZA and have a limited ground attack and Air Defence capability using guns, bombs and rockets, but are not within striking range of the Falkland Is.

### Transport Forces

We do not cover internal resupply by air since we consider that there are adequate numbers of civil aircraft to supplement the military aircraft. The Argentine military airlift capability is relatively small.

Turning to resupply and/or reinforcement of the Falkland Islands by air, the biggest obstacle is the small poorly equipped airfield which can only be used in daylight and in reasonable weather. The airfield has no significant fuel storage, poor surfaces, little parking and a short runway. There are 6 x F-28 (60 pax), 10 x F-27 (44 pax) and 7 x C-130s. Some of these aircraft have been using this airport.

### Airfields

The majority of Argentine Air Bases are orientated towards the potential threat from Chile. The availability of suitable airfields in Southern Argentina will severely limit their option for redeployment of fighter or attack resources, even ignoring transport aircraft movements to resupply the Falkland Islands. Rio Gallegos is the most suitable military airbase for such operations but would be unable to handle the numbers required. Santa Cruz, a civil airport, has one runway but may have adequate disused runway space to be used for parking.

Operational Proficiency and Weather Limitations

Only sparse information is available on the training, proficiency and operational readiness of the Argentinian Air Force. The combination of deteriorating weather conditions with the onset of the Southern Winter and the difficulty in detecting and attacking surface ships will be a major limitation.

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# FAA REGIONS AND AIR BRIGADE SHOWING PRINCIPAL HOLDINGS

- 1 **CORDOBA**  
ESCUELA DE AVIACION MILITAR  
FABRICA MILITAR DE AVIONES
- 2 **MENDOZA**  
IV BRIGADE  
F8E SABRE
- 3 **V. REYNOLDS**  
V BRIGADE  
47 SKYHAWK

- 4 **RECONQUISTA**  
III BRIGADE  
45 I A58 PUCARA
- 5 **PARANA**  
II BRIGADE  
9 X B62 FANBERG
- 6 **PALOMAR**  
I BRIGADE  
TPT - 130's + LIAS
- 7 **MORON**  
VII BRIGADE  
HEL'S + PAN
- 8 **M. MORENO**  
VIII BRIGADE  
R-360
- 9 **PARANA**  
VI BRIGADE  
26 AIRCRAFT DA
- 10 **C. RIVADAVIA**  
IX BRIGADE  
LADE ++

