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LOOSE MINUTE

D Ops Staff 7/10/2

- Sec/ACNS(O)
- SO/DNO
- SO/ACAS(Ops)
- SO/DS Int
- MA/ACDS(Pol)
- PA/AUS(D Staff)

OPERATION CORPORATE - PRESENTATION TO PRIME MINISTER -  
15 APRIL 1982

1. The attached copy of ACDS(Ops)'s draft, for the presentation to be given to the Prime Minister is circulated for 2 star comment.
2. If you have substantial 2 star comment it is requested that this be forwarded to the DSC Controller (Ext 6081) by 1000 on 14 April. Otherwise ACDS(Ops) would be grateful if your principal would attend, or be represented, at a first rehearsal to finalise the script, at a time to be decided.

J A ROBERTS  
Cdr RN  
Sec D Ops Staff  
MB 5185 2795 MB

13 Apr 82

Copy to:

PSO/CDS

CHIEF OF DEFENCE STAFF	
DATE 13/4/82	COMES
2 CDS	CNS
	CGS
Hd SCD (A)	CA S
3 CDS A 1	SECDCS
	VDCS (P&L)
Hd S	DCDS (I)
DCDS I	DCDS (OR)
SPC	DCDS (OPS)
ADC	DCDS (POL)
SO/CDS	DCDS (P&L)
AVCDS	DCDS (S)
FILE 102/11	DS SEC

1. I am now going to tell you about our own Forces and Plans, starting with the present dispositions of our own Ships .....VG 1 ON

2. First the SSNs. One is in the Exclusion Zone, POINT  
the second should arrive on Apr.

3. Second the South Georgia Group which is destined .....VG 2 ON  
for the repossession of that Island. Its composition POINT  
is shown on the vufoil and I shall return to it later.

4. Third the Carrier Battle Group, made up as on the .....VG 4 ON  
vufoil .....FLIP 1

At the moment the group is split; the carriers led by POINT  
HERMES are on the way to Ascension and due to arrive  
there on 17 April, where six destroyers and frigates,  
led by GLAMORGAN, with their own tanker, are currently POINT  
storing ship.

5. Lastly the Amphibious Landing Group (PAUSE) composed POINT  
as shown, which is due to reach Ascension on 19 April .....FLIP 2  
and the Falkland Islands in early May. ....VG 2

6. Moving now to the Troops embarked in the Amphibious  
Landing Group. The 4,600 men from 3 RM Commandos, and a  
Parachute Battalion with Artillery, Rapier Air Defence  
missiles, Armoured Recce Vehicles, Engineers and Light  
Helicopter support. 20 Sea Harriers provide offensive  
air support and there are 16 helicopters for carrying  
troops and stores. ....VG 1 & 2  
OFF.

7. This vugraph .....VG 3 ON  
shows the ships which have been requisitioned or chartered,  
and some of them have been provided with additional  
facilities for helicopter operations, replenishment at sea

and additional communications.....VG 3 OFF

8. So far RAF Hercules, VC10 and Civil Belfast aircraft have lifted nearly 400 tons of freight, 11 helicopters and over 600 men to Ascension.

9. Our maritime air surveillance is being carried out by 2 Nimrod aircraft from Ascension. The inner-line on the Vufoil shows the range to which they can remain on patrol for three hours, and the outer-line the limit for dropping mail and urgently required spares.....VG 4 ON

10. That covers the whereabouts of our own forces. I will now discuss 4 Military Options covering:

- a. The enforcement of the 200' Exclusion Zone around the FI before the Carrier Battle Group arrives.
- b. The repossession of South Georgia.
- c. The domination of the EZ after the Carrier Battle Group arrives and finally,
- d. The repossession of the Falkland Islands.

11. At the moment 1 SSN is in the EZ, and the second is.....VG 5 ON due on April. Present instructions to the submarine are to remain covert and fire only in self defence. If you wish the EZ to be enforced and therefore authorise the SSN to attack Argentine warships and naval auxiliaries it can be done. The first two SSN's are armed with Mk 8 torpedoes which are unsophisticated short range but reliable weapons. The third SSN, which is destined for South Georgia is equipped with the longer range TIGERFISH guided torpedo.

12. Communications to and from the SSNs are carried out at regular preplanned intervals. These intervals can be varied but the shorter the interval the greater

are the tactical restrictions placed upon the Submarine Commander who has to come to periscope depth to receive

signals ..... VG 5 OFF

13. Turning next to the repossession ..... VG 6 & 7 ON

of South Georgia as soon as possible. The Task Group on the vufoil has already been formed with an embarked force of about 150 Royal Marines. One SSN will be assigned in support with the task of anti-ship patrol in the vicinity of South Georgia. The Group will reach the area of the island about the 21st April. <sup>Weather permitting,</sup> it is planned to conduct covert reconnaissance using Special Boat

Service and Special Air Service men and then to capture Leith and Grytviken by landing Royal Marines by helicopters supported if necessary by naval gunfire. This will be done causing minimum loss of life and damage to property.

14. The environment in South Georgia is generally harsh. The temperature is normally around freezing point at this time of the year. Fog is commonplace and gales frequent. Although icebergs are present there is little danger of

the sea freezing over ..... VG 6 & 7 OFF

15. Returning to the Falklands Islands ..... VG 8 ON

It is not until the Battle Group, with its ships and aircraft, arrives in late April that we can dominate the Exclusion Zone.

16. Sea and air control of the area is an essential prerequisite before the next stage in our operations which is to land and repossess the Falkland Islands in early May with minimum civilian casualties and damage to property.

17. There are a number of factors to be considered when planning this landing.

a. Weather in the Falkland Islands is always unpredictable though less severe than in South Georgia. With the onset of winter in mid-May it is wet, chilly and windy. In general the wind is Westerly with speeds of 20 mph or more for most of the time. Gales are frequent. It is normally very cloudy, and low visibility is common. Seas are usually rough with significant swell away from land. Weather therefore has a significant affect on operations in terms of troop exposure, air support, helicopter operations and amphibious landing over exposed beaches. It is also likely to lead to Argentine deployments being concentrated in the immediate area of settlements, particularly Port Stanley.

The Falkland Islands are  
b. / about the size of Wales, the terrain is difficult, being composed of alternate soft peat bog and rock, with natural barriers of mountains and water. East and West Falkland are separated by a channel 2-12 miles wide with a fast flowing current. Because there are no roads outside Port Stanley, tactical mobility will depend chiefly on the use of helicopters.

c. Assessing relative air and sea strengths, the UK Task Group should be able to operate with relative immunity in the eastern sector of the exclusion zone provided Stanley airfield is not improved to support offensive air operations. Towards the western end of the zone, as Argentine offensive aircraft from the mainland became effective, the Task Group would be at increasing risk. East Falkland

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presents the least problems if sea and air superiority is to be achieved for a landing.

d. The Argentine land forces deployed on the Falklands are numerically superior to those embarked on the UK Task Force. They are likely to be concentrated in the Stanley area and this, coupled with the need to keep civilian casualties and damage to the minimum, precludes a direct assault on Stanley. Given local air and sea superiority a landing could be achieved with minimum casualties if mounted away from the Argentine force concentrations.

18. To summarise, there are a number of landing sites both in West and East Falklands, where it should be possible to achieve tactical surprise, make a lightly opposed landing and attain local superiority.

West Falkland

has the least risk overall but also the least impact on Argentine forces; East Falkland would lead to heavier fighting as the main Argentine forces were engaged. A British presence on the Islands should be sustainable but operations could be prolonged if the Argentine forces do not capitulate.

19. The final choice of a landing site will depend on geographical and tactical intelligence. We must know more about the beaches, possible mining and the strengths and deployment of Argentine forces. The gaining of intelligence is thus a key factor.

20. This leads to a word about use of Special Forces for passive intelligence gathering and offensive operations. The forces available for this are one SAS squadron and an SBS Unit

In addition two SAS squadrons and one SBS section are available to deploy from UK at short notice. Priorities for employment are firstly to gather and report intelligence from the Falkland Islands and secondly in offensive operations.

CLOSED FOR 40 YEARS UNDER  
FOI SECTION 27

22. Now finally a word on logistics. I will not disguise the difficulties which the very considerable distances and the vagaries of weather impose. The length of our supply lines has made it necessary for us to establish a Joint Service Support Unit on Ascension Island. This is now fully operational. We are making considerable use of Wideawake airfield and the communication and support facilities on the Island.

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23. The force can be resupplied either by air to Ascension and then onward by sea or by an emergency air drop if within range, or by sea direct to the operational area.

24. In terms of fuel, food and stores, the Task Force is self-sufficient in the South Atlantic until the last half of May. These estimates, of course, could be reduced in the event of casualties and plans are being drawn up for the resupply of the force to sustain it for at least a six month period. This will certainly necessitate taking up further ships from trade.

25. In short, there are logistic difficulties but they will be surmounted.

27. Your Chiefs of Staff will be pleased to answer any of your questions.