

CCS(Misc) 152/742/1

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OPERATION CORPORATE - RULES OF ENGAGEMENT AGAINST
SURVEILLANCE AIRCRAFT

1. The attached draft submission to the Secretary of State has been prepared in accordance with the instructions (1) of the Chiefs of Staff.
2. Unless the Secretary, Chiefs of Staff Committee hears to the contrary by telephone (Ext 6347) by 0900 Friday 23 April 1982 it will be assumed the Chiefs of Staff have agreed the draft.

Note:

1. COS 27th Meeting/82, Item 1.

Attachment:

Draft Submission (3 pages).

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- 5 MAY 1982

22 April 1982

Mr [unclear]
 This is
 satisfactory
 in
 principle.
[Signature]
 23/4

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DRAFT MINUTE FROM CDS TO S OF S

1. S of S will be aware that Argentina yesterday deployed a 707 aircraft in military markings in the close vicinity of the Carrier Battle Group. This aircraft was intercepted by a Sea Harrier. No offensive action was taken by either side.

2. The current Rules of Engagement which are relevant to this case are at annex. Essentially, they authorise the local commander to use minimum force against hostile units, including positively identified Argentine combat aircraft. These are specified as fighter, bomber, ground attack and long range maritime patrol (LRMP) aircraft, and armed and ASW helicopters.

3. We believe that the Argentine 707 intercepted yesterday would not normally be regarded by any strict definition as a LRMP aircraft. But there is no doubt that it was effectively performing that role. Such aircraft are unlikely to have any direct offensive capability but would nonetheless be effective shadowers of the Task Force. More significantly they would be capable of directing Argentine combat units, including submarines, to an attack position. Patrols by Argentine 707s or other aircraft, civil or military, on surveillance missions against the Task Force thus pose a real and considerable threat to the security of the Task Force.

4. We believe it is essential that the Task Force commander should be given clear instructions on how to deal with this threat. We propose that once an Argentine aircraft has been positively identified, both electronically by the Task Force and by visual observation by an intercepting Sea Harrier as conducting surveillance of the Task Force, an intercepting Sea Harrier should use the internationally accepted signalling procedure to order the departure of the surveillance aircraft from the area. The area should be defined as a 40 mile radius from the nearest British unit. If the Argentine aircraft did not comply, we propose that the Sea Harrier should be permitted to fire across its path and to maintain harassment until the aircraft clears the area.

5. In order to reinforce our objection to this surveillance and to maximise the deterrent effect, we propose that the FCO should issue a bilateral warning to the Argentine authorities, through the Swiss, that we would treat all Argentine aircraft engaging in surveillance of the Task Force as hostile and liable to be dealt with accordingly.

6. The foregoing has been cleared with FCO officials, including legal advisors. FCO officials wish, however, to consult their own Ministers and the Attorney-General and are submitting in parallel on similar lines.

SECRET

7. Finally, it might be worth recalling that the Rules of Engagement which Ministers have already agreed confer authority on our forces to attack LRMP aircraft which approach within 25 miles.

CDS