

9 Pa 333
TOP SECRET

BRIEF A

FORCE LEVELS: REINFORCEMENT

Points to Make

1. The paper is rather 'iffy'. We do not yet know whether we want to go for repossession of the Falklands, including Port Stanley by military means; if we do, when this should be attempted.
2. Obviously, if we are confronting 9,000 Argentine troops with only 5,500 British troops, reinforcement by an extra 4,000 British troops would be very handy. But can we manage the additional logistic task of supporting and sustaining such a force? The background paper at Annex A contains a number of warning signals about the dangers of military stalemate in conditions disadvantageous to us.

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET

BRIEF B

ESSENTIAL FACTS

1. An earlier paper on military options produced for consideration at Chequers is attached, together with a brief for it which remains relevant.

2. We do not yet know the shape of the paper for consideration on 2 May. But if it follows an earlier draft consideration by MOD yesterday, it may include the following list:

MOD
paper
now
attached
below

- i. ~~Psychological options~~ **Psychological Operations**
- ii. Retaking South Sandwich (South Thule)
- iii. Prolong^{ed} cutting of Argentine lines of communication to Falkland Islands, plus reinforced UK air presence in Falkland area
- iv. Harassment operations against Argentine garrison by special forces
- v. Harassment operations by air attack
- vi. Unrestricted offensive operations against Argentine navy
- vii. Operation Sutton (with modified aim of establishing secure military presence, without attempting to evict Argentine garrison)
- viii. Operation Sutton (including repossession of Falklands)
- ix. Mining/blockading main Argentine ports
- x. Increased military cooperation with Chile
- xi. Landing in South Argentina (Tierra del Fuego)
- xii. Attack Argentine's mainland targets.



TOP SECRET

3. In terms of the line suggested in the line to take above, the ~~cutting~~ off point on this list, on the basis of the station as we know it today, comes between items 7 and 8. In other words items 8 to 12 should be rejected.

TOP SECRET

MILITARY
OPTIONS

TOP SECRET

BRIEF B

MILITARY APPRECIATION, IE MILITARY OPTIONS

Line to take [Difficult to provide in absence of paper]

1. Best general line is to settle for level of military activity which has highest ^{prospect} ~~concern~~ of sustainability of ~~or~~ protracted period.

2. This points to air/sea blockade with reduced task force. Draw back half of naval units soon to resupply, before returning to ~~relieve~~ ^{relieve} naval forces on station. Hold off major amphibious landing until or unless it is clear that Argentine morale and military stamina is at point of collapse.

3. Meanwhile sap Argentine strength by series of small ~~landings~~ ^{lightning} thrust and harassment operations, maintaining surprise as far as possible. (The Callaghan option).

TOP SECRET

SHIPPING
REQUISITIONING



TOP SECRET

Pa

BRIEF C

REQUISITIONING OF FURTHER COMMERCIAL SHIPPING

Line to Take

1. Understand movement of Fifth Infantry Brigade would require substantial further commercial shipping. FCO exploring possibility of chartering shipping from EEC countries. This would mean principally Norway, Denmark or Greece. First impression is that this would not be easy. Scarcity of ships ^{will} require characteristics (passenger liners, deep sea vessels, RO/RO ships). But will look into position and report back to ODSA.

Essential facts

2. The requirement is set out in the attached paper for Chiefs of Staff. MAED are the lead Department in the FCO pursuing the possibility. But they are not sanguine.

TOP SECRET

CARRIER

RET - UK EYES 'A'



PM

PM/82/31

PRIME MINISTER

Attack on Argentine Aircraft Carrier

1. Following our decision in OD(SA) yesterday to authorise an attack without warning on the Argentine aircraft carrier outside our exclusion zone, I have been giving a further thought to the line we should take in public after the event.
2. After discussion with the Attorney General the way in which our action would have to be publicly justified and its legality defended, I believe our position would be immeasurably strengthened if we had given a warning to the Argentine Government, requiring the aircraft carrier to stay within the narrow zone which we discussed yesterday or within territorial waters South of about 41° South.
3. I attach a draft of a possible warning message which we could ask the Swiss to convey urgently to the Argentine Government. This in no way alters the substance of the decision we took yesterday. But I believe it would greatly strengthen our hand in dealing with criticism at home and abroad once an attack on the carrier has been carried out.
4. I am copying this minute to the Secretary of State for Defence, the Home Secretary, the Attorney General and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

1 May 1982

FP
(FRANCIS PYM)



NOTIFICATION TO THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT

In announcing a Total Exclusion Zone around the Falklands on 28 April, HMG made it clear that these measures are without prejudice to the right of the UK to take whatever additional measures may be needed in exercise of its right of self-defence, under Article 51 of the UN Charter. In the light of the Argentine statement of 30 April of an intention to consider hostile British vessels within 200 miles of the Argentine mainland, the Falklands and their dependencies, the British Government has decided on the following measures. The Argentine carrier quote THE 25TH OF MAY unquote is hereby warned not to move East of a line [45° West] or South of a line [38° South] or outside a limit of 12 nautical miles from the coast of the mainland North of [41° South]. If the quote 25TH OF MAY unquote moves beyond these limits she will be regarded as constituting an immediate threat to British forces in the South Atlantic and will be liable to be dealt with accordingly. Further, if any attack anywhere in the South Atlantic is made upon British naval or air forces by an Argentine unit, all other Argentine naval units operating on the high seas, including the carrier quote THE 25TH OF MAY unquote, even if she is still inside the limits defined in this communication, and all Argentine military aircraft operating in air space over the South Atlantic will be regarded as hostile and are liable to be dealt with accordingly.

C. OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS BY SPECIAL FORCES

POINTS TO MAKE

1. Glad that MOD now propose proper categorisation of targets for direct action by special forces.
2. Agree that authority should be given to Force Commander to mount operations only against Category 1 (military installations) in the first instance.
3. Agree that before attacks are mounted on Category 2 and Category 3 targets (civil installations and personnel respectively) Ministerial approval should be sought.

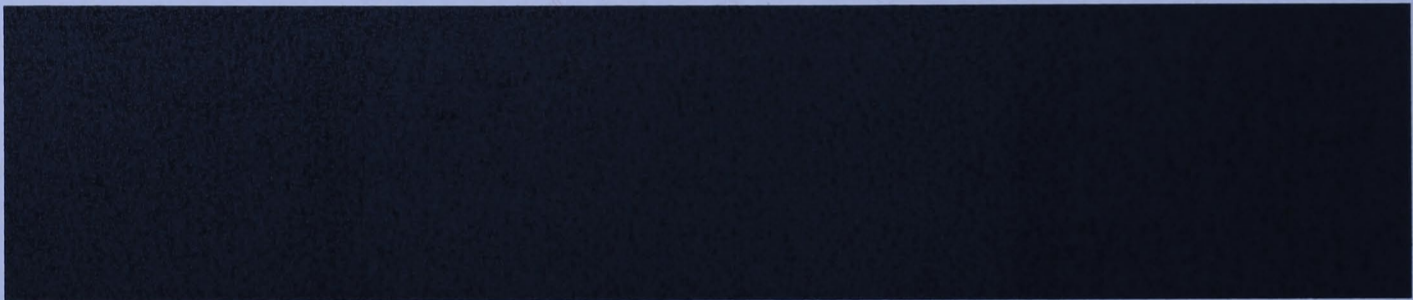
*Will not the Argies take
revenge on the Islanders?*

C. OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS BY SPECIAL FORCES

ESSENTIAL FACTS

1. Largely at our insistence the MOD have now divided targets for offensive operations by special forces into three categories.

/ 2. I attach an MOD paper (in draft at this stage) to which is attached an annex setting out the categories in detail. Category 1 covers military installations. This is divided into 2 sub-groups: the first covers targets which improve the impact of the blockade; the second sub-group covers military targets which would help the Argentine garrison to resist landing or, presumably, attack from the air.



THIS IS A COPY
THE ORIGINAL HAS BEEN RETAINED
IN THE DEPARTMENT UNDER
SECTION 3 (4) OF THE
PUBLIC RECORDS ACT, 1958

- OPERATION CORPORATE - STRATEGIC OPTIONS -
COS (MISC) 150/742/1

Line to Take

1. This paper is largely discursive in form, and it will be inappropriate at this stage to offer a precise line to take. It does, however, give rise to a number of important questions, some of which the Secretary of State may care to raise as an aid to clear ministerial minds:-

- (a) would quick and decisive British military action on significant scale be likely to bring about a political decision by the Argentine Government to withdraw its forces and settle the dispute on terms acceptable to us?
- (b) or is it more likely that, even if badly mauled by British action, Argentina will limp on seeking to avenge military humiliation by exacting maximum retribution on British interests and British passport holders on the mainland?
- (c) what type of British military action would be most likely to consolidate support for Argentina from Latin American parties to the Rio Treaty?
- (d) is there a deadline by which military action and the threat of its escalation will cease to be effective as a form of pressure on the Argentine Government

because it can no longer be sustained politically?

- (e) what form of military action offers the greatest flexibility to Ministers if they are engaged in negotiations, whether through Haig or through some other channel?
- (f) is there a limit, in terms of resource allocation and opportunity cost in other defence commitments, to the scale and duration of military action in support of our Falklands objectives?

Background

2. The strategic options paper reflects an increasing sense on the part of military planners in the MOD that Operation Sutton, as so far conceived, is by itself an inadequate basis for military operations in the Falklands. A succession of planning papers produced for the Chiefs of Staff Committee over the past fortnight have been equivocal and ambiguous about the chances of carrying out large-scale military operations when inevitably subject to such very large uncertainties. The discussion paper attempts to widen the choices confronting Ministers. It concentrates on:

- (i) land in the Falkland Islands as presently planned, but with the aim changed from 're-possession of the Falklands' to 'establish a British presence' (modified Operation Sutton);

- (ii) enforce TEZ for as long as possible with full carrier Task Force but not attempt landing;
- (iii) achieve sea/air superiority, then sustain blockade over longer period with reduced force level, concentrating on Port Stanley;
- (iv) general offensive operations against the Argentine Navy;
- (v) supplementary option of periodic raids and lightning thrusts to weaken and wear down Argentine resistance.

Of these options, (i), (ii) and (iv) look the least attractive from the political point of view. Options (i) and (ii) in particular are open to very large problems of sustainability. Option (iv) is high profile internationally, difficult to square with Article 51, and may well fail if the Argentine fleet stays in port unless attacks on the mainland are authorised. Options (iii) and (v) offer the best combination of maximum flexibility, sustainability and military feasibility.

3. There is also the broader political question in the long run: how to reconcile significant continuing military obligations in the Falklands with other defense policy commitments, particularly to NATO. So far the drawdown of NATO committed forces has been accepted uncomplainingly by our allies. But we cannot expect them to acquiesce indefinitely to the diversion of the Royal Navy.

RESTRICTED

Covering TOP SECRET UK EYES A

COS(Misc) 150/742/1

Copy No ... 24 of 25 Copies

OPERATION CORPORATE - STRATEGIC OPTIONS

The attached paper by the Assistant Chief of the Defence Staff (Policy) will be tabled for consideration by the Chiefs of Staff at their meeting at 1130 on Friday 23 April 1982.

Attachment:

ACDS(Pol) 104/82 dated 22 April 1982 (9 pages).

Distribution:

Copy No:

PSO/CDS	1
Sec/CNS	2
MA/CGS	3
PS/CAS	4
<hr/>	
Copy to:	
PS/S of S	5
PS/PUS	6
VCDS(P&L)	7
DCDS(I)	8
DUS(P)	9
ACDS(Pol)	10
ACDS(Ops)	11
AUS(D Staff)	12
DS 11	13
FCO (Def Dept)	14
Cabinet Office	15
COSSEC	16 - 25

22 April 1982

Covering TOP SECRET UK EYES A
RESTRICTED

COS S17(12)

100

OPTION CORPORATE - STRATEGIC OPTIONSINTRODUCTION

1. The aim of this paper is to identify what broad strategic options, in addition to OP SUTTON, might be feasible in principle and suitable for further detailed military study. The options which follow are all designed in one way or another to achieve attrition of Argentine forces or will, and to lead to the withdrawal of Argentine Forces from the Falkland Islands. They are not necessarily mutually exclusive.

2. For the purpose of this paper it is assumed that:

a. OP PARQUET has been successful and international support for the British position has not been greatly eroded. ✓✓

b. There would be no overriding legal constraints on the application of necessary rules of engagement.

c. A combination of UN, international, economic and domestic political considerations would preclude attacks on Argentine mainland targets. ✓

OPTION 1

3. To land in the Falkland Islands as presently planned, but with the aim changed from "re-possession of the Falklands" to "re-establish a British presence".

4. Objective. To occupy and secure a substantial part of the Falkland Islands, but not to attempt final military eviction of the main body of Argentine forces from Port Stanley. To achieve thereby a negotiating position, perhaps for a mutual withdrawal of forces and a restoration of mainly British administration.

5. Operations. Landing forces and procedures would be essentially as presently outlined by the Force Commander for operation SUTTON. However there would be options of landing in the less heavily defended areas of West Falkland Is or the South of East Falkland, with high chances of success and lower casualties. In terms of area, the majority of the Falkland Islands might be occupied and consolidated, leaving Argentine forces as the gaolers of Port Stanley.

6. Timing. The landing window would be subject to the same constraints as the main operation SUTTON ie from about 7 May to about end May, after which our ability to effect a landing would be progressively degraded.

Discussion

7. a. Would this action provide a worth while negotiating platform? Could we control or predict the diplomatic environment for negotiations eg Security Council initiatives?

b. If it does not lead to an immediate and satisfactory result, the military situation may be difficult. Operations may not have engaged the main Argentine force

before our carrier air availability declines. Would tide then turn against us? After how long?

c. Further study would be needed on the political aspects of this option, and on the second phase military operations if no quick negotiated settlement is achieved.

OPTION 2

8. To continue for as long as possible to enforce the 200 mile Maritime/Air Exclusion Zone with the full Carrier task force, but not to attempt a landing.

9. Objective. To isolate and weaken the Argentine garrison to the point where a negotiated withdrawal on our terms might be possible.

10. Operations. Forces involved would be the 2 CVS, 3 SSN and 12 DD/FF of the present TG 517. Operations would be directed to attaining and maintaining air/sea superiority around the Falklands. Some attrition to Argentine sea and air forces might be expected. Traffic in and out of Port Stanley would be stopped. Stanley Airfield would be put out of action. Harrassment operations would be conducted against the Argentine garrison, to wear them down. Operations would continue until a carrier had to be withdrawn for maintenance - the date would depend largely on the intensity of flying operations, but might be late July. Amphibious landing would be held at Ascension and ultimately to Gibraltar

11. Timing. From 29 April until about the end of July.

Discussion

12. a. Using a high proportion of our naval force for this option, we would only be able to replace it with lesser capability ships when declining serviceability forced withdrawal of ships for maintenance.

b. Would the Argentine garrison be sufficiently worn down by this time?

c. If they were not, we would be short of military options in August. Would we have used up our major increment of maritime power without a decisive effect?

d. Assessments are needed on: the duration of this option; the detailed effect on Argentine forces; the level of attrition possible to sea and air forces of both sides during its implementation.

TOP SECRET OR EYES A

OPTION 3

13. Following achievement of sea/air superiority by Option 2, reduce to a blockading force level that can be sustained by roulement for at least 6 months.

14. Objective. To isolate and weaken the Argentine garrison to the point where they might surrender or withdraw on our terms, or a new UK landing operation could be mounted with high chances of total success.

15. Operations. After perhaps a month, when sea/air superiority had been established and some attrition of Argentine forces achieved, slim down our force to half size ie 1 CVS, 6 DD/FF, 1-2 SSN. Change their aim from enforcement of the whole MEZ to stopping sea and air traffic in and out of Port Stanley. The Amphibious landing force, first held at Ascension, is withdrawn. The blockade is kept up over the Southern winter, by roulement of ships. Launch a series of harassing raids, whose timing and execution can be tuned to the political situation, at the Argentine garrison. Intelligence suggests that Argentine garrison effectiveness and morale might be markedly weakened by Aug/Sep.

16. Timing. It might be possible to reduce the force level and change aim to blockade at about end May, and maintain it thereafter for at least 6 months if necessary.

Discussion

17. a. This option might have the advantage of appearing as a steady level of minimum force, more acceptable to international and domestic political opinion.

b. Blockading Port Stanley is a less demanding task than enforcing the whole of the present MEZ.

c. Further work is necessary on the level of naval forces needed, and the ability to keep them on station by roulement.

d. The risks to our forces, with only one carrier, need study. It would be assumed that sea/air superiority was achieved before our force was reduced; Stanley airfield was kept out of action; our one Carrier could operate well to the East of the Falklands.

e. The effects of a long blockade on the civil population - and any way of ameliorating these by Red Cross intervention - need further thought.

f. The concept of blockading forces being used as a platform, from which raids against the Argentine garrison could be deployed in the light of international/political factors, might have advantages.

OPTION 4

18. General offensive operations against the Argentine navy.

19. Objective. To sink sufficient units of the Argentine navy to influence their Government to make substantial concessions in early negotiations. To provide also an improved military setting for any later UK landing or blockade operations, and eventually for a smaller UK re-occupation force.

20. Operations. Authorise the Fleet (or perhaps only the SSNs) to undertake offensive operations against the Argentine fleet on the high seas. The task is within the capability of the forces we have in the South Atlantic. The Victor reconnaissance aircraft now at our disposal will assist operations. One or two early sinkings might well shake the Argentine Government; as well as provide a better platform for HMG to negotiate from. They would also enhance the chances for a successful blockade of the Falklands by a smaller and more sustainable RN force.

21. Timing. Operations could commence immediately. They can be launched at any later time when opportunity affords. They are not mutually exclusive with other options, particularly MEZ/blockading options, and may indeed arise out of such options.

Discussion

22. a. The decisive nature and high level of visibility of such operations might bring a strong world reaction. Would Latin-American opinion be against us?

legal problems).

c. This option contains a good deal of flexibility. It can be done now, or later as desired. It can be done at different levels - against submarines, or destroyers, or the Argentine carrier. It can be done as a quick strong punch to shake the Argentine Government into concessions; or as a more steady attrition to enhance the probabilities of success of our other operations.

d. The operations need not be seen as a total alternative to enforcing the MEZ or blockade. The availability of maritime reconnaissance might make more feasible quick strikes by carrier aircraft or SSNs, followed by a return to MEZ/blockade duties.

SUPPLEMENTARY OPTION

23. A series of specific raids against the Argentine garrison in the Falkland Islands.

24. Objective. To weaken and wear down Argentine troops, in a series of operations whose timing and level could be tuned to the World and political setting.

25. Operations. Raids could be conducted by SAS, SBS, Harrier aircraft, Vulcans. Helo-borne troops. They could be aimed at key Argentine points such as communication centres, storedumps, strong-points, airfield facilities, barracks, command facilities etc. Isolated Argentine outposts or observation points away from Port Stanley could be overwhelmed. The result could be steady attrition of personnel and material, and a war of nerves exacerbating the already

26. Timing. From the arrival of the Fleet off the Falklands about 29 April, at intervals and over a period of time as the situation dictates.

Discussion

27. a. A series of raids would be practicable.
- b. Would their cumulative effect weaken the garrison to surrender point?
- c. Such harassment might best be employed to enhance an MEZ or blockade option.

22 Apr 82

RESTRICTED
Covering SECRET

COS(Misc) 181/742/1

Copy No *60* of 71 Copies

MOVEMENT OF 5 INFANTRY BRIGADE TO
THE FALKLAND ISLANDS

The attached revised paper prepared by DDOMS will be tabled for consideration by the Chiefs of Staff at their meeting on Friday 30 April 1982. The attachment to COS(Misc) 180/742/1 is withdrawn.

Attachment:

Paper by DDOMS (6 pages).

Distribution: Copy No:

PSO/CDS	1 - 2
Sec/CNS	3 - 17
MA/CGS	18 - 25
PS/CAS	26 - 35

Copies to:

PS/S of S	36
PS/PUS	37
VCDS(P&L)	38
DCDS(I)	39 - 44
DUS(P)	45
ACDS(Pol)	46 - 49
ACDS(Ops)	50 - 52
AUS(D Staff)	53
DOMS	54 - 55
DS 11	56
Sec/CINCFLEET	57
UKCICC(O)	58
FCO (Def Dept)	59 - 60
Cabinet	61
COSSEC	62 - 71

30 April 1982

COS S7(7)

Covering SECRET
RESTRICTED

MOVEMENT OF 5 INFANTRY BRIGADE TO THE FALKLAND ISLANDSBACKGROUND

1. Following the Chiefs of Staff meeting on 29 April 1982 (1) it was felt that it may be of assistance to outline the options examined by DOMS for the movement of 5 Infantry Brigade (Inf Bde) to the Falkland Islands area to meet the operational needs of the Task Force Commander.
2. ORBAT. We have been advised that a likely ORBAT for 5 Inf Bde will be as follows (2):
 - a. 3,961 men, including 552 as 3rd line support
 - b. 1,067 tons ammunition
 - c. 1,129 tons supplies (for 35 days)
 - d. 205 vehicles
 - e. 19 helicopters, including 10 RAF Puma SH

An alternative 'slimline' Brigade would reduce the force by some 1,000 men and the quantity of vehicles and freight support.

3. Shipping Resources. The main limiting factor is the availability of passenger vessels on the UK register, although we are advised that the use of ships of EEC countries should not be ruled out and FCO has been asked (3) to pursue this option.
4. A summary of UK registered shipping available for the task is at Annex A.
5. Harrier Deployment is not included in this paper, although the feasibility of shipping these aircraft to the operational area is under consideration.

AIM

6. The aim of this paper is to outline possible options for the movement of 5 Inf Bde to the Falkland Islands.

Notes:

1. COS 36th Meeting/82.
2. OPC/ARMY OPS/105 dated 28 April 1982 (NOTAL).
3. AUS(PL) 190/82 dated 28 April 1982.

MOVEMENT OPTIONS

7. The following movement options have been considered by DOMS:
- a. Option 1. Sea movement from UK of complete ORBAT.
 - b. Option 2. Sea movement from UK of 'slimline' ORBAT.
 - c. Option 3. Air move to Ascension Island and sea move from Ascension Island to the Falkland Islands using shipping already allocated to Operation SUTTON.
 - d. Option 4. Combination of sea movement from UK direct to the Falkland Islands, linked with elements by air to Ascension Island and onward movement by shipping allocated to Operation SUTTON.

OPTION 1 - SEA MOVEMENT FROM UK OF COMPLETE ORBAT.

8. This option involves the use of:
- a. QUEEN ELIZABETH 2 (QE2) - available for sailing 8 May or 20 May (both dates allow 4 days for conversion).
 - b. 2 x Ro Ro Ferries (BAL TIC/NORDIC FERRY) - available for sailing 4/5 May.
 - c. 1 additional passenger ship (RANGATIRA or SEA PRINCESS).

The earliest availability of SEA PRINCESS is 13 May and RANGATIRA is still subject to survey and repair.

9. Timings. Based on these factors:
- a. BAL TIC FERRY - Depart 5 May ETA Falklands 28 May.
 - b. NORDIC FERRY - Depart 5 May ETA Falklands 28 May.
 - c. SEA PRINCESS - Depart 15 May ETA Falklands 5 June.
 - d. QE2 - Depart 8 May ETA Falklands 24 May or depart 20 May ETA Falklands 5 June.

10. Limitations

- a. Depends on uncertain availability of RANGATIRA or SEA PRINCESS.
- b. Possible political implications of requisitioning QE2. The later sailing date for QE2 would allow further cruise sailing.

OPTION 2 - SEA MOVEMENT FROM UK OF 'SLIMLINE' ORBAT

11. As for OPTION 1 less additional passenger liner.

12. Timings

- a. BALTIC FERRY - Depart 5 May ETA Falklands 28 May.
- b. NORDIC FERRY - Depart 5 May ETA Falklands 28 May.
- c. QE2 - Depart 8 May or 20 May ETA Falklands
24 May or 5 June respectively.

13. Limitations

- a. Possible political implications of requisitioning QE2.
- b. Later departure date for QE2 would allow a further cruise sailing.

OPTION 3 - AIR MOVE ASCENSION/SEA MOVE ASCENSION TO FALKLANDS USING OPERATION SUTTON SHIPPING.

14. This would involve the use of:

- a. SS CANBERRA.
- b. 5 x LSLs.
- c. MV NORLAND.

15. Timings. On assumptions shipping released by 24 May from Operation SUTTON and an 18 - 26 day return passage, movement of the force could be achieved by 19 June at the earliest.

16. Limitations

- a. Will depend on extensive airlift to Ascension which will preclude all other air transport tasks.
- b. Force will be limited to airportable scales.
- c. A heavy administrative load on Ascension for transshipment (including extensive use of helicopter force).
- d. WMR would have to be moved separately by sea.

SECRET

OPTION 4 -- COMBINATION OF SEA MOVEMENT FROM UK DIRECT TO FALKLANDS
LINKED WITH ELEMENTS BY AIR TO ASCENSION AND ONWARD MOVEMENT
BY SHIPPING ALLOCATED TO OPERATION SUTTON

17. This option involves:

- a. BAL TIC FERRY)
- b. NORDIC FERRY) Vehicles, freight, ammunition, helicopter
and advance party.
- c. Airlift to Ascension)
and onward move by) Main body.
CANBERRA and MV NORLAND)

18. Timings

- a. BAL TIC FERRY - ETD UK 19 May ETA Falklands 11 June.
- b. NORDIC FERRY - ETD UK 19 May ETA Falklands 11 June.
- c. CANBERRA) Released from Operation SUTTON 24 May
)
- d. NORLAND) Return to Falklands 11 - 13 June.

19. Limitations

- a. Force arrives later than OPTIONS 1 and 2.
- b. In spite of the move of heavy lift items by sea, this option still has considerable impact on Air Transport lift and places a heavy administrative load on Ascension.

CONCLUSIONS

20. Option 1 moves the complete force but depends on the uncertain availability of additional passenger vessels. Option 2 meets the requirement in fastest possible time, but with a reduced force level. Both these options require the use of QE2.

21. Options 3 and 4 both depend heavily on Air Transport lift and impose a considerable administrative burden on Ascension. Furthermore, the time scale is greater than either Options 1 or 2.

22. It is concluded that on balance Options 1 and 2 provide the most suitable means of moving 5 Inf Bde to the Falkland Islands.

RECOMMENDATIONS

23. It is recommended, subject to the views of CINCFLEET, that the Chiefs of Staff:

- a. Decide whether Options 1 or 2 be pursued.

- b. Agree that arrangements should be made to requisition the QE2.
- c. Decide on the timings for requisitioning.
- d. Invite the FCO to pursue the feasibility of chartering EEC shipping should it be required.

Annex:

- A. Movement of 5 Inf Bde - Shipping Availability (1 page).

MOVEMENT OF 5 INF BDE - SHIPPING AVAILABILITY

	SHIP (a)	CAPACITY (b)	AVAILABILITY (c)	EARLIEST ARRIVAL FI (d)	FITTING OUT REQUIREMENT (e)	REMARKS (f)
(1)	QE2 (Cunard)	2500 pax	Returns Southampton 4 May Earliest sailing 8 May Next availability 15 May Next sailing 20 May	24 May 5 June	i RAS ii Hel (3 days) iii Comms	Assuming crew reduced to 50
(2)	RANGATIRA	1000 pax	Earliest (at Falmouth) 14 May Estimated sailing 20 May	5 June	i RAS ii Hel iii Comms	Subject to satisfactory survey
(3)	SEA PRINCESS	1000 pax	Earliest (Southampton) 14 May Estimated sailing 20 May	5 June	i RAS ii Hel iii Comms	At present in dry dock, but assume no untoward delay
(4)	BALTIC FERRY) NORDIC FERRY)	300 pax All vehicles and most of the ammunition and freight	Within 48 hours sailing 13 May	5 June	i RAS ii Hel iii Comms	
(5)	MV LAERTES	4000 tons + freight/WMR	Within 7 days	(23 days passage)	i RAS ii Comms	Only required if freight shut out from BALTIC/NORDIC FERRY

<p>LETTERCODE/SERIES <i>FCO 7</i></p> <p>PIECE/ITEM <i>4566</i></p> <p>(one piece/item number)</p>	<p>Date and sign</p>
<p>Extract/Item details:</p> <p><i>Folio: 333 D</i></p>	
<p>CLOSED FOR <i>40</i> YEARS UNDER FOI EXEMPTION <i>27(i)(a)(d)</i></p>	<p><i>[Signature]</i> <i>15/6/12.</i></p>
<p>RETAINED UNDER SECTION 3(4) OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS ACT 1958</p>	
<p>TEMPORARILY RETAINED</p>	
<p>MISSING ON TRANSFER</p>	
<p>MISSING</p>	
<p>NUMBER NOT USED</p>	

Instructions for completion of Dummy Card

Use **Black Pen** to complete form

Use the card for one piece/item number only

Enter the Lettercode, Series and Piece/Item references clearly
e.g.

LETTERCODE/SERIES	GRA 168
PIECE/ITEM	49
(ONE PIECE/ITEM NUMBER ONLY)			

Please Sign and Date in the box adjacent to the description that applies to the document being replaced by the Dummy Card

If the document is Closed under a FOI exemption, enter the number of years closed. See the TNA guidance *Preparation of records for transfer to The National Archives* , section 18.2

The box described as 'Missing' is for TNA use only (it will apply to a document that is not in it's proper place after it has been transferred to TNA)

Pa

E

E. DEPARTURE OF FURTHER ELEMENTS OF AMPHIBIOUS FORCE FROM ASCENSION

1. There was a preliminary discussion of this issue at the meeting this morning of OD(SA). I understand that the Prime Minister's inclination was to agree to whatever the Chiefs of Staff recommended.

2. Nevertheless, I stand by the line recommended in the brief which I submitted for OD(SA) this morning (brief attached).

3. My view is reinforced by discussion of possible additions to the landing forces at Chiefs of Staff this morning (see Brief ~~to~~). We are now faced with the despatch of amphibious forces before we have any plan for what we do with them and we are furthermore considering the addition of one brigade to these forces, still without knowing the purpose these forces are designed to achieve, and creating for ourselves immense logistic problems in order to support this additional brigade.

~~A. See also brief at Flap D.~~

THE DESPATCH OF THE AMPHIBIOUS FORCE FROM ASCENSION

POINTS TO MAKE

1. A decision to despatch the force should be delayed for a minimum of 48 hours.
2. This will not give wrong signals to Argentines. Plenty of other actions (TEZ and possible air attack on Stanley airport) will convince them of our seriousness.
3. Must not let military actions be driven by media expectations of imminent invasion.
4. No plan has been agreed for the use of these amphibious forces. Pointless to agree their despatch before we know what to do with them.
5. Worse still, we impose on ourselves artificial deadline; in a few weeks time we shall have to decide whether to use them for landing or return them to Ascension. It could turn out that neither option is attractive.
6. Better to delay decision until we have clear plan, even at expense of losing a couple of days or so.

THE DESPTACH OF THE AMPHIBIOUS FORCE FROM ASCENSION

ESSENTIAL FACTS

1. The amphibious force is at present at Ascension Island. The MOD consider that a decision is necessary by 10.00 hours on 29 April to give orders for the embarkation and despatch of this force in the direction of the Falkland Islands.

2. The reasons for the MOD's wish for an immediate decision appear to be as follows:

a. every day lost in reaching a decision on the despatch of the amphibious force will mean that the 'window' for their use in an amphibious landing on the Falkland Islands will be reduced by one day;

b. the media are expecting the disembarcation of the British forces on the Falkland Islands imminently. Unless there is action to make this possible, public expectations will be dashed;

c. failure to take a decision now would give the wrong signal to the Argentines. The latter have a merchant ship patrolling in the Ascension Island area and are well aware of movements of forces from the Island.

3. None of these arguments is compelling. Taking them in the order set out above,

a. it is not necessarily true that we shall narrow the 'window' of opportunity for an assault landing if we delay a decision (eg for a further 48 hours) on whether or not to despatch the force from Ascension Island. We would merely delay the date at which these forces could be disembarked on the Falkland Islands.

- b. Expectations artificially built up in the media must not drive us to precipitate decisions on military action.
 - c. It is doubtful whether a decision not to despatch the force would give the wrong signal to the Argentines at a time when we have just announced the imminent implementation of a Total Exclusion Zone and may be authorising the bombing of Stanley airport.
4. There are however two even more compelling arguments against an immediate decision to despatch the amphibious force. These are:
- a. if we despatch the force now it will have to be 'used' for an assault within a maximum of about 6 weeks (troops cannot be kept at sea for longer). The alternative would be to bring them back to Ascension Island. We are thus creating for ourselves a watershed in the near future. Six weeks hence we shall face strong arguments that the amphibious force must be launched because not to take this action would be to give a wrong signal to the Argentines (cf paragraph 3 c. above).
 - b. We have no sensible plan yet for the reoccupation of the Falkland Islands. Drafts have been discussed in the Chiefs of Staff Committee. It is evident from these discussions that the CGS, for example, has grave doubts about the military feasibility of what has been proposed so far. We believe Mr Nott may share these doubts. It would be senseless to agree on the despatch of the

amphibious force before we knew what we were going to do with them or indeed whether any military plan involving their use was really feasible.