

FALKLAND ISLANDS - SPECIAL FORCES OPERATIONS

1. Special Forces, from 22 Special Air Service Regiment and the Special Boat Squadron, are deployed with the Task Force. Patrols from both Services were involved in the gathering of intelligence on South Georgia before the landing on 25 April, and in the landing itself.
2. The primary purpose for which the Force Commander wishes to use Special Forces is to gather intelligence on which to base the final detailed plans for any landing or for other direct action. Special Force patrols would be inserted covertly, probably by helicopter, and would remain covert if possible. The patrols would probably be extracted for detailed debriefing before any assault.
3. A secondary task of Special Forces is offensive action in advance of the assault. These operations are designed to harass the enemy severely, so lowering his morale and weakening his willingness and capability to resist any assault. Such operations on the Falkland Islands would also undermine the Argentine garrison's ability to withstand the blockade, further eroding the potential effectiveness of its forces.
4. In the direct action role, Special Forces are first clandestinely landed, usually in small patrols of 4 men equipped for up to 14 days, to gather intelligence on likely targets. These intelligence gathering patrols are not equipped for direct action themselves, so further Special Forces are landed to carry out the offensive action plans developed from the intelligence gathered. Intelligence gathering patrols will need to be landed as soon as possible in order that plans for direct action can be developed in time for the resulting operations to achieve their intended effect.
5. The sort of targets that might be suitable for direct action by Special Forces include Argentine command, control and communications facilities; ammunition, fuel and food dumps, and helicopters and shipping in the Port Stanley area. Whilst these targets are suitable because of their value in sustaining the Argentinian occupation of the Islands, offensive action against them would most probably cause Argentinian casualties.
6. Ministers are therefore invited to approve:
 - a. The insertion of Special Forces for intelligence gathering at the Force Commander's discretion after the announcement of the TEZ.
 - b. The use of Special Forces in offensive operations against military targets on the Falkland Islands after the implementation of the TEZ.