

LOOSE MINUTE

D/DS11/10/6

ACDS (Ops) ✓

Copied to:

ACNS (O)

DMO

ACAS (Ops) ✓

AUS (D Staff) ✓

D of DP (C)

Hd of DS5

FCO, Defence Dept - Mr Weston ✓

"25th of May"

1. I attach the draft of an OD(SA) paper on the threat posed to our forces in the South Atlantic by the Argentine aircraft carrier "25th of May". I understand that you will seek Chiefs of Staff clearance of the paper at their meeting tomorrow morning. I suggest that copy addressees may like to suggest to you direct any amendments to the paper by 2130 tonight. The paper was prepared in consultation with D of DP (C), DNW, D D Ops (RoW), DS5, FCO Defence Dept and FCO Legal Advisers.

27 April 1982

R. T. Jackling

R T JACKLING
Head of DS11
MB 9326 3287 MB

LOOSE
29 APR 1982
112 423
STAFF

DRAFT OD (SA) PAPER

Argentina : Military Threat Posed by the Aircraft Carrier "25 of May"

Memorandum by MOD

1. This paper considers the military threat posed by the aircraft carrier "25 of May" to our forces in the South Atlantic, identifies options for eliminating that threat and makes recommendations.

The Threat

INT?
2. ²⁰⁰Argentina has one aircraft carrier. It is old but the Skyhawk and, possibly, Super Etendard aircraft which it carries are capable of mounting air-to-surface and air-to-air attacks at a distance of about 500 miles from the carrier. The Argentines are thus able, if they deploy their carrier against us, to threaten our forces at a great *from the air* distance from the Argentine mainland. We would expect the carrier to be escorted by two or three other vessels with a balanced ship-borne surface-to-air and surface-to-surface capability.

What is Threatened

3. The threat is posed to:-
- a. Our forces engaged in enforcing the Total Exclusion Zone (TEZ);
 - b. ~~To~~ all ^{our} other ships in and around the Falkland Islands and their dependencies;

- c. ~~To~~ all the vessels in the re-supply and reinforcement chain from Ascension Island which will be ^{only} lightly escorted by RN warships.

Capability to Defeat the Threat

4. Argentine carrier-launched aircraft engaging our forces can be defeated by our own aircraft, by anti-aircraft missiles and, best of all, by neutralising the carrier. The air cover provided by our Sea Harriers should be able to cope with land based Argentine aircraft which challenge the TEZ and will be near the end of their radius of action. But the threat from carrier based aircraft launched outside but close to the TEZ and capable of sustained operations in the TEZ is considerable. Anti-aircraft missiles can be effective but may be no match for an air attack by several aircraft simultaneously, particularly on the re-supply/ reinforcement ^{route} from Ascension, or on elements of the Task Force without the benefit of Sea Harrier cover. The requirement, therefore, is to neutralise the carrier itself.

How to Neutralise the Threat

5. Means The carrier could be engaged by surface ships, Sea Harriers or submarines. The most economical method is to use a submarine (SSN). The carrier could be shadowed covertly, and an attack could be launched with an acceptable level of risk to the SSN's own security. Engaging the carrier by surface ships or Sea Harriers would require the diversion of ships and aircraft

specifically to this task and would involve considerable risk to these forces. A SSN would give the greatest certainty of success.

6. Effect of Attack on Carrier A SSN could only attack the carrier with torpedoes. As a result of such an attack, the carrier would probably be disabled. It is possible that the carrier might sink/ but unlikely given a reasonable level of damage control. An attack by gunfire, missiles or bombs might have more serious results (fire, direct hit on magazine etc). If the carrier did sink, it is likely that her crew would have time to abandon ship with life rafts. Her escorting vessels should be able to pick up survivors.

7. When to Attack *There are three options:-*
~~The carrier could be attacked-~~

- a. Wherever our force locate her;
- b. Whenever she approaches to within a certain distance from our forces;
- c. When she advances beyond a boundary line, defined by us, and notified to Argentina.

The political disadvantage in a. is that the carrier could be ^{attacked} ~~sunk in port~~ or while in no way posing an immediate threat. The political disadvantage of b. is that the carrier might be on innocent passage. c. appears to be the best of these options in that the area to which the carrier was confined would be clearly stated, and by transgressing that boundary would be demonstrating hostile intent.

*and unaware
of her proximity
to our forces*

8. Warning There are strong arguments, both political and legal, for notifying the Argentine authorities that their carrier is liable to attack by our forces, ~~in any of the circumstances~~ ^{which are option of those} listed above. ^{is selected} This could be done bilaterally through the Swiss along the lines that their carrier, in certain specified circumstances, would be treated as hostile and encounter the appropriate response.

Recommended Option

9. The recommended option would be to notify Argentina that their carrier would be treated as hostile if ~~it~~ ^{she} advanced south and east of a line joining the positions 23° S 32° W and 43° S 56° W, thence westward along latitude 43° S to the mainland. A map is attached.

10. Provided the carrier remained north and west of the designated line, she would not be liable to attack. Beyond that line, she would be and would indeed pose a direct threat to our forces in and around the TEZ and the re-supply/reinforcement chain between Ascension Island and the TEZ.

11. The best method of enforcing this prohibition would, after a warning period, be to instruct a SSN to shadow the carrier and attack her if the line was crossed. This solution requires a dedicated SSN, but is more economical than keeping the carrier under surveillance by other means, which would in any case be difficult. An attack by SSN would require the SSN to close within about 1500 m of the target. The probability of a hit at this range is good. A disadvantage is that the SSN can only be contacted periodically (at 12 hours interval) but this should be sufficient leeway to enable a counter order to be issued if political events demanded it.

A T L A N T I C

WEST INDIES

CARIBBEAN SEA

CAPE VERDE IS.

Nouakchott

St. Louis

Dakar

Banjul

GUINEA BISSAU

FRENCH GUAYANA

Monrovia

VENEZUELA

COLOMBIA

Sogota

GUYANA

Surinam

French Guiana

Georgetown

Paramaribo

Cayenne

R. Amazon

Belém (Pará)

O C E A N

EQUATOR

St. Paul's Rocks

ASCENSION

B R A Z I L

PERU

BOLIVIA

Brasilia

Recife (Pernambuco)

Salvador (Bahia)

200 MILE LIMIT

TRINIDADE

São Paulo

Rio de Janeiro

23°S

32°W

43°S

56°W

TEZ

FALKLAND IS.

SOUTH GEORGIA

SOUTH SANDWICH

Drake Strait

Cadon de Mollina

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1035E MINUTE

Ops Staff 7/10/2

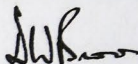
Duty Captain/CTF 317

Copy to:

ACNS(O)

"25th OF MAY"

1. The attached paper will be taken by the Chiefs of Staff tomorrow morning (28 April). The comments of CTF 317 are required by 0800, 28 April and should be telephoned direct to ACNS(O).



D W BROWN
Rear Admiral
ACDS(Ops)

27 April 1982

Reference: COMNAVSTA/317/27 APR 82

1. The COMNAVSTA Liaison Officer will be responsible for coordination in the reference.

2. The Liaison Officer reports to the Chief of Staff for consultation on all aspects of matters related to the Falkland Crisis. He will normally be the only representative of the Navy in any (NSA) paper JIC Military Assessment Group. He has delegated powers to outperform 'action' or 'no action'.

3. He is accommodated in Room 4111 and has the following telephones:-

5118 (not secure)
2823 313 and 372 5119 (both secure)

When not in attendance COMNAVSTA will have access to telephones 5119, 5123 or 7723 and when in the field of duty in the JIC and the JICSG will have access to the reference.

4. This notice supersedes the reference.

27th April 1982

DRAFT OD(SA) PAPERArgentina: Military Threat Posed by the
Aircraft Carrier "25 of May"

Memorandum by MOD

1. This paper considers the military threat posed by the aircraft carrier "25 of May" to our forces in the South Atlantic, identified options for eliminating that threat and makes recommendations.

THE THREAT

2. Argentina has one old aircraft carrier. However it carries ~~47-91~~ ⁴⁷⁻⁹¹ ~~The~~ Skyhawk and, possibly, up to 5 Super Etendard aircraft. Both types of aircraft are capable of mounting air-to-surface and air-to-air attacks at a distance of about 400 miles from the carrier. The 6 Tracker aircraft can carry out radar surveillance operations up to 500 miles from the carrier, giving her the capability to direct other air and naval units into attack positions as well as using her own offensive aircraft. The Argentines are thus able to threaten our forces from the air at a great distance from the Argentine mainland. We would expect the carrier to be escorted by two or three other vessels with a balanced ship-borne surface-to-air ~~and~~ ^{and limited ASW} surface-to-surface capability.

WHAT IS THREATENED

3. The threat is posed to:
- a. Our forces engaged in enforcing the Total Exclusion Zone (TEZ);

- b. all our other ships in and around the Falkland Islands and their dependencies;
- c. all the vessels in the re-supply and reinforcement chain from Ascension Island which will be only lightly escorted by RN warships. These ships will be particularly vulnerable;
- d. ^{UK} aircraft undertaking maritime and other operations South of Ascension Island.

CAPABILITY TO DEFEAT THE THREAT

4. Argentine carrier-launched aircraft engaging our forces can be defeated by our own aircraft, by anti-aircraft missiles and, best of all, by neutralising the carrier. Although the air cover provided by our Sea Harriers should be able to cope with land based Argentine aircraft which challenge the TEZ and may be near the end of their radius of action, the additional threat from carrier based aircraft launched outside but close to the TEZ will stretch our air resources leaving little offensive effort available for other priority targets. Anti-aircraft missiles will be effective but may be out numbered by several aircraft attacking simultaneously. This particularly applies on the re-supply/reinforcement route from Ascension where escorting forces will necessarily be limited. The requirement, therefore, is to neutralise the carrier itself.

HOW TO NEUTRALISE THE THREAT

5. Means. The carrier could be engaged by surface ships, Sea Harriers or submarines. A submarine (SSN) could shadow the carrier covertly and an attack launched with an acceptable

level of risk to the SSN's own security. Engaging the carrier by surface ships or Sea Harriers would require the diversion of ships and aircraft specifically to this task and would involve considerable risk to these forces. A SSN would give the greatest certainty of success with least prejudice to other operations.

6. Effect of Attack on Carrier. A SSN could only attack the carrier with torpedoes. As a result of such an attack, the carrier would probably be disabled. It is possible that the carrier might sink quickly, but this is unlikely given a reasonable level of damage control. An attack by gunfire, missiles or bombs might have similar serious results. If the carrier did sink, it is probable that her crew numbering about 1,000 would have time to abandon ship with life rafts. Her escorting vessels should be able to pick up survivors.

7. When to Attack. There are three options:

- a. Wherever our forces locate her;
- b. Whenever she approaches to within a certain distance from our forces;
- c. When she advances beyond a boundary line, defined by us, and notified to Argentina.

The political disadvantages in a. is that the carrier could be attacked while in no way posing an immediate threat. The political disadvantage of b. is that the carrier might be unaware of her proximity to our forces given that the necessary distance within which she should not be allowed to approach must be considerable. c. appears to be the best of these

Options in that the area to which the carrier was confined would be clearly stated, and by transgressing that boundary would be demonstrating hostile intent.

8. Warning. There are strong arguments, both political and legal, for notifying the Argentine authorities that their carrier is liable to attack by our forces, whichever option of those listed above is selected. This could be done bilaterally through the Swiss along the lines that their carrier, in certain specified circumstances, would be treated as hostile and encounter the appropriate response.

RECOMMENDED OPTION

9. The recommended option would be to notify Argentina that without prejudice to our forces right of self defence, their carrier would be treated as hostile if she advanced south and east of a line joining the positions $23^{\circ} S 35^{\circ} W$ and $43^{\circ} S 56^{\circ} W$, thence westward along latitude $43^{\circ} S$ to the mainland. A map is attached.

10. Provided the carrier remained north and west of the designated line, she would not be liable to attack except in self defence. Beyond that line, she would be and would indeed pose a direct threat to our forces in and around TEZ and the important re-supply/reinforcement chain between Ascension Island and the TEZ.

11. The best method of enforcing this prohibition would, after a warning period, be to instruct a SSN to shadow the carrier and attack her if the line was crossed. This solution requires a dedicated SSN which, whilst it could not guarantee continuous

Surveillance, would be more economical in effort than other more difficult means. An attack by SSN would require the SSN to close within about ^{2000 m} 1500 ~~m~~ of the target. The probability of a hit at this range is good. A disadvantage is that the SSN can only be contacted periodically (normally at 12 hours interval) with reduced flexibility to enable a counter order to be issued if political events demanded it.

HRSS (or)

7/10/2

25th of May

few comments for the WBSL are
as follows:

para 6, 3 lines from end: insert after "cross",
" numbering ~~at~~ at least 1,000".

para 11, 3 lines from end: delete "but this should
be sufficient leeway" and insert "with
reduced flexibility".

[Signature]
DSU

2080 274.

x2466.

Loose Minute

ACDS(OPS)

copy to:

- DMO
- ACAS(OPS)
- AUS(D Staff)
- D of DP(C)
- Head of DS 5
- FCO Defence Dept Mr WESTON

7/10/2

"25th of MAY"

Reference:

A. D/DS11/10/6 dated 27 April 1982.

1. I have the following comments on the draft paper enclosed with the Reference.
2. Para 4. line 11. Suggest "no match for" is rather strong. Propose "may not be able to defeat an". *Similar wording in draft.*

Para 6. line 5. Suggest this should read "but this is unlikely".

Para 6. line 6 & 7. Is this true? I believe last war experience showed that torpedoes were every bit as devastating as shells or bombs.

Para 6. line 9. For "likely" read "possible". *probable*

Para 9. The limits deny the Argentine forces use of a considerable part of their own territorial waters. I do not know whether this is legal, I suspect legality is irrelevant, but doubtless the Argentine Government would present it as a demand rather in keeping with Austrians ultimatum to Serbia in 1914. One could argue having gone this far that it might, be no less reasonable to claim the right to ~~sink~~ the Carrier wherever she might be found.

Para 11. Suggest last sentence read "As the SSN can only receive signals periodically (normally at 12 hourly intervals) a counter-order in response to political events may not be received in time to prevent an attack, though normally enough leeway will exist." *personally*

3. Discussions with CINCFLEET staff have led to consideration that a "hit one-hit all" rule of engagement is required so that an attack by any Argentine unit on our forces would be taken as giving an SSN freedom to attack the carrier before she herself reached an attacking position. The area limits recommended in para 9 would arguably make this rule unnecessary as the carrier would always render herself open to attack before reaching a position where she could threaten our own forces. Nonetheless I put forward for consideration the proposal that even if the carrier were North and West of the designated line, she should be liable to attack once an attack had been made on our forces by any Argentine unit. To achieve this would require delegated authority to CINCFLEET to give submarines freedom to attack outside the stated zones if necessary.

*Yes
or
no
SSN
rule
needed
to match
206*

D. OPS
 20 APR 1982
 1152 420
 STAFF

A/Sels line
ACNS(O)

LOOSE MINUTE

D/AF OPS/TF4

ACDS (Ops)

Copy to:

ACNS(O)

DMO

AUS (D Staff)

D of DF(C)

Hd of DS5

Hd of DS8

Hd of DS11

FCO, Defence Dept - Mr Weston

7/10/2

"25 OF MAY"

Reference: D/DS11/10/6 dated 27 Apr 82

1. The reference requested comments on the Draft OD(SA) Paper entitled "25 of May". Comments on behalf of ACAS(Ops) are as follows:

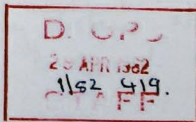
a. The following should be added as a new sub-paragraph 3d.

✓ "Aircraft undertaking maritime and other operations South of Ascension Is."

(Reason. Aircraft conducting maritime and other operations from Ascension, with the aid of Victor AAR, are necessarily routed very near to and conduct their critical final RV close by Ilha da Trindada. In this vicinity and for a considerable distance to the South of 23° aircraft are at risk to attack from carrier-based aircraft. There is no possibility of moving the aircraft's track and final RV further East.)

✓ b. The north-easterly point (23°S 32°W) is perilously close to the area where aircraft operating with the aid of AAR take on fuel at their final and critical RV with tankers. Their track cannot safely be moved to the East in this area. It is therefore necessary to ask that the north-easterly point of the "25 May" operating area be moved to 23°S 35°W to allow a safe margin from aircraft tracks.

27 APR 82



M. Tetley
J F H TETLEY
Air Cdre
D AF Ops

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

27 APR 525

A.F.O.R. (R.A.F.)

loose minute

D/DPS(C) 54/1

ACDS (Ops)

file 7/10/2

Copy to:

ACNS(O)

Dmo

ACAS (Ops)

AUS (D Staff)

D. C. P.

28 APR 1982

1152 418.

STAFF

CVA - "25th of May"

Reference : D/DS 11/10/6 of 27 April 1982.

1. We agree this Draft OD (SA) Paper with two small amendments.

2. First, when the options for attack are considered at paragraph 7 the political disadvantage to course b., appears weak: we do not consider that "innocent passage" carries much weight. For the beginning of that sentence we suggest:

The political disadvantage of b. is that the carrier might be unaware of her proximity to our forces given that the necessary distance within which she should not be allowed to approach must be considerable.

3. Second, in discussing the recommended option at paragraph 11 we believe it would be prudent to inject a

Small note of caution on the SSN's ^{implied} liability to maintain continuous surveillance. We suggest the second sentence of that paragraph should read:

"This solution requires a dedicated SSN which, whilst it could not guarantee continuous surveillance, would be more economical in effort than other more difficult means."



M J EVANS

Colonel

AD of DPS(C)

MB 7128 Ext 7449

27 April 1982

0.59/2

ASOS(Ops)

Copy to:

- DMO
- ACAS(Ops)
- AUS (D Staff)
- D of DP(C)
- Head of DS5
- FCO - Defence Dept

7/10/2

"25th OF MAY - MILITARY THREAT"

Reference:

A. D Ops Staff 7/10/2 of 27 April 1982.

1. CinC Fleets' initial comments on the reference are as follows. He stresses that CTG 317.8 has not been consulted.

2. a. Para 2: Amend last line to read:

✓ " surface-to-air, surface-to-surface and limited ASW capability".

✓ b. Para 3c: Add "and UK aircraft". *with new 3d*

c. Para 4: Delete first sentence. Rewrite old second and third sentences as follows:

"The Sea Harriers will be stretched in order to cope with the land-based Argentine aircraft, which challenge the TEZ, although these will be near the end of their radius of action. The threat from carrier-based aircraft launched outside but close to the TEZ and capable of sustained operations in the TEZ will greatly increase this task".

Similar point already included

d. Para 6: CinC accepts that this is designed to show that torpedoing ships is not so bad really!!

e. Para 7: Suggested that a fourth option should be included:

"d. After a stated time or when any attack has occurred on our own maritime forces".

f. Para 9: If line is to include large areas of Argentine territorial waters in the "no-go" zone, CinC would like to go further and make southern limit 40° S. He would not press this point if it threatened concept.

g. Para 11: Suggest 2000m as reasonable SSN torpedo range.

mainly taken care of in new self-defence clause

ASOS is already in N. the previous

D. OPS
 28 APR 1982
 112 428
 STAFF

SECRET

CinC thinks it must be appreciated that in including Argentine coastal waters in the "no-go" area, we extend the zone into water in which SSN operations would be difficult and in some cases hazardous. Therefore the SSN would not be able to enforce the coastal strip from 45° S to Tierra del Fuego except at considerable risk to herself.

4. In general the CinC very much favours the proposal and considers that despite any limitations it should be pursued.

*left
this
applies
to any
action*



A J Whetstone

A J WHETSTONE
Rear Admiral
ACNS(O)

28 April 1982

SECRET

~~26 of May~~

O. 39/2.

ACDS (Ops)

c. DMO

ACAS (Ops)

AUS (D. Staff)

Doj DP (c)

Hd of DSS

FO - Defence Dept.

"25th of May - Military Threat"

Ref D Ops Staff 7/10/2 of 27 April 1982

1 Cmc Fleet's initial comments on the reference are as follows. He stresses that CTC 317.8 has not been consulted.

2 a) Para 2. amend last line to read

✓ "surface-to-air, surface to surface and limited ASW capability".

✓ b) Para 3 c. add "and ~~the~~ UK aircraft".

c) Para 4. delete first sentence.

rewrite old second & third sentences as follows:.

"The Sea Harrier will be stretched in order to cope with the land based Argentine aircraft, which although challenge the TEZ, although there will

be near the end of their radius of action.

Similar
point
included

The threat from carrier based aircraft launched outside but close to the TEZ and capable of sustained operations in the TEZ will greatly increase this task."

d) Para 6. CnC accepts that this is designed to show that confederality is not so bad really!!

e) Para 7. Suggested that a fourth option should be included.

" d... After stated time or when any attack has occurred on our own maritime forces.

?
really taken care
of with the new
self-defence clause

8] Para 9. If line is to include large areas of Argentine territorial waters in the "no-go" zone, CnC would go further & make southern limit 40° S. He would not press this point if it threatened concept.

43°
gives
.500m
from TEZ

9] Para 11. Suggest 2000^m as reasonable SSN confedo range.

3. CnC thinks it must be appreciated that in including Argentine coastal waters in the "no-go" area, we extend the zone into water in which SSN operations would be difficult and in some cases hazardous. ^{but so what?} Therefore the SSN would not be able to enforce the coastal strip from 43°S to Tierra del Fuego except at considerable risk to herself.

4. ^{Good} In general the CnC very much favors the proposal and considers that despite any limitations it should be pursued.

g