

FC 712

23

D/DS 5/9/82

APS/Secretary of State

Copy to:

- ✓ PSO/CDS
- SEC/CNS
- SEC/ACNS(O)
- SCPL
- DOMS
- DS11
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CDS has agreed

[Handwritten signature]

OPERATION CORPORATE - REQUISITIONING OF SHIPPING

1. You asked for a short note for Secretary of State on the financial aspects of the draft OD(SA) paper.

2. I attach a background brief on which Secretary of State may care to draw and a short speaking note.

1 May 1982

DATE	1/5/82	
CDS		CNS
		CCS
		CA
FILE:	2038/1/1	DS SEC

Per H.Winter
E McLOUGHIN
DS 5

BACKGROUND NOTE

1. The requirement is to move 2900 men together with vehicles, stores, aircraft, guns and ammunition to the Falkland Islands by 28 May.

2. The remaining identified resources of British flag passengers are extremely limited. In essence they principally amount to:

QE2 - with capacity of at least 2500, SS RANGATIRA - with capacity of about 1000, MV SEA PRINCESS - with capacity of about 1000.

There are also a number of short sea ferries with significant passenger lift which are however for a number of reasons not suited to the task.

3. Neither the RANGATIRA nor the SEA PRINCESS could sail before 20 May with an estimated arrival date of 8/10 June. Neither of these would meet the requirement.

4. The QE2 together with the two ferries (carrying about 150 passengers each) would meet the Operational requirement in terms of date and capacity. Both would reach the area on 28 May.

5. The possibility of the use of foreign ships has been explored by Department of Trade. A list of about 1100 ships has been examined. No one ship has been found which would take the entire passenger lift. In any event suitability could not be confirmed and negotiations taken to a point at which availability was assured in time to allow us still to take up the opportunity of the QE2 on 4 May. The same considerations apply to suggestion in the COS paper on US assistance that US amphibious ships might be used.

6. A broad order of costs is:

QE2 about £150K per day
Ferries about £10-15K per day each
Tanker about £15K per day

LINE TO TAKE

The QE2 provides the only absolute assurance that the task can be met within the operational timescale. The results of the Department of Trade survey of foreign vessels indicates that the possibilities are highly uncertain to say the least. We cannot afford to pass up the certainty of the QE2 against what can only be a very dubious prospect.