

COS(Misc) 199/742/1

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DEFENCE OF ASCENSION ISLAND

ENCLOSURE
31

1. In accordance with the instructions (1) of the Chiefs of Staff, the attached Note has been prepared by ACDS(Ops).

2. Unless the Secretary, Chiefs of Staff Committee hears to the contrary by telephone (Ext 6804) by noon on Wednesday 5 May 1982, it will be assumed that the Chiefs of Staff have taken note of the Note.

Attachment:

Note by ACDS(Ops) (2 pages)

7895

Note:

1. COS 41st Mtg/82, Item 5.

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5 May 1982

COS S25(10)

NOTE BY ACDS(OPS)DEFENCE OF ASCENSION ISLANDS

1. At their meeting on 4 May 1982 (1) the Chiefs of Staff directed ACDS(Ops) to examine further any other requirements, including the need for short range surface surveillance radar, for the defence of Ascension Island (ASI) and to report to them out of committee on 5 May.
2. As a result of a recent threat assessment report (2) several measures have been taken:
 - a. Sufficient small arms for two thirds of British Forces at ASI, have been despatched.
 - b. A Guardship has been designated and is due to arrive on 10 May.
 - c. Three GR3 Harriers have been made available for use by the Commander British Forces Support Unit (CBFSU) ASI.
 - d. Nimrod flights are providing MRR cover of the area around ASI on an opportunity basis.

Additional Requirements

3. Stemming from the report (3) of the survey team sent to ASI and with the agreement (1) of the Chiefs of Staff, the following forces are being deployed:
 - a. An RAF Wing HQ (10 officers and men) on 5 May.
 - b. An RAF Regiment Flight (31 officers and men) on 6 May.
 - c. An RAF 259 early warning radar (15 officers and men) on 5/6 May which should be operational on 7 May.

Notes:

1. COS 41st Meeting/82.
2. DCDS(I) 26 dated 28 April 1982.
3. CBFSU ASI I9F 031800Z MAY 82.

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4. Copies of the daily INTSUMS are now being provided to CBFSU ASI and it is proposed to carry out Nimrod MRR sorties on a daily basis.

Short Range Radar

5. The RAF radar has a detection range of 150 NMs against Canberra size aircraft and 75 NMs against low flying aircraft and ships. However, it cannot detect surface targets within 15 NMs of the radar head. An Army radar 17 could detect surface targets at 15 NMs range or less but it is unreliable (3 required at Gibraltar to ensure one on line) and it is not considered that the threat justifies the deployment of the equipment.

Command and Control

6. Responsibility for the defence of ASI was delegated (4) to CTF 317 on 1 May. He has issued (5) a directive to CBFSU ASI covering security of the Island, and is studying (6) the survey team report and will state his requirements as soon as possible.

Recommendation

7. The Chiefs of Staff are invited to take note of actions taken to defend Ascension Island.

Notes:

4. MODUK I9F 011258Z MAY 82.
5. CTF 317 I9F 041520Z MAY 82.
6. CTF 317 I9F 041525Z MAY 82.