

OPERATION UNIFIED PROTECTOR

RAF EXPERIENCE - FLTLT ADRIAN KIELY



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OBJECTIVES

- Outline Typhoon / NATO operations in Libya
- Understand operational and tactical lessons



SCOPE

- Background / preconditions
- Sequence of events
- Composition / OPFOR / Roles
- Operational / tactical lessons
 - CAOC composition / output
 - Tactical effects
 - Legal
 - Enablers – LOG / ENG
- Psychological effects / social media
- FLIR footage
- Perspective / questions



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WHAT IT WAS...

- Very short notice operation
 - Tested NTM / AOC standup / processes
- GBAD not IADS but extensive manpad / AAA threat
- Minimal Air-Air threat

- Biggest RAF bombing campaign since WW2
 - 400 NATO missions / day
- Very complex ground situation and A-G tasking
- Resounding Coalition win but integration challenges

Background / preconditions



Why Libya?

- Suppression unlike Egypt/Tunisia/Algeria/Yemen
- Identifiable rebel group controlling territories
- Favourable geography and demography



Why Libya?

- Suppression unlike Egypt/Tunisia/Algeria/Yemen
- Identifiable rebel group controlling territories
- Favourable geography and demography
- Largest oil reserves in Africa
- SDSR
- UNSC and Arab League Support

RAF Preconditions

- RAF warfighting experience
 - Afghan / Iraq / Kosovo / Bosnia
- RAF appreciation of facilitators vs task
- Typhoon force composition / commitments / currency
 - Financial restructuring => training lms => Op risk
- OPSEC made NTM ineffective
 - Nil workup outside core currencies
 - Operational guidance
- Government tasking expectation

Sequence of events



Sequence of events – March

- 17 March – UNSCR 1973
- 19 March – Op Ellamy / Odyssey Dawn
 - Libyan military march on Benghazi
 - Typhoons deploy for FOB
 - Strikes on strat tgts – SAMs / SCUDs / C2
 - Intent / expectation
- 31 March - Op Unified Protector
 - CAOC standup in execution phase
 - Transition of authority

Sequence of events – Apr/May

- Regime revive and attack
 - Hold most of Libya minus Benghazi
 - Attack Misratah
- US withdraw strike assets 4 Apr
- Majority DT – fielded military
 - Aircrew generated
 - CAOC intent / processes



Sequence of events – Jun/July

- Rebels win and hold Misratah
- Tactical stagnation
 - Initial expectation vs reality
 - Lack of strategic direction
 - Mission / priorities?
 - Push for change of tactics
 - Media scrutiny



Sequence of events – Aug-Oct

- Change of UK tactic / targets
- Defeat mechanism – C2 structure / leadership
- Improved rebel tactics
- Expanding areas defeating regime
- Rebel multi-axis towards Tripoli
- End Aug – fall of Tripoli
- Mid Oct – fall of Surt/Bani Walid



Composition / OPFOR / Roles



Blue Air Composition

- RAF – Typhoon / GR4 / E3D / AAR / Sentinel / RI
- 14 of 28 NATO, 8 contribute to A-G task
 - High maintenance Air Power = co-ord nightmare
 - Day only / area of ops
 - SEAD requirements
 - Mission types
- Arab League – Qatar/UAE/Jordan
 - Non formed alliance – no TTPs, mainly airborne co-ord

Libyan Military

- Air
- Libyan SAMs – Strat / Tac / Manpads
- AAA
- Ground Equip
 - MBT – T55/T62/T72
 - SPA – 2S1, 2S3, M-77, M-109, Palmaria
 - APC – BMP-1/2, BTR-50/60/BRDM-2
 - MBRL – BM-11, BM-21, RM-70
 - Technical vehicle



Roles / Mission types

- Libya vs Afghan scenario
- Pre-planned AI
- XINT – sent to point/area/MSR
 - F2T2EA
 - Pilot solve PID/POL/ROE/CDE
- SCAR
 - Varying degree of F2T2EA
- Armed Recce
- Fatigue
- Strategic effect of tactical error



F2T2EA

- Multiple source, multi input
- Integration with UAVs
 - Enduring / low signature
 - Big pic SA / immersion - slower TTK
- Countries represented by RCH
 - Non-conventional role
 - Limitations
 - Political posn re JTACs = Op risk



Operational / tactical lessons



CAOC composition / output

- Odyssey Dawn – CAOC USEUCOM Ramstein
 - Nations controlled own assets
 - Bro-TO – ATO passing / asset co-ord
- CAOC handover – NATO CAOC-5 Poggio
 - Not prepared for Tactical Control in new AO
 - Communication of plan
 - AOC manning
 - Under-resourced
 - Platform LNO – simultaneous Op and Tac planning
 - Resolution

CAOC composition / output

- Did not execute AOC operational C2 construct
 - Undermanned
 - Did not communicate the plan
 - Unclear mission / priorities / endstate
- CCDE – failed initially
 - Requirements
 - AOC manning to ensure integration of capabilities
 - AOC control of execution - CCCE

Operational objectives

- Convergent effects => strategic outcome
 - Inadequate integration across small spectrum
 - Effects not established or regularly reviewed initially
 - Misunderstood relationship of tgts to effects
 - Difficult to predict without IPOE
- Air Superiority / Supremacy vs A2AD
 - Did not determine effects reqd to achieve A2AD

Tactical effects

- Operational failings => tactical effects
 - Significant delays in execution
 - Wastage of assets
 - Didn't have required assets
 - Over reliance on DTs
 - Support from non-air assets degraded
 - Reduced OPSEC
 - Supervisory implications – Ops / Maint



Legal Considerations

- A/A ROE not robust – shooting match expected
 - Command level pushback – UK TD
- A/G ROE simple and effective
 - PID – probabilities, reasonable doubt
 - POL – challenge PID/CDE
 - Adversaries exploited known constraints
- Close relationship with LEGALOs
 - LEGALO knowledge built through exercises
 - LEGALO with no land/sea/air exp useless on Ops

Air Power Enablers

ENG

- 24hr operations, 3month rotations
- SNCO leadership crucial
 - Corporate knowledge
 - 99% fragged msns flown

LOG

- LOG challenges had Op effects
- Deployed base support
 - 24hr operations
 - Relationships build pre-op



Psych effects / social media

- Media management – UK vs FOB
- Aircrew effects
 - Sensor fidelity
 - Transit time
 - Legal scrutiny
- Media reporting of BDA
 - Social media
 - CNN / BBC
 - Regime propaganda
- Post-Op support



Summary

- Beware of the *Afghan / Iraq* effect
- Op preparedness – NTM is a luxury
- Optimising Tactical effect requires sharp Operational execution
- Media management – multi-source, multi-input



Questions?

