OPERATION UNIFIED PROTECTOR

RAF EXPERIENCE - FLTLT ADRIAN KIELY
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
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 lims => 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 / R1
- 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?