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Se refiere a las averías del SIR TRISTAM y al hundimiento del SIR GALAHAD, publicado por el Ministerio de Defensa de Gran Bretaña.

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COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF FLEET

**LOSS OF RFAs
SIR TRISTAM
&
SIR GALAHAD
BOARD OF INQUIRY
(parte 2)**

RFA SIR GALAHAD

90. Whereas there were shortcomings in certain areas, AB policy of involvement of others in the formulation of new plans and organisations, and the ready flow of information that existed via the daily Head of Department meetings produced a well led ships company that acted and thought of themselves as a team. (G1).
91. It is concluded that a greater liaison between the communication departments of SIR GALAHAD and SIR TRISTRAM on arrival at FITZROY would have resulted in both ships listening to the correct frequency. It might also have resolved the mistaken impression SIR TRISTRAM had that she would be given a specific ARW for the FITZROY area, addressed by her own personal callsign, which led the AH to disregard the ARW Red heard shortly before the attack. (G2).
92. In all other respects SIR GALAHAD was at the correct state of readiness. (G2).
93. RFA SIR GALAHAD was hit by 3 x 500 lb HE bombs starboard side aft; none of these bombs exploded. (G3).
94. The ship was also struck by a short burst of 30mm cannon fire in the vicinity of the Engineers Office and possibly the Troops Cafeteria. (G3).
95. Three types of fire quickly established themselves in the ship:
- (i) A fierce diesel fuel fire in the funnel, funnel uptakes and upper part of the Engine room.
 - (ii) A fireball followed by fire and cordite explosions in the stern trunk of the tank deck.
 - (iii) Miscellaneous small fires started as a result of the effects of (i) and (ii) above. (G2).
96. Deflagration, rather than detonation, of one or more weapons caused the immediate effects of burns and thick smoke. The path of unexploded bombs passing through a ship cannot be accurately assessed after the point when its passage has been positively identified by a witness. Therefore it is not possible to state categorically which weapon was exactly responsible for what damage. (G3).
97. Deflagration was the cause of the damage, fire, burns and injuries on the Tank Deck, and in its immediate vicinity. (G3).
98. The most likely cause of the diesel fuel fire in the funnel was the rupture of the 500 gallon diesel header tank in the port engine uptake at poop deck level; this rupture was probably caused by the passage of weapon 3 in its path through the ship. (G3).

99. After very considerable deliberation the Board cannot come to firm conclusions as to what caused each individual area of damage described in testimony given by witnesses. (G3).

100. AB assessed the situation rapidly and correctly. (G3).

101. With power gone, an incredibly rapid spread of smoke, and very limited access to BA, no major fire fighting effort could be achieved
XX
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

S38
S4

LSLS GENERAL

102. Furniture and mattresses were of suitable standard compatible with habitability. (G4).

103. Lack of BA external to accommodation hindered search for survivors and any subsequent fire fighting effort in SIR GALAHAD. (G4).

104. Provision of ELSA throughout the ship accessible not only to Engine Room personnel but to all ships company and embarked troops could have contributed in saving further lives. (G4).

105. The present system of launching valise type liferafts is not conducive to the rapid evacuation of the ship in an emergency and is therefore not acceptable. (G4).

106. Communication equipment was outdated in one case and the fit was only just adequate for essential comms with no redundancy to allow for maintenance or repair. (G4).

107. The use of aluminium in construction is acceptable, as alternatives have severe operational penalties. (G4).

108. Partition bulkheads consisting of asbestos filled materials are a hazard and ideally should be replaced in existing ships. This type of material should not be used in new construction. (G4).

109. External wooden doors were adequate but hinges and locking arrangements were weak points. (G4).

110. All cabin doors were liable to jam when subjected to associated weapon damage; alternative methods of escape must be provided. (G4).

111. Existing Roller Shutter fire doors operated effectively and no replacement is required. (G4).

112. Due to operational considerations the AVCAT tank cannot be resited. Remote starting of the resupply pump by flight deck team at the ready use tank is supported. (G4).

113. The siting of the Alternator fuel header tank gives the Board cause for great concern; although it is clear that this problem is recognised, the Board in the light of experience gained, support a review of the situation. (G4).

114. Foam tubes to assist in fire fighting is essential for compartments such as the steering gear and compartments containing inflammable stores which have only one access. (G4).

115. No evidence supported that breaching of firemain was in any way a problem; desirable enhancement of the system is not considered essential. (G4).

116. The isolation system fitted to LSLs is adequate for the tasks they have to undertake. (G4).

117. The emergency lighting system is comprehensive and effective, no lighting system could have provided visibility in the conditions of smoke that existed in SIR GALAHAD. (G4).


G1441

118. Certain relaxations of peacetime standards and regulations must be acceptable as in the case of tank deck lighting if Military Commanders are to achieve their aims in war. (G4).

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. No further action be taken in respect of AD
AB AP should be instructed to report as required by Annex E13 para 19c on one member of his staff. (Main).
2. The Commander in Chief considers whether he wishes to take further action in respect of XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX . (Main). S38,840,8
3. Further study of the Command and Control Organisation for OPERATION CORPORATE be undertaken to ensure that all lessons are fully learnt; this Board was not tasked to do this in its entirety. (E2).
4. If the Royal Navy is to be tasked to carry out national amphibious operations of the nature of CORPORATE, then either national doctrine must be developed or the relevant ATP's require review so as to cover the requirements. (E2).
5. The reliability of Rapier on initial installation in a fire position needs further investigation. (E6).
6. Sea and land commanders involved in the planning and execution of amphibious operations be given better guidance in the capability of Rapier to defend both shore and amphibious units. (E6).
7. RFA personnel be better trained in Air Raid Warning procedures and limitations in giving accurate raid warnings. (E6).
8. Guidance on the employment and siting of BLOWPIPE in RFA's be included in the LSL Handbook. (E6).
9. Units given control of amphibious units must be trained to have full knowledge of their capabilities and limitations. (E7).
10. Units given control of forward amphibious units must have compatible and working communications with the amphibious commander. (E7).
11. In future operations of this nature more MHE is required to be available to ABUs. (E7).
12. In future joint operations of this nature much more attention must be paid to the clear definition of support responsibilities both within a Task Group, and between Task Groups. (E10).
13. The failure of relevant information reaching 5 Brigade's BMA at FITZROY should be represented to the Army for further investigation. (E10).

29. All RFA Officers regardless of specialisation should receive first aid training early in their careers. This should comprise a course of at least two days with particular emphasis on practical aspects. This should be reinforced by regular exercises involving dummy casualties. (G1).
30. Training of Chinese crew or indeed any rating designated as first aid party should be undertaken by the ships Medical Officer, who should satisfy himself as to their performance. (G1).
31. The present establishment for LSLs of six Neil Robertson stretchers should be revised to eighteen. At present there are no stretchers readily available for evacuation from the troops accommodation spaces, although these dormitories can sleep more than 300 men. One stretcher should be fitted in A1 and A2 dormitories, and three should be sited in the port and starboard troop alleyways at the top of the ladders leading to the lower dormitories. One should be stowed at each end of the tank deck, and one each side in the crews accommodation alleyways. (G1).
32. Additional BA sets be sited externally on the upper decks of LSLs. (G4).
33. ELSA be carried in sufficient quantity to cover all personnel embarked in LSLs. (G4).
34. A study be carried out into changing the present valise type liferafts in LSLs, and resiting them in positions in the quick release mode. (G5).
35. A review of the communications fit of LSLs be undertaken.
36. Asbestos filled materials should not be used in new construction RFAs, and that existing ships continue the policy of replacement as time on an opportunity basis exists. (G4).
37. External doors in LSLs to have hinges and securing arrangements strengthened. (G4).
38. All LSL cabin doors to be fitted with escape panels. (G4).
39. The feasibility of fitting remote start facility to AVCAT resupply pump from the bulk tank, be progressed in LSLs. (G4).
40. A review into the resiting of the Diesel Alternator fuel header tank in LSLs be undertaken. (G4).
41. Remote foam tube accesses be fitted to the steering flat one either side in way of Fridge Flat handling space and the Bonded Store access lobby. Similar compartments used for the temporary stowage of flammable materials, ie. paint store. Should also be considered. (G4).



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From: A R M JAFFRAY CB., Deputy Under-Secretary of State (Navy)

Ref: 14/2/35(51)

8 February 1983

Commander-in-Chief Fleet
Northwood
Middlesex HA6 3HP



Sir

BOARD OF INQUIRY - REPORT INTO THE LOSS OF RFAs SIR TRISTRAM
AND SIR GALAHAD

Reference: 520/242.L dated 26 October 1982

1. I am commanded by the Admiralty Board of the Defence Council to inform you that they have taken note of your report and the Board of Inquiry proceedings forwarded under the reference.
2. You will have seen the Ministerial statement on 21 December 1982 at the close of the Parliamentary debate on the Falklands campaign (Hansard Vol 34, Col 918; sidelined in the enclosed copy). That statement was made before your report and the proceedings had been seen by all Board members, and therefore contained interim conclusions only. However, these conclusions have now been confirmed by the Admiralty Board.
3. I also enclose a copy of a fuller account which has been based on your report and the proceedings, amplified in consultation with your staff. It is not at present intended to publish this more widely; it may, however, be drawn upon in the event of further Parliamentary, public and media interest.
4. The Admiralty Board made the following observations:
 - a. The cardinal finding was that in all the circumstances the decision to order the advance by sea to Bluff Cove was justified in spite of the acknowledged risks. That decision having been taken, it was difficult to see how disaster could have been altogether avoided, as events unfolded, even without the contributory factors to which the report draws attention.

Nevertheless, the Board considered that although these factors were not decisive in themselves, they culminated in a lack of clear intention and decisive action which, allied to the lack of clear command authority on the spot, were sufficient to hazard the operation.

b. The principal underlying factor was the low priority which has necessarily been given to amphibious and joint warfare training over many years as a consequence of the adoption of a defence policy which has specifically excluded the requirement to prepare for this type of operation. The Board acknowledged that this has resulted in a lack of resources for training and the development of expertise, which in the event led to a failure fully to appreciate the problems and risks of the operation at Bluff Cove, and to staff and communications failures in a fast moving situation. The measures needed to re-provide this expertise are being studied; it is, however, intended that all officers appointed in future to AW posts, and some senior ratings, will complete the appropriate course.

c. The failure of communications which led to lack of preparedness for SIR GALAHAD's arrival and consequently delayed unloading, was particularly significant.

d. Only air cover might have been effective in averting disaster; the diversion of the CAP to deal with another raid before the one on Fitzroy was sighted was nevertheless correct. Given adequate air defence assets in the form of either AD frigates or carrier borne aircraft, Commodore Amphibious Warfare would not have been compelled deliberately to place these LSLs at risk in order to provide vital support to the land battle.

e. The theory that reports of unexploded bombs in other ships had enabled the Argentines to improve their fusing arrangements before this attack is not supported by the findings of this inquiry.

f. Your comments about the role, manning and training of LSLs are endorsed. LSLs have been almost wholly dedicated to providing a secure line of communication to British Forces in Germany, in which role they have performed economically and well. Their precise tasks in war, and the relative priority of these in a period of prolonged tension, have not been clearly established. As they were untrained and inexperienced in this specialised employment, it is hardly surprising that there were failures, including the morale of the Chinese crew; in the circumstances the gallantry of the officers was noteworthy. The need to define the LSLs' true role both in peace and war, and to make material changes in order to meet this role, is acknowledged. Approval has now been given to replace the Chinese crews of LSLs with UK seamen. The need to provide adequate tactical training for RFA staff, particularly in the amphibious role, is agreed.

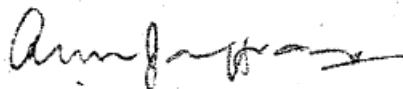
g. The recommendations of the report are being taken into account in the design of replacement LSLs. Although the cardinal dimensions of the design are to be based upon that of the present LSLs, the use of aluminium in the ships' structure will be avoided, as will be that of marinite and other asbestos filled partition bulkheads. Other detailed design changes will take account of revised staff requirements, international regulations for Merchant ships and equipment obsolescence. Should Ro-Ro ships be taken up by purchase or charter as interim replacements, the extent to which the lessons learned should be incorporated by modification will need to be determined.

h. Your comments on the medical organisation and stretchers are agreed: the medical and first aid organisation of RFAs is being examined.

5. The Army Board have seen and noted your report and the proceedings:

6. Your report and the proceedings have been taken into account in the "Lessons Learned" studies in the Navy Department. The detailed lessons in your report and the proceedings are being followed up by the staffs responsible. The Admiralty Board may wish to make further observations when all the lessons learned from Operation CORPORATE and in the reports and Boards of Inquiry into other ship losses have been fully examined.

I am, Sir
Your obedient Servant



and the registration of ships abroad, there has been a steady decline in the merchant fleet over the years. It has been estimated that if the Falklands crisis had occurred at the end of the decade, and if the decline had continued at the present rate, there would be few British merchant ships left to send to the South Atlantic.

It is all very well to talk glibly about reinforcing decks and doing other work on cargo ships, but that cannot be done unless the ships are British. It is time that the Government started to put money into the British merchant fleet to reverse that decline. In addition, they should also consider the powers in the Exchange Control Act and in the income tax Acts to prevent the deregistering of United Kingdom flag ships. As the House recognises, the White Paper inevitably means that more money will be spent on defence in the next few years. In 1982-83, the total will probably be about £16 billion, or about 5.7 per cent. of our gross domestic product, which, incidentally, is growing very slowly. I believe, that that is the highest percentage of gross domestic product since 1963, before the withdrawal from east of Suez. The percentage will probably increase during the next few years, especially as a result of the 3 per cent. NATO commitment, the new frigates and the increasing cost of Trident.

Indeed, the senior analyst at Greenwell, the stockbrokers, was quoted in *The Sunday Times* recently as saying:

"It is staggering how fast the figures are growing".

There will have to be another review of expenditure in the next few years. When the Secretary of State produced his famous White Paper of 25 June 1981 he said:

"No enhancement of our conventional forces could possibly prove of equal deterrent value."—[*Official Report*, 25 June 1981; Vol. 7, c. 389.]

That is a wrong, and very simplistic, way of looking at the issue.

The right hon. Gentleman still believes that we can have a low level of conventional forces and that we can rely on nuclear weapons for defence and deterrence. However, all the thinking in Britain and in NATO is moving away from that point of view and towards saying that we must have strong conventional forces to avoid the ready use of nuclear weapons. We shall cancel Trident and use some of the money saved to provide adequate conventional forces.

When introducing his first White Paper to the House the Secretary of State said that our defence policy was unbalanced and overextended. He has now apparently introduced his last White Paper and his defence policy is even more unbalanced and overextended. His successor will have to look at the whole issue again. I can only hope that the right hon. Gentleman will do a bit better with his daffodils.

9.38 pm

The Under-Secretary of State for Defence Procurement (Mr. Geoffrey Pattie): One hon. Member who took part in the debate expressed surprise that nearly all of the 46 pages in the White Paper produced by the Ministry of Defence and presented by my hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence should be devoted to military matters. Of course, I realise that one could talk about other issues, and, indeed, many of today's participants have done so. However, we are not debating the findings of the Franks committee or public

expenditure. Therefore, I shall concentrate on responding to the points that have been raised before turning, if time permits, to the performance of our equipment.

The right hon. Member for Cardiff, South-East (Mr. Callaghan) mentioned the tragic events at Fitzroy. That is an important matter. The right hon. Member for Llanelli (Mr. Davies) also referred to it. The reports on that operation have been studied carefully in the Ministry of Defence.

We have concluded that the land force commander's concept for committing 5 Brigade to the south by sea was fully justified in view of the need for an early and concerted operation with 3 Commando Brigade against Port Stanley. The tragedy came about not through any major error but through the ordinary chances of war, involving a combination of circumstances such as difficult and overloaded communications, disruption of plans by weather, and resources being pushed to their limit to achieve an early end to hostilities.

I noted the right hon. Gentleman's words. He said how lucky we were that we did not have to fight much longer. I am sure that he will appreciate that it was substantially in the interests of speed that that manoeuvre was put into action. The risks taken were no greater than some others in the campaign. Precisely the same manoeuvre was carried out successfully at Teal inlet earlier in the campaign, although on that occasion there were no casualties.

Although it may be possible to criticise in retrospect some of the judgments that were made by individuals, they are of the type that will always be made in rapidly developing operations; and no blame is attached to anyone. The decision to press on with speed rather than a slow and methodical build-up was right. The loss of life at Fitzroy was tragic, but the overall loss of life would have been greater—casualties from exposure would certainly have been greater—if our forces had moved too cautiously.

The right hon. Member for Cardiff, South-East asked whether the Commander-in-Chief at Northwood knew that the "Sir Galahad" had men on board for disembarkation. He will realise that since he made his speech we have endeavoured to check on that point. I cannot confirm that Northwood knew the precise plans on that day for the "Sir Galahad". Many planning signals were copied to the Commander-in-Chief, who could intervene when he chose. However, decisions were being taken at great speed and the initiative lay, as the right hon. Gentleman will appreciate, with the commanders on the spot. There seems to be no reason why the Commander-in-Chief should have intervened in this case. Logistic landing ships such as the "Sir Galahad" have a troop carrying capacity comparable to that of HMS "Fearless".

Mr. James Callaghan: I am much obliged for that explanation. I only asked about Northwood because I understood—I only asked and I may be wrong—that on a previous occasion, Northwood intervened because it was felt that "Sir Tristram" was not capable of being properly defended when carrying men and that the operation had been stopped. I was asking whether, if the operation was stopped in the earlier instance, Northwood authorised it on the second.

Mr. Pattie: The right hon. Member for Cardiff, South-East will appreciate that I have taken some care to check