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Se refiere al hundimiento de la SHEFFIELD, publicado por el Ministerio de Defensa de Gran Bretaña.

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COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF FLEET

**LOSS OF HMS SHEFFIELD
BOARD OF INQUIRY**

Annex D

CORPORATE DEPLOYMENT TO TEZ

1. Preliminary. On 2 Apr SHEFFIELD was ordered by POF1 (subsequently referred to as CEG) to stand by for deployment to the South Atlantic in connection with the Falkland Islands crisis. This annex describes the ship's preparations for war, her movements, and other activities in the period 2 Apr - 1 May. Training is discussed separately at Annex E.

2. Preparations for War - Stores. Ships of the Task Force were paired off, SHEFFIELD with ACTIVE, for stores transfer. This involved SHEFFIELD receiving a large quantity of such stores and ammunition as might be useful in a war situation, in particular 4.5 inch ammunition, chaff rockets, and some medical stores, together with food and miscellaneous items, including canteen stores, of which the ship was short following her Indian Ocean deployment. The ammunition then carried exceeded outfit, possibly by as much as 100% in some categories. However, it was all stowed in magazines, although inevitably not in approved stowages. For example 4.5 inch ammunition was stowed on the deck in the 4.5 inch Magazine and also in the Air Weapons Magazine adjacent to the Hangar. Back-loading to ACTIVE of unwanted stores was restricted to defective items and empties; it did not include furniture or furnishings, possessions or inflammables.

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3. Preparations for War - Material. Material preparations were in accordance with Ships War Orders, of which no copy is available, and included the removal of pictures, taking up of carpets below 1 Deck, and stowing away of loose fittings. Due to the danger of misidentification of an RN Type 42 as Argentinian, and particularly SHEFFIELD with her ears, vertical black identification marks were painted on the funnel, screen and ship's side both Port and Starboard. Some material preparations were significant, also, from the point of view of increasing the Ship's Company's awareness of the reality of the threat. For example SHEFFIELD issued, at an early stage, their Atropine and other prophylactics for use in the event of chemical attack. Conversely, the removal of beards was considered but was not enforced.

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4. Comment. It is difficult to make any overall assessment of the effectiveness of SHEFFIELD's preparations for war. Most of the accepted doctrine in BR 2170 appears to have been followed conscientiously. However, in some senses the preparations for war were probably most significant in the effect they had on the awareness, by the Ship's Company, of the potential dangers ahead. In this respect many of the preparations would have been wholly beneficial, the early issue of chemical warfare kit is a prime example. In this respect, however, it is unfortunate that, to really make the point, a somewhat stronger line was not taken on personal kit and soft furnishings. As it turned out some of these were later to prove important; the privately owned boats stowed on the upper

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deck caught fire as did the messes and cabins on 1 Deck and above from which carpets had not been removed. Overall, the Board felt that, in this vital area of mental preparation for war, the Captain's comment that the ship's achievement was not nearly as good as we would have wished is a little self critical. The lectures, training programmes, briefings, and particularly material preparations clearly had a significant effect on many of the Ship's Company. A great deal was achieved.

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5. Paneling. The ship's decision, following consultation with CTG, not to remove Melamine Plastic Ram (Formica) paneling, is considered totally justifiable. Investigation in NEWCASTLE shows that paneling removal is highly impracticable and would leave the ship with an unacceptable number of loose fittings, switches and wiring.

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6. Ascension. Following passage South in company with ANIRIM (CTG initially), GLAMORGAN (CTG subsequently), COVENTRY, GLASGOW, BRILLIANT, ARROW, PLYMOUTH and RFA's, SHEFFIELD arrived at Ascension on 10 Apr. A large quantity of stores were ashore awaiting collection and this was effected from the anchorage using Wessex V. The stores organisation ashore is described by Ship's Officers as chaotic. The stores flown to Ascension included a large number of items which were only required for the planned AMP and were of no importance to a ship proceeding to a War Zone. The procedure adopted by the ship was to identify, to the best of their ability, useful items, embark them and ignore the rest. The stores situation ashore contributed to SHEFFIELD's decision not to take advantage of this further opportunity to offload personal possessions, valuables and inflammables.

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7. Comment. Although by all accounts the provision of stores to Ascension reflects enormous credit on the energy and achievement of the Naval Stores organisation, a more selective approach would have reduced both the transport required and the subsequent need at Ascension to sort the useful from the useless.

8. Passage South. After a short period in the local exercise areas, SHEFFIELD sailed from Ascension on 14 Apr and proceeded South, at about 25 knots, to a position near 35S 38W, in company with BRILLIANT (CTU), GLASGOW, COVENTRY and ARROW. This destroyer group was later joined by RFA APPLLEAF. While some other ships had considerable propulsion problems during this fast passage, SHEFFIELD's main machinery remained generally serviceable. This group was silent during their fast passage, but subsequently joined the HERMES and INVINCIBLE group and adopted an overt EMCON policy. The combined group entered the TEE, 200 nautical miles around the Falkland Islands, on 1 May.

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Prior to this, contact with Argentinian forces was restricted to some long range detections of 707s, presumably operating in the reconnaissance role.

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9. Subsequent operations in the TEE are at Annex H.