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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 P

SALVAGE PHASE - ANALYSIS

Scope

1. This annex examines the final disposition of life rafts, the fire damage and the mechanism of sinking. The analysis of the salvage phase of SHEFFIELD is drawn from evidence of Ship's Officers, DG Ships expert witnesses, photographs and the Type 42 stability model at EXCELLENT (PHOENIX).

Q7374

Analysis

2. At some time after abandoning ship but before the first survey at 042045Z May an explosion was reported aft of the missile entry hole by GLASGOW (1). This explosion may have been the cause of distortion of the starboard forward liferaft supports and damaged guardrails; although it is also possible that this damage was caused by FARNOUTH. From the photographs it appears unlikely that the liferafts remained functional (see ANNEX N App 1). The cause of this explosion is not known, but judging by its position its source was fuel in the FAMR. The four aft starboard liferafts were all in place on 4 May, but one was missing on 7 May. This may be associated with the Hangar explosion (see Annex N). Of the 10 apparently undamaged liferafts in place when the ship sank, seven or eight were subsequently sighted. Of these only one was the correct way up and fully inflated. The others were all inverted and some appeared not to have their canopy supports inflated.

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3. Firefighting efforts lasted from the attack at 041403Z May to abandon ship at 041750Z May. Because of the lack of ship's firemain and the burning off of fuel the amount of liquids between decks was not sufficient to noticeably affect ship stability. Photographs (see ANNEX N, App 1) show SHEFFIELD upright and trimmed with boat topping visible three days after the attack. Surveying officers who landed on SHEFFIELD confirm her stability, with a list to starboard of less than 1°.

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Q6901
Q6931, Q691
Q6944, Q691
Q6980

4. The Poc'sle remained reasonably cool throughout and there are no indications of fire forward of F/G watertight bulkhead at any time. The fire amidships burnt fiercely on all decks for about two days. The after superstructure caught fire at some time after 051000Z May. An explosion occurred in the Hangar probably caused by the cooking off of a Sea Skua or a 4.5" HE tanked round. This fire was substantially out by 061900Z May. The most likely route for the fire to reach the after superstructure was via the AAMR ventilation ducts which come out at the forward end of that superstructure.

Q6931

Q1948, Q598

Q6936

Q6935

5. The bulkhead between the FAMR and FER, J/K, was almost certainly breached high up on missile impact. This caused fires in both compartments. It is surmised that fire damage further breached this bulkhead and those forward to the Refrigerators/ Provision Room, H/J; and aft to the AER, K/L. The mechanism

(1) GLASGOW 19F 042024Z MAY 82.

of breach could have been cable glands burning through (2), other inter-compartment pipes burning through, or structural rupture due to heat distortion. Similarly L/M bulkhead was probably breached carrying the fire to the after AMR. Thus there was no watertight integrity at 4 Deck level through at least H, J, K, L and M sections.

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Q7375

6. The fires were substantially out from the morning of 7 May (when the final photographs were taken) and the ship was relatively dry and floating on an even keel and trim. The inside of the ship was open to the weather at the missile entry hole at 2 Deck level; at the Quarterdeck door, 2R; and on 1 Deck level at the Poc'sie escape man holes, 1 H starboard door to the Cabin Flat, 1B door to the Reg Office Flat and at the Hangar. The lowest and most exposed of these breaches was the missile entry hole and it was through this that sea water was to enter the ship.

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Q6943

7. It is believed that very little equipment in the midships and aft sections of the ship would have survived or been salvageable. However, it was decided to tow SHEPPFIELD to South Georgia. Forward of the Bridge screen the Launcher and Sea Dart Magazine XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX; the gun, 4.5" Power Room and 4.5" ammunition may all have been preserved. Salvaging the hull would have provided valuable data for analysis of damage and for future ship design.

526

8. Discussion between Ship's Officers and HERMES' Officers took place on the necessity of repairing the missile entry hole before starting this long tow. It was concluded that the hole should be patched, but that to do so from outside the ship would require, because of the petalled plate and protruding pipework, more cutting gas than HERMES carried. To have done so from inside the ship was too hazardous from heat and danger of re-ignition. The need to tow SHEPPFIELD to the eastern edge of the TEE as soon as possible remained in order to deny the Argentinians knowledge of the success of their attack.

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Q6879

Q6880

9. The ship was taken in tow by YARMOUTH early on the morning of 9 May and, as the weather deteriorated, began to ship water through the missile entry hole. The majority of this water would have gone to 4 Deck and below. A little water may have remained on 2 Deck creating a partial free surface. This situation was reconstructed with the Type 42 stability model at PHOENIX. On the model the Computer Room, 3G, and the Conversion Machinery Room:4G, were also flooded to simulate draining down of 2 Deck. The model steadied at a 20° loll, trimmed 7'6" down by the bow. This is not inconsistent with reports from YARMOUTH (3) shortly before SHEPPFIELD's sinking. The model's 20° loll to starboard brought the missile entry hole under water, but it remained stable.

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Q6881

(2) MODUK NAVY AGA/HAA 151030Z JUL 82.
(3) YARMOUTH 250/2 dated 10 May 82.

The Quarterdeck was largely underwater and modelling water access to 2 Deck aft in Q, P and N Sections quickly rendered the model unstable. SHEFFIELD reportedly sank with a list to starboard of 90° but still trimmed fore and aft. However, it must be added that she was on a long tow and it was dark.

Q6883

10. A principal modelling weakness was the lack of wind and waves. Despite this and other limitations, it is believed that the mechanism of sinking has been broadly established.

Q7375

Summary

11. SHEFFIELD sank following breaches of watertight integrity at 4 Deck level caused by fire damage; settling and lolling as water entered the missile entry hole; submersion of the missile entry hole; and finally becoming rapidly unstable as the settling and lolling allowed water in aft through the quarterdeck door, 2R. It is reasonable to assume that had it been practical to patch the missile entry hole the tow to South Georgia would have been feasible.

Q7375