

Op Ellamy update ♦ first half September 2011

OPERATION Ellamy is the UK's contribution to NATO forces enforcing UN Resolution 1973 to protect civilians in Libya.

Sept 15

At dawn, Tornados from Gioia del Colle conducted an armed reconnaissance mission to Sebha, following reports that Qadhafi's troops there were actively shelling the civilian population.

Previously during combat missions in both Libya and Afghanistan, the Brimstone missile has been fired individually, using laser guidance, with exceptionally accurate results.

However, it also has the capacity to be fired in a large salvo utilising millimetric radar to guide simultaneously each missile to a separate target. ♦ Since a large concentration of former regime armoured vehicles had been located by NATO, this mission saw the salvo firing technique used for the very first time in action, with some two dozen missiles fired.

Full battle damage assessment continues, but seven or eight target vehicles were observed on fire, and the precision nature of the Brimstone's warhead means that additional targets were most likely destroyed or severely damaged.

Armed reconnaissance missions were also flown by the RAF over the area of Sirte. ♦ Our Typhoon and Tornado aircraft engaged targets on a number of occasions during the day, and Paveway bombs and Brimstone missiles accounted for a total of one tank, four multiple rocket launchers and four other armed vehicles.

At sea, the Royal Navy continues to support NATO's maritime mission to enforce UN Security Council Resolutions 1970 and 1973, with HMS Liverpool conducting boarding inspections of merchant shipping as necessary, and HMS Bangor helping keep the sea lanes free from any residual mine threat.

Sept 13

As on a number of previous occasions, a formation of RAF Tornado GR4s took off from RAF Marham loaded with Storm Shadow stand-off missiles.

Supported by a Tristar tanker, they flew south to Libya, where the Storm Shadows were fired at a number of targets in and around Sebha, including a military vehicle depot and a group of buildings which careful surveillance analysis by NATO had confirmed were in use as a base for those Qadhafi troops and mercenaries who continue to suppress the local population.

During the morning, Royal Air Force Tornado GR4s conducting an armed reconnaissance patrol over Sebha in southern Libya located a number of former regime armoured vehicles occupying dug-in positions near the town.

Three of the vehicles were destroyed by our aircraft.

♦ NATO was also maintaining an intensive presence over the coastal city of Sirte, and during the afternoon, an RAF patrol identified one of Qadhafi's multiple rocket launchers to the east of the city. ♦ A Brimstone missile destroyed the vehicle.

At sea, Royal Navy vessels, including HM Ships Liverpool and Bangor, remain on patrol off the coast ensuring the free movement of shipping, especially the humanitarian supplies needed by the coastal communities after months of conflict.

Sept 9

RAF aircraft also helped NATO maintain its armed reconnaissance patrols over other parts of the country, and this afternoon Tornado and Typhoon aircraft destroyed a command and control installation near Hun in central Libya.

The following morning, a similar mission spotted a former regime main battle tank at Bani Walid, firing from a concealed position. A Paveway guided bomb from a Typhoon destroyed the tank.

The same patrol subsequently located a multiple rocket launcher nearby, hidden in a tree line, and destroyed that vehicle as well with a further Paveway.

Sept 8

NATO launched a long range mission, targeting a military vehicle depot at a former regime compound located near Sebha. ♦ The RAF contribution to the mission was a formation of Tornados from RAF Marham in Norfolk, which flew south across Europe to rendezvous with the other allied aircraft in the strike package

before firing a large salvo of Storm Shadow precision guided stand-off missiles. Our aircraft recovered to Gioia del Colle and will return to Marham in due course. ♦ This mission once again demonstrated NATO's ability and resolve to reach deep into Libya to target those elements of the former regime who persist in their attempts to oppress the Libyan people. NATO also maintained its armed reconnaissance patrols over all areas of potential continuing conflict, and in the course of these, RAF Tornado and Typhoon aircraft observed multiple rocket launchers in action near Sirte. Paveway and Brimstone attacks accounted for one of the rocket launchers and an armed pick-up truck. Royal Air Force Tornado GR4s also participated with other allied aircraft in a major strike by NATO against a significant command and control facility located near Birak, over 400 miles south of Tripoli, in the Sahara. NATO surveillance had demonstrated that the site, much used by the Qadhafi regime in the past, was once more in active use as a military headquarters. Numerous military targets within the compound were destroyed. A similar long range Storm Shadow attack was also launched by GR4s on Sept 10 again, flying from RAF Marham in Norfolk to hit a major military staging post used by Qadhafi's troops in the town of Sebha, 30 miles from Birak. **Sept 6** Their target this afternoon was the surface-to-air missile depot at Sebha, near to the airfield and former regime headquarters complex, which surveillance showed was still being used as an active military base by those of Qadhafi's troops who continue to oppress the population of the town. A Tristar tanker from RAF Brize Norton supported the mission on the long flight south. A couple of hours later, an armed reconnaissance patrol by Tornados out of Gioia del Colle located another of Qadhafi's armed trucks east of Sirte, on this occasion armed with a multiple rocket launcher. A Brimstone missile removed the threat that this vehicle posed. **Sept 5** Royal Air Force Tornados on patrol to the east of Sirte identified a group of three former regime armed pick-up trucks. Close observation revealed that they were acting as a command group for a dug-in artillery piece which had recently been in action; a single Paveway guided bomb destroyed all three vehicles. Off Tripoli, HMS Liverpool and other NATO vessels maintained their long standing watch along the Libyan coast, maintaining UNSCRs 1970 and 1973 and protecting humanitarian shipping movements. Once again, a formation of Tornado GR4s from RAF Marham in Norfolk demonstrated NATO's ability to reach deep into Libya and the Sahara, flying a long range precision strike mission with Storm Shadow missiles. **Sept 4** A formation of Royal Air Force Tornado GR4s took off from RAF Marham in Norfolk on Sunday, and, flying south to the Mediterranean, rendezvoused with allied aircraft to lead a long range strike mission against a group of military communications installations that form a key part of the former regime's major headquarters complex at Sebha, in the Sahara. The RAF aircraft launched a large salvo of highly accurate Storm Shadow stand-off missiles against their targets. ♦ Meanwhile, RAF Tornados and Typhoons based in Italy at Gioia del Colle helped NATO maintain armed reconnaissance patrols over Sirte, and during the evening our aircraft successfully attacked an ammunition depot nearby, as well as a self-propelled artillery piece and an armed pick-up truck, using Paveway and Brimstone guided weapons. **Sept 2** Royal Air Force aircraft flew a number of armed reconnaissance missions as NATO maintained its patrols over those areas where the civilian population remains subject to the oppression of Colonel Qadhafi's remaining troops. In the course of the afternoon, RAF Tornado GR4s conducted a precision strike on three buildings in Bani Walid which were being used by the former regime forces as a depot for

military vehicles. All three targets were destroyed by Paveway laser and GPS guided bombs.

"Since the start of military operations on 19 March, Royal Navy, Royal Air Force and Army Air Corps strikes have damaged or destroyed over 910 targets that were being used by Qadhafi's former regime to threaten the Libyan people, ranging from secret police headquarters and command bunkers, to tanks, rocket launchers and armed trucks.

Sept 1

Royal Air Force aircraft conducted intensive patrols over Waddan and Bani Walid. ♦ At Waddan, two tanks, a pair of multiple rocket launchers and an artillery support vehicle were destroyed before dawn with Paveway guided bombs, while at Bani Walid two formations of our aircraft targeted a large barracks. Numerous military targets within the barracks were destroyed by Paveways, as well as a tank and a rocket launcher deployed in the same area.

At sea, HMS Liverpool last night closed with pro-Qadhafi coastal positions in and around Sirte and fired illumination barrages of star shell over two vehicle check points. ♦ These had the dual effect of confirming the location of the military positions and having a psychological impact on the troops manning them, who were seen to rapidly disperse their vehicles.

As has been well reported, an RAF C-17 yesterday delivered a very large consignment of Libyan bank notes to the authorities in Benghazi.

In the afternoon, Tornado GR4s conducted a strike on six buildings in use by former regime forces near Bani Walid, at Qaryat al Mirqib. ♦ All six targets were destroyed by Paveway guided bombs. ♦ Overnight, HMS Liverpool again fired star shells over pro-Qadhafi military positions at Sirte, to demonstrate to those forces which persist in prolonging the conflict that their positions are well known and capable of being targeted.