

SOME FACTS FROM THE RFTG IN 2011

RFTG 11 consisted of COMUKTG and staff, 11 ships, 1 submarine and numerous other key enabling capabilities.

A returning forward deployed RFTG unit, HMS CUMBERLAND evacuated over 500 civilians from Libya.

Elements were sailed at very short notice in order to provide options for response to the ongoing situation in Libya or other crises in the Middle East and North African region and exploit the utility of maritime power in support of wider Government objectives.

Exercised with partners new and old, from new NATO member Albania to Saudi Arabia, Oman and the UAE. For elements of the deployment the TG included a French frigate and Dutch marines.

Initially operated as a single Task Group, the scaleable nature of the RFTG allowed it to be divided into 2 Groups to achieve concurrent but strategically linked operations – one for Libya and the other East of Suez conducting capacity building off the Horn of Africa.

A range of capabilities were provided in support of the campaign in Libya including mine clearance, control and support of UK air assets, using naval gunfire to engage shore targets which threatened civilians, and launching Attack Helicopter and TLAM strikes from the sea

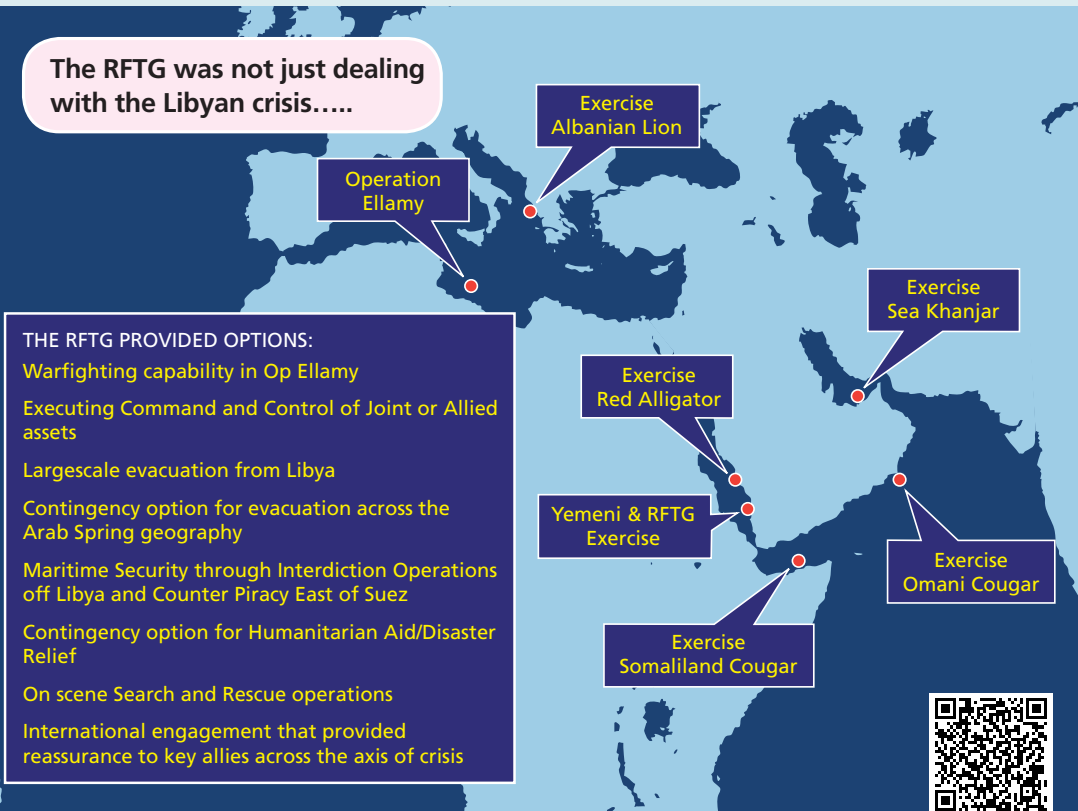
The RFTG spent 7 months at sea with minimal additional operating costs and, as a result, contributed to HMG's aims in the Mediterranean, Red Sea, Indian Ocean and the Arabian Gulf

THE RESPONSE FORCE TASK GROUP (RFTG)

The UK's Very High Readiness Maritime Force



The RFTG was not just dealing with the Libyan crisis.....



THE RFTG PROVIDED OPTIONS:

- Warfighting capability in Op Ellamy
- Executing Command and Control of Joint or Allied assets
- Largescale evacuation from Libya
- Contingency option for evacuation across the Arab Spring geography
- Maritime Security through Interdiction Operations off Libya and Counter Piracy East of Suez
- Contingency option for Humanitarian Aid/Disaster Relief
- On scene Search and Rescue operations
- International engagement that provided reassurance to key allies across the axis of crisis



"What 'smart power' is about is picking the right club, or the right combination of clubs, for the right occasion. It is about forging traditional soft and hard power assets - from development aid to defence diplomacy - from sanctions to air-strikes - into a comprehensive strategy focussed on the fulfilment of national objectives."

Gerald Howarth MP
Minister for International Security Strategy



The Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR) concluded that:
“UK forces should have the ability to deploy highly capable assets quickly when we need to, but also to prepare a greater scale and range of capabilities if required”.

The Response Force Task Group (RFTG) is the UK’s scaleable, very high readiness maritime force capable of responding with a range of capabilities to crisis and world events.

Commanded by Commander UK Task Group (COMUKTG), a Royal Navy 1* Officer, it provides an advanced capability able to plan and execute the full range of maritime operations around the globe.

Elements of the RFTG may be forward deployed on other tasks whilst remaining at readiness for contingent activity



THE RFTG OFFERS MOBILITY, VERSATILITY AND INTEROPERABILITY BECAUSE IT IS...

...a Very High-Readiness Force, able to deploy a fully constituted command team (a HQ afloat), and pre-designated ships, submarines, aircraft and Commandos at very short notice – 365 days a year.

...an Integrated force of ships, submarines, aircraft and commandos. It has the ability to command both Joint, maritime and landing forces in order to conduct Joint Action such as: Fires (precision Missiles, Naval Guns and Air Support), Information Activities (such as Intelligence and Influence), Manoeuvre (up to 300 mile in 24 hours) and outreach Activities (to enhance political aims and regional stability). All of this is conducted at or from the sea through the delivery of land effect by the Lead Commando Group and/or maritime based aviation. In addition, it is capable of conducting the full range of sea control, sea denial and maritime security operations such as mine clearance, humanitarian intervention or Non-Combatant Evacuations.

...a Deployed force is able to provide persistent presence in those regions where the UK has interests and respond swiftly to crises. Deployed Tankers and Store Supply ships of the Royal Fleet Auxiliaries (RFAs) can sustain RFTG operations both at sea and ashore for prolonged periods. All of this is achieved with minimal footprint ashore and at marginal additional operating costs.

...a Credible intervention force, the RFTG is currently based around a Cdo Gp Littoral Manoeuvre capability of up to 1800 personnel and, currently, the RFTG’s strike capability is based around Submarine launched Tomahawk Precision Land Attack Missile, Apache Attack Helicopters and Naval Medium Calibre Guns. On the introduction of a Queen Elizabeth Aircraft Carrier (QEC), a potent strike capability will be added to the RFTG. This capability can operate without restriction on the high seas (to within 12nm of any of the world’s 147 coastal states) and can be held at readiness or utilised. It allows the UK to act wherever it is in our strategic interest to do so.

...a Flexible force – the RFTG is able to simultaneously deliver a wide range of effects – including deterring adversaries, support to Special Forces, conducting maritime security operations, conducting international engagement and reassurance of allies, and capacity building and stabilisation in the vicinity of fragile states.

...an Adaptable force able to operate as a single entity, or in any smaller combination of units, and as a UK force integrating Army and Air Force or other government agency elements. It may operate with allies and partners, become a multi-national task group by including elements of their forces, or being incorporated into a larger multi-national expeditionary force.

