Declassified by MoD 2 Feb 10

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CDS/6/2(2/018)

19 Sep 05

~~APS2/SofS~~ e.v

Copy to:

PS/PUS	MA/VCDS	DCDS(C)
CJO	ACDS(Ops)	DG Op Pol

IRAQ/AFGHANISTAN COMMITMENTS

1. SofS asked (your MSU4/5/2C&4/5/3 dated 12 Sep 05) whether, in the event of a slower than expected drawdown of our forces in Iraq, our planning assumptions for deployment in Afghanistan would be achievable.

2. The short answer is yes, but to provide further reassurance for SofS, we have taken advice from CJO: he is clear that our plans for Afghanistan are deliverable even if events slow down our Iraq disengagement; furthermore, DCDS(C) has factored the possibility of such a slippage into the MOD's strategic planning for Afghanistan and our strategic intent for future commitments.

3. It is of course the case that a such a situation would lead to some pain-and-grief, in particular:

- the hoped for easement of pressure on our current 'pinch points', especially helicopter support, specialist intelligence gathering and certain logistic functions (notably medical and some Combat Service Support trades) would be delayed;
- the JRRF Second Echelon would be diluted as earmarked manpower was drawn forward to theatre, again impacting upon pinch-points within key strategic and logistic enablers (e.g. medical, [redacted] CIS); and continued commitment of a brigade size force in Iraq beyond TELIC 10 would prevent our regenerating the JRRF high readiness armoured brigade in early 2008.

4. But, our ability to fulfil our plan in Afghanistan is not predicated on withdrawal of such capabilities from Iraq and, notwithstanding these qualifications, in the event that our conditions-based plan for progressive disengagement from southern Iraq is delayed, we will still be able to deliver our DOP-A mandated force levels in Afghanistan.

Steve Jermy

PSO

MSU

Pse file on both Iraq and Afghanistan files

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