

Recent example of the RFTG...

Looking back to 2011 we see how valuable the RFTG can be:

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.

Ships 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 task group included a French frigate and Dutch marines.

Initially operated as a single Task Group, the scalable nature of the RFTG allowed it to be divided into 2 Groups to achieve concurrent, 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 Tomahawk missile strikes from the sea.

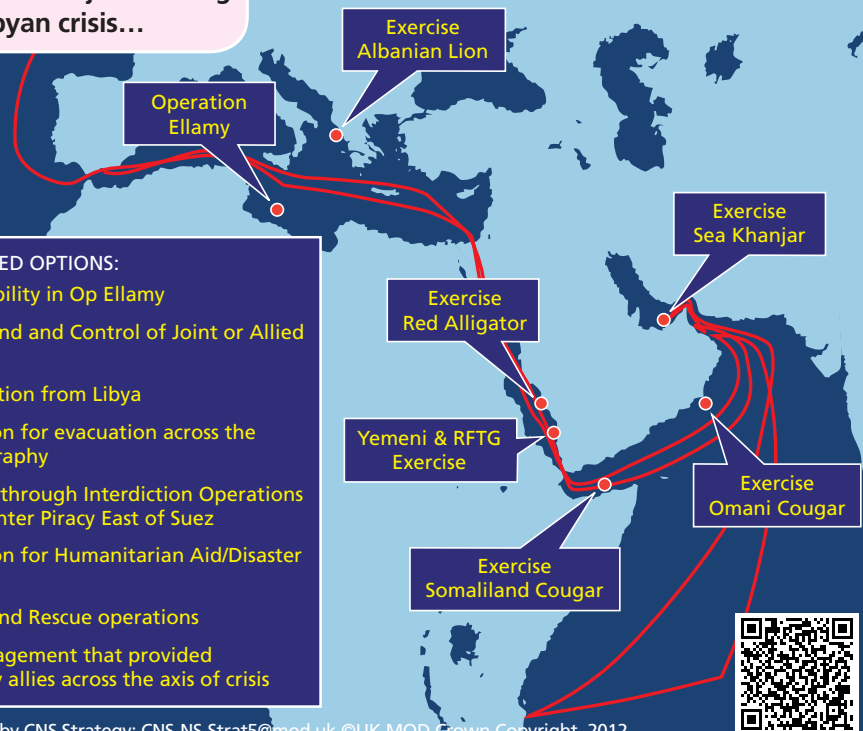
The RFTG spent 7 months at sea with minimal additional operating costs and, as a result, contributed to the Government's aims in the Mediterranean, Red Sea, Indian Ocean and the Arabian Gulf.

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





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

...a Very High-Readiness force. It is able to deploy ships, submarines, aircraft and manpower 365 days a year, this includes units forward deployed around the world on other tasks which can quickly manoeuvre to wherever they are needed, a lead commando group kept at very short notice to move, and a fully constituted command team (HQ afloat).

...a Credible intervention force. The RFTG is currently based around the Lead Commando Group, a force of up to 1800 personnel drawn from 3 Commando Brigade Royal Marines who can go ashore using helicopters and landing craft of the RFTG. The RFTG also has a potent strike capability based around Submarine-launched precision Tomahawk Land Attack Missiles, Apache Attack Helicopters and Naval Medium Calibre Guns. This capability can operate without restriction on the high seas (to within 12nm of any of the world's 147 coastal states). It allows the UK to act wherever it is in our strategic interest to do so. Upon introduction of the Queen Elizabeth Class Aircraft Carrier (QEC), or when working closely with French and American allies, a fixed wing air capability adds another potent dimension to the RFTG, giving an increase in both offensive and defensive options.



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 scalable, very high readiness maritime force capable of responding, with a range of capabilities, to crises and world events.

Under control of a unique combination of two Headquarters who specialise in sea and land missions, it provides the capability to plan and execute the full range of maritime and amphibious operations around the globe.

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



...an Integrated force of ships, submarines, aircraft and commandos. It has the ability to command maritime and landing forces in order to conduct joint action including: Fire support AKA Fires (precision Missiles, Naval Gunfire and Air Support), Information Activities (such as Intelligence and Influence), Manoeuvre (up to 300 miles 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 Flexible force – the RFTG is able to simultaneously deliver a wide range of effects - including:

- deterring adversaries,
- conducting maritime security operations,
- conducting defence engagement and reassurance of allies,
- capacity building and stabilisation in the vicinity of fragile states and
- support to Special Forces.



...a Deployed force. It 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 Auxiliary (RFA) can sustain RFTG operations both at sea and ashore for prolonged periods. All of this is achieved with minimal footprint on land and at marginal additional operating costs.

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

