


BRITISH FORCES, OPERATION TELIC, IRAQ 2003—2004

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Operation TELIC

By late January-early February 2003 the UK deployed approximately 46,000 personnel for “potential operations against Iraq.” About 5,000 reservists had been called up in January to support the deployment, and another 2,700 were called up later. As with the US forces, there were also various civilians deployed. These included 200 Ministry of Defence (MOD) civilians, around 150 civilian contractors, and civilian personnel manning the Royal Fleet Auxiliary (RFA) vessels and from the Defence Logistics Organization. Air Marshal Brian Burridge was appointed GOC, British Forces in the Gulf.¹ The UK National Contingent Chief of Staff was Major General Peter Wall.

 **Royal Navy elements.** Naval Task Group 2003, which had been planned to deploy via the Mediterranean and Gulf en route to the Far East for participation in Exercise FLYING FISH, was augmented to provide a significant maritime and amphibious capability. The carriers, destroyers and frigates were the main elements of Naval Task Group 2003, along with a Mine Countermeasures Group and an Afloat Support Group. Not all of the following vessels were present at the same time. Rear Admiral David Snelson was in command of British naval forces.²

HMS *Ark Royal* (aircraft carrier³)

HMS *Ark Royal* carried 4 Sea King Mk 7⁴ from 849 Squadron FAA and 5 Chinook from No 18 Squadron RAF.

HMS *Ocean* (amphibious helicopter carrier⁵)

HMS *Ocean* carried 10 Sea King Mk 4⁶ from No 845 Naval Air Squadron along with 6 Lynx AH7 and 6 Gazelle AH1 from No 847 Naval Air Squadron.

HMS *Splendid* (nuclear attack submarine)

HMS *Turbulent* (nuclear attack submarine)

HMS *Liverpool* (Type 42 destroyer⁷)

HMS *Edinburgh* (Type 42 destroyer)

HMS *York* (Type 42 destroyer)

HMS *Marlborough* (Type 23 frigate⁸)

HMS *Richmond* (Type 23 frigate)

HMS *Chatham* (Type 22 frigate⁹)

RFA *Sir Tristram* (Landing Ship Logistic [LSL])

RFA *Sir Galahad* (Landing Ship Logistic [LSL])

RFA *Sir Percivale* (Landing Ship Logistic [LSL])

¹ Burridge was Deputy Commander-in-Chief Strike Command from February 2002.

² Snelson was promoted to Read Admiral November 2002 and appointed Commander UK Maritime Forces and the Anti-Submarine Warfare Striking Force.

³ Armament: 3 x Phalanx/Goalkeeper (CIWS), 2 x 20mm Close range guns. Aircraft were normally a mix of Sea Harriers FA2, RAF Harrier GR7, Sea King AEW and Merlin depending on ship's deployment. However, for Operation TELIC the *Ark Royal* only carried helicopters.

⁴ The Airborne Surveillance and Area Control (previously Airborne Early Warning) version of the Sea King.

⁵ The ship's primary role is to carry an Embarked Military Force (EMF) supported by 12 medium support helicopters, 6 attack helicopters and 4 Landing Craft Vehicle Personnel (LCVP) Mk 5 Landing Craft.

⁶ Mk 4 is the commando version of the Sea King, and can carry up to 27 troops.

⁷ Primary role of the Type 42 destroyer is air defence. Armament: Twin Sea Dart Missile launcher, 114mm (4.5 inch) Mk 8 gun, 2 x 20mm Close range guns, 2 x Vulcan Phalanx close in weapons system (CIWS), 2 x Triple anti submarine torpedo tubes.

⁸ The Type 23 frigate was originally oriented for ASW tasks, but now is a more multi-purpose vessel. Armament: 2 x Quad Harpoon Missile launchers, Vertical Launch Sea Wolf anti-missile system, 4.5in (114mm) MK 8 gun, 2 x 30mm close range guns, 2 x Magazine launched anti submarine torpedo tubes.

⁹ The Type 22 frigate was also originally intended as a specialist ASW vessel, but has evolved. Armament: 114mm (4.5") Mk 8 gun, Goalkeeper Close-In Weapons System (CIWS), Sea Wolf anti-missile system, 2xquad Harpoon missile launchers, 2x20mm close range guns.

The destroyers and frigates each carried one (two for the Type 22 frigate) Lynx Mk 8 [ASW] from No. 815 Naval Air Squadron.

RFA *Sir Bedivere* (Mine Countermeasures [MCM] Support Ship)
HMS *Bangor* (Sandown class MCM vessel¹⁰)
HMS *Blyth* (Sandown class MCM vessel)
HMS *Ramsey* (Sandown class MCM vessel)
HMS *Shoreham* (Sandown class MCM vessel)
HMS *Sandown* (Sandown class MCM vessel)
HMS *Grimsby* (Sandown class MCM vessel)
HMS *Brocklesby* (Hunt class MCM vessel¹¹)
HMS *Ledbury* (Hunt class MCM vessel)

RFA *Argus* (Aviation Training and Primary Casualty Reception Ship)
RFA *Fort Victoria* (Combined Fleet Support Tanker and Stores Ship)
RFA *Fort Rosalie* (Fleet Support Stores Ship)
RFA *Fort Austin* (Fleet Support Stores Ship)
RFA *Orangeleaf* (Fleet Support Tanker)
RFA *Bayleaf* (Fleet Support Tanker)
RFA *Bambleleaf* (Fleet Support Tanker)
RFA *Grey Rover* (Small Fleet Tanker)
RFA *Diligence* (Forward Repair Ship)
RFA *Sea Crusader* (Strategic Life Ro-Ro)¹²
HMS *Roebuck* (Hydrographic Survey Vessel)

There were six Sea King Mk 6¹³ helicopters (No 820 Naval Air Squadron): two on RFA *Argus* and four on RFA *Fort Austin* in the support force, along with four Merlin HM Mk 1 (No 814 Naval Air Squadron) on RFA *Fort Victoria*.



An **amphibious force** (mainly Royal Marines) of some 4,000 personnel:

HQ 3 Commando Brigade: Brigadier Jim Dutton
40 Commando RM
42 Commando RM
29 Commando Regiment RHA [105mm Light Guns]
23 Commando HQ Battery RHA
7 Commando Battery RHA (Sphinx)
8 (Alma) Commando Battery RHA
79 (Kirkee) Commando Battery RHA
148 Commando Forward Observation Battery RHA (Meiktila)
59 Independent Commando Squadron RE
131 Independent Commando Squadron RE (Vol)
9 Assault Squadron RM [river and canal patrol/transport]
539 Assault Squadron RM [river and canal patrol/transport]
Commando Logistic Regiment RM

A reinforced US Marine battalion, the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit,¹⁴ was under command of 3 Commando Brigade through 25 March.

¹⁰ The most recent MCM class, dedicated single-role mine hunters. These are 600-ton vessels and carry a single 30mm gun.

¹¹ Constructed out of Glass Reinforced Plastic, intended for hunting and sweeping, 750 tons and armed with a 30mm gun, 2x20mm guns, and 2 GPMG.

¹² Ro-Ro is "roll on, roll off".

¹³ Sea King Mk 6 was the ASW version, which is being replaced by the new Merlin HM Mk 1.

¹⁴ Built around Battalion Landing Team (BLT) 2/1 [i.e., the reinforced 2nd Battalion, 1st Marines].

There were also personnel drawn from 45 Commando (and its associated 20 Commando Battery RHA) and 4 Assault Squadron RM, along with personnel from the Fleet Protection Force RM and RM reservists.



Land forces of some 26,000 personnel:

- 1 (UK) Armoured Division: Major General Robin Brims¹⁵
 - Headquarters and Signal Regiment¹⁶
 - 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards (reconnaissance)
 - 28 Engineer Regiment
 - 23 Amphibious Squadron RE
 - 45 Field Squadron RE
 - 29 Armoured Engineer Squadron [from 35 Engineer Regiment]
 - 70 Gurkha Field Squadron RE [from 36 Engineer Regiment]
 - 1 General Support Regiment RLC
 - 2 Close Support Regiment RLC
 - 2nd Battalion REME
 - 1 Close Support Medical Regiment
 - 5 General Support Medical Regiment
 - 1 Regiment, RMP
 - 2 Signal Regiment
 - 14 (Geographic) Squadron RE
 - Specialist Team RE from 64 CRE (Works)¹⁷
 - plus elements from various units including:
 - 12 Engineer Brigade (Air Support)
 - 39 Engineer Regiment
 - 73 Engineer Regiment (Vol)
 - 33 Engineer Regiment (Explosive Ordnance Disposal)
 - 10, 14, 21, and 30 Signal Regiments
 - 32 Regiment RA (Phoenix UAVs)
- 7th Armoured Brigade: Brigadier Graham Binns
 - Headquarters and Signal Squadron (207)¹⁸
 - Royal Scots Dragoon Guards [Challenger 2 tanks]
 - 2nd Royal Tank Regiment [Challenger 2 tanks]
 - 1st Bn The Black Watch [Warrior infantry fighting vehicles]
 - 1st Bn Royal Regiment of Fusiliers [Warrior infantry fighting vehicles]
 - 3rd Regiment RHA [AS90 self-propelled guns]¹⁹
 - M HQ Battery RHA
 - C Battery RHA
 - D Battery RHA
 - J (Sidi Rezegh) Battery RHA
 - 32 Engineer Regiment (The Assault Engineers)
 - 2 HQ Squadron RE
 - 26 Armoured Engineer Squadron
 - 31 Armoured Engineer Squadron
 - 39 Armoured Engineer Squadron
 - 25 Armoured Engineer Squadron [from 38 Engineer Regiment]

¹⁵ Also served as GOC, British Land Forces in the Gulf (i.e., including the commandos ashore). Brimms was named GOC 1 (UK) Armoured Division in November 2000.

¹⁶ Supplemented with personnel from 3 (UK) Division Headquarters and Signal Regiment.

¹⁷ 64 CRE (Works) has the lead on bulk petroleum. However, like other CRE (Works), its STREs can have other capabilities as well.

¹⁸ Supplemented with personnel from 4 Armoured Brigade Headquarters and Signal Squadron. The signal regiment is organized into a headquarters squadron and the 201, 211 and 212 Signal Squadrons.

¹⁹ Personnel and equipment drawn from 26 Field Regiment RA to bring regiment up to strength.

- plus elements from various units including:²⁰
- Queen's Royal Lancers (Challenger 2 tanks)
 - 1st Battalion Irish Guards (Warrior infantry fighting vehicles)
 - 1st Battalion The Light Infantry (Warrior infantry fighting vehicles)
 - 4th Bn The Parachute Regiment (Volunteers)
 - 38 Engineer Regiment
- 1st Bn Duke of Wellington's Regiment [supplemental infantry under 1 (UK) Armoured Division]
The Royal Yeomanry [reconnaissance regiment]
1st Royal Tank Regiment (Joint NBC Regiment)
- 16 Air Assault Brigade: Brigadier 'Jacko' Paige
Headquarters and Signal Squadron (216)
1st Bn The Royal Irish Regiment
1st Bn The Parachute Regiment
3rd Bn The Parachute Regiment
7 (Parachute) Regiment RHA [105mm Light Guns]
H (Parachute) HQ Battery RHA
F (Parachute) Battery RHA
G (Parachute) Battery RHA
I (Parachute) Battery RHA
23 Engineer Regiment²¹
12 (Nova Scotia) HQ Squadron RE (Air Assault)
9 Parachute Squadron RE
51 Field Squadron RE (Air Assault)
61 Field Support Squadron RE (Air Assault)
'D' Squadron, Household Cavalry Regiment [armoured reconnaissance]
3rd Regiment AAC [Lynx & Gazelle helicopters]
elements 662 Squadron AAC
elements 663 Squadron AAC
7 Air Assault Battalion REME
13 Air Assault Support Regiment RLC
16 Close Support Medical Regiment
- 102 Logistics Brigade: Brigadier Shaun Cowlam
Headquarters and Signal Squadron (262)
33 and 34 Field Hospitals
4 General Support Medical Regiment
3rd Battalion REME
6 Supply Regiment RLC
7 Transport Regiment RLC
17 Port & Maritime Regiment RLC
23 Pioneer Regiment RLC
24 Regiment RLC
5 Regiment, RMP
specialist Royal Engineer teams
airfield engineer support units from 12 Engineer Brigade
elements from 11 Explosive Ordnance Disposal Regiment
elements from additional RLC regiments

²⁰ Personnel and equipment also came from the 5, 12, 40 and 47 Regiments RA. 5 Regiment RA is surveillance and target acquisition; 40 Regiment RA is a field regiment (AS90); 12 and 47 Regiments RA are air defence (Javelin).

²¹ This regiment was only formed in January 2003, generally by taking over existing units. 51 Field Squadron appears to have been still officially part of 38 Engineer Regiment and 61 Field Support Squadron appears to have been still officially part of 36 Engineer Regiment.

Major items of equipment included 116 Challenger 2 MBTs, 66 Scimitar tracked recce vehicles, 12 Striker tracked ATGW vehicles (Swingfire), 140 Warrior IFVs along with command and repair/recovery variants, and 12 Fuchs NBC vehicles. Artillery included 36 AS90 SP 155mm guns, 39 105mm light guns, and 3 Rapier SAM launchers.²² 3rd Regiment AAC appears to have had 10 Gazelle AH1 and 12 Lynx AH7.²³

9

The **air component** had 115 fixed-wing aircraft and 27 helicopters, supported by 8,100 personnel. Prior to expansion for Operation Telic, there had been 25 aircraft and 1000 RAF personnel in the Gulf as part of the No-Fly Zone enforcement operations. Air Vice-Marshal Glen Torpy was in command of RAF elements in the Gulf.²⁴

4 Sentry AEW1 command & control aircraft (from Nos 8 and 23 Sqns)
12 Tornado GR4 bomber/reconnaissance aircraft (from Nos II, IX, and 31Sqns)
18 Tornado GR4/4A bomber/reconnaissance aircraft (from Nos. 12 and 617 Sqns)
4 Jaguar GR3A attack/reconnaissance aircraft (from Nos 6, 41 and 54 Sqns)
20 Harrier GR7 attack aircraft (from Nos 1, 3 and IV Sqns)
14 Tornado F3 air defence aircraft (from Nos 43 and 111 Sqns)
9 VC-10 tanker aircraft (from Nos 10 and 101 Sqns)
4 Tristar tanker aircraft (from No 216 Sqn)
4 C-17 transport aircraft (from No 99 Sqn)
12 C-30J/C-130K Hercules transport aircraft (from Nos 24, 30, 47 and 70 Sqns)
7 Nimrod MR2 reconnaissance aircraft (from Nos 120, 201 and 206 Sqns)
1 Nimrod R1 reconnaissance aircraft (from No 51 Sqn)
2 Canberra PR9 reconnaissance aircraft (from No 39 (IPRU) Sqn)
4 HS125 VIP aircraft (from No 32 [The Royal] Sqn)

20 Chinook helicopters (from Nos 7, 18 and 27 Sqns)²⁵
7 Puma helicopters (from No 33 Sqn)

RAF Regiment elements for ground defence

16 Sqn RAF Regiment (air defence)
1 Sqn RAF Regiment (ground defence)
11 Sqn RAF Regiment (ground defence)
23 Sqn RAF Regiment (ground defence)
51 Sqn RAF Regiment (Joint Helicopter Force protection)

In addition, 27 Sqn RAF Regiment, from the Joint NBC Regiment, was in theater for NBC defence.

The Army's 21 Signal Regiment provides communications support for the Joint Helicopter Force

Military operations generally began 20 March 2003 when ground forces moved into Iraq. The first objective was to seize the Al Faw peninsula, key oil installations (Rumaylah oil fields), and the port of Umm Qasr. For the British, the next major objective was Basrah—second largest city in Iraq. Following the end of major military operations (declared by the US on 1 May 2003), the British began to reduce their force levels for what was intended to be a reconstruction and peacekeeping phase.

²² It is possible the Rapiers were from the RAF Regiment rather than the Army.

²³ The initial MOD report shows 16 Gazelle and 18 Lynx in theater, and 6 of each type were with the Naval Air Squadron supporting the RM commandos. The Lynx AH7 carries 8xTOW anti-tank missiles and 7.62mm machine guns. The Gazelle AH1 can carry 2 machine guns, but that is not a standard mount.

²⁴ Torpy had been AOC No. 1 Group since March 2001. No. 1 Group is responsible for strike/attack operations, support of the Army in the field, and the remaining RAF forces based in Germany

²⁵ This total does not include the 5 Chinook from No 18 Sqn on the *Ark Royal*.

Operation TELIC 2²⁶

The Defence Secretary announced changes to the force levels deployed in the Gulf in April 2003, with the withdrawal of units as conditions permitted, and the deployment of some replacement formations. The ground units from the initial attack began to redeploy to home stations in May, and other units began moving to Iraq as part of the new force. 3 (UK) Division took over from 1 (UK) Division on 11 July 2003. The new division headquarters was tasked to serve as well as headquarters for the Multi-National Division (South-East) [MND(SE)], and various non-British units were placed under its control. On the support side, 101 Logistics Brigade began to replace 102 Logistics Brigade in May.

The organization of the new ground force was:

Division Troops

Headquarters and 3rd Division Signal Regiment²⁷

3 Regiment, RMP

3 Close Support Regiment, RLC

3 Close Support Medical Regiment, RAMC

5 Battalion, REME

Elements from:

5 Regiment RA

7 Signal Regiment

14 Signal Regiment

30 Signal Regiment [strategic communications]

4 General Support Regiment, RLC

4 General Support Medical Regiment, RAMC

East of England Regiment (Volunteers)

Tyne-Tees Regiment (Volunteers)

19 Mechanised Brigade:

Headquarters and Signal Squadron (209)

1st Bn, The Queen's Lancashire Regiment [Saxon armoured personnel carriers]

1st Bn, King's Own Scottish Borderers [Saxon armoured personnel carriers]

1st Bn, The King's Regiment [Warrior infantry fighting vehicles]

40 Regiment RA (The Lowland Gunners) [AS90 SP 155mm gun]

49 (Inkerman) HQ Battery RA

6/36 (Arcot 1751) Battery RA

38 (Seringatam) Battery RA

129 (Dragon) Battery RA

137 (Java) Battery RA

38 Engineer Regiment²⁸

25 Armoured Engineer Squadron RE²⁹

51 Field Squadron RE (Air Assault)³⁰

15 Field Support Squadron RE

Elements from:

The Light Dragoons

2nd Royal Tank Regiment

Royal Monmouthshire Royal Engineers (Militia)

²⁶ Each succeeding major rotation is indicated with a sequential number.

²⁷ The signal regiment comprises Headquarters (Somme) Squadron and the 202, 206 and 222 Signal Squadrons.

²⁸ 32 HQ Squadron is not listed under the official RE deployment page, so possibly only the RHQ went.

²⁹ Remained from Operation TELIC, where under 32 Engineer Regiment.

³⁰ Remained from Operation TELIC, where under 23 Engineer Regiment.

101 Logistics Brigade

101 Logistics Brigade Headquarters and Signal Squadron (261)

27 Transport Regiment, RLC

9 Supply Regiment, RLC

168 Pioneer Regiment, RLC

4 Regiment, RMP

33 Field Hospital

Elements from:

17 Port & Maritime Regiment, RLC

29 Regiment, RLC

11 Explosive Ordnance Disposal Regiment, RLC

1 Postal & Courier Service Group

Other Units:

elements from 4th Regiment AAC

10 Field Squadron RE (Air Support)

49 Field Squadron RE (EOD)

100 Field Squadron RE (Militia)³¹

elements from 39 Engineer Regiment (Air Support)

elements from 42 Engineer Regiment (Geographic)

Specialist Team RE from 62 CRE (Works)³²

As the headquarters for Multi-National Division (South-East), 3 (UK) Division also had several national contingents under its command, including:

Italy: a mechanised brigade, along with a marine company and Carabinieri detachment

Netherlands: marine battalion group and a Chinook helicopter detachment

Denmark/Lithuania: infantry battalion group, incorporating Lithuanian detachment (

Romania: mechanised infantry battalion (attached to Italian mechanised brigade) and a military police company

Czech Republic: military police company (attached to HQ MND(SE) at Basrah), field hospital (attached to HQ MND(SE) at Basrah), and transport and civil affairs personnel

Norway: engineer company (attached to 19 Mechanised Brigade)

Portugal: security company (attached to Italian mechanised brigade)

New Zealand: engineer detachment

MND(SE) was responsible for the southern provinces of Basrah, Maysan, Dhi Qar and Al Muthanna.

The new levels were set at about 14,000 personnel, and most of the Royal Navy and air units were withdrawn. At least in July 2003, air support was reduced to 8 Tornado GR4 bomber/reconnaissance aircraft and 18 helicopters of all types (Chinook, Sea King, Lynx and Gazelle).

On 8 September 2003, the Defence Secretary announced the additional deployment of the 2nd Bn, The Light Infantry, and the 1st Bn, The Royal Green Jackets. On 28 October 2003, the Defence Secretary outlined the roulement³³ of UK forces serving in Iraq, including the deployment of the 2nd Bn, The Parachute Regiment from early November.

³¹ From the Royal Monmouthshire Regiment RE (Militia). For historical reasons, units from the RMonsRE (M) utilize (Militia) rather than (Volunteers) in their titles.

³² 62 CRE (Works) leads on water development.

³³ Roulement is the British term for rotation of units among different stations.

Operation Telic 3

20 Armoured Brigade duly took over from 19 Mechanised Brigade in November 2003. Late the same month, the Defence Secretary set out the plans for 1 Mechanised Brigade to relieve 20 Armoured Brigade in April 2004. He also outlined the substitution of a composite headquarters to take over the leadership of Multi-National Division (South East) from HQ 3 (UK) Division.

On 15 December 2003, the Defence Secretary announced that an additional battalion—1st Bn The Argyll & Sutherland Highlanders - and additional Royal Military Police personnel would be deployed from January to aid the training of Iraqi security forces

Lieutenant General J. C. McColl became the Senior British Military Representative (Iraq) 14 March 2004.

Royal Navy vessels on duty in the Gulf included:

HMS *Norfolk* (Type 23 frigate)
HMS *Kent* (Type 23 frigate)
RFA *Bayleaf* (Fleet Support Tanker)

Land forces deployed in Iraq included:

3 (UK) Division: Major General Graeme Lamb³⁴
Headquarters and 3rd Division Signal Regiment (being replaced by 16 Signals Regiment)³⁵
Elements from:

14 Signal Regiment
30 Signal Regiment (strategic communications)

20 Armoured Brigade:

Headquarters and Signal Squadron (200)
Queen's Royal Hussars [Challenger 2]
1st Bn, The Light Infantry [Warrior infantry fighting vehicles]
1st Bn, The Royal Regiment of Wales [Warrior infantry fighting vehicles]
2nd Bn, The Parachute Regiment
1st Bn, The Royal Scots
1st Bn, The Argyll & Sutherland Highlanders [from January 2004]
26 Regiment RA (The West Midland Gunners) [AS90 SP 155mm Gun]
55 (The Residency) HQ Battery RA
7 (Corunna) Battery RA
16 Battery (Sandham's Company) RA
159 (Colenso) Battery RA
35 Engineer Regiment³⁶
37 Armoured Engineer Squadron RE
77 Armoured Engineer Squadron RE
100 Field Squadron RE (Militia) from RMonsRE(M)
15 Field Support Squadron RE from 38 Engineer Regiment [left Jan 2004]
45 Field Support Squadron RE [replaced 15]
troop from 73 Engineer Regiment (Vol)
troop from 75 Engineer Regiment (Vol)

³⁴ Replaced 28 December 2003 by Major General A. R. E. de C. Stewart.

³⁵ During this period the transition to a composite multi-national headquarters began, so that it would be in place when 3 (UK) Division left in April 2004.

³⁶ 29 Armoured Engineer Squadron RE from this regiment remained in Germany, having been deployed as part of the original Operation TELIC under 28 Engineer Regiment. 44 HQ Squadron RE is not shown in the official RE deployment lists, so only RHQ might have gone.

[20 Armoured Brigade, continued]

Elements from:

The 9th/12th Royal Lancers [CVR(T) armoured reconnaissance vehicles]
Royal Monmouthshire Royal Engineers (Militia)³⁷

National Support Element:

4 General Support Regiment, RLC

22 Field Hospital

Elements from:

33 Engineer Regiment (Explosive Ordnance Disposal)

1 Regiment, RMP

10 Transport Regiment, RLC

11 Explosive Ordnance Disposal Regiment, RLC

17 Port & Maritime Regiment, RLC

23 Pioneer Regiment, RLC

24 Regiment, RLC

5 General Support Medical Regiment, RAMC

Other Units:

Lynx and Gazelle helicopters, Army Air Corps

49 Field Squadron RE (EOD)³⁸

13 (Geographic) Squadron RE

519 STRE (Works) from 62 CRE (Works)

one STRE (Works) (Vol)

As the headquarters for Multi-National Division (South-East), 3 (UK) Division continued to have several national contingents under its command, including:

Italy: a mechanised brigade, along with a marine company and Carabinieri detachment

Netherlands: marine battalion group and a Chinook helicopter detachment

Denmark/Lithuania: infantry battalion group, incorporating Lithuanian detachment (

Romania: mechanised infantry battalion (attached to Italian mechanised brigade) and a military police company

Czech Republic: military police company (attached to HQ MND(SE) at Basrah), field hospital (attached to HQ MND(SE) at Basrah), and transport and civil affairs personnel

Norway: engineer company (attached to 19 Mechanised Brigade)

Portugal: security company (attached to Italian mechanised brigade)

New Zealand: engineer detachment

MND(SE) remained responsible for the southern provinces of Basrah, Maysan, Dhi Qar and Al Muthanna.

UK air component included:

Tornado GR4 bomber/reconnaissance aircraft

VC-10 tanker/transport aircraft (from 10 and 101 Sqns)

Tristar tanker/transport aircraft (from 216 Sqn)

C-17 transport aircraft (from 99 Sqn)

Hercules transport aircraft (from 24, 30, 47 and 70 Sqns)

Nimrod maritime patrol aircraft (from 120, 201 and 206 Sqn)

Chinook helicopters (from 7, 18 and 27 Sqns)

HS-125 transport aircraft (from 32 (The Royal) Squadron)

³⁷ 100 Field Squadron RE (Militia) is part of the Royal Monmouthshire RE (Militia), so it is unclear from the original MOD or RE deployment page source if this refers to 100 Field Squadron RE (Militia) or if other elements of the regiment were present as well.

³⁸ Supplemented with personnel from 101 Engineer Regiment (EOD) (Vol).

Operation Telic 4

1 Mechanised Brigade relieved 20 Armoured Brigade on duty in Iraq in April 2004.

Royal Navy vessels on duty in the Gulf included:

HMS *Grafton* (Type 23 frigate)
HMS *Echo* (Hydrographic Survey vessel)
RFA *Bayleaf* (Fleet Support Tanker)

Land forces deployed in Iraq include:

HQ Multi-National Division (South East): Major General A. R. E. deC. Stewart

16 Signals Regiment³⁹

Elements from:

14 Signal Regiment
30 Signal Regiment (strategic communications)
The London Regiment (TA)

1 Mechanised Brigade:

Headquarters and Signal Squadron (215)

Queen's Royal Lancers [Challenger 2]

1st Bn, Princess of Wales' Royal Regiment [Warrior infantry fighting vehicles]

1st Bn, Royal Welch Fusiliers

1st Bn, Cheshire Regiment

1st Bn, Royal Highland Fusiliers

1st Bn, The Argyll & Sutherland Highlanders

1st Regiment RHA [AS90 SP 155mm Guns]

O HQ Battery (The Rocket Troop) RHA

A Battery (The Chestnut Troop) RHA

B Battery RHA

E Battery RHA

L/N (Néry) Battery (The Eagle Troop) RHA

22 Engineer Regiment⁴⁰

45 Field Support Squadron RE from 35 Engineer Regiment (left May 2004)

61 Field Support Squadron RE from 36 Engineer Regiment [replaced 45]

Elements from:

The Household Cavalry Regiment [CVR(T) armoured reconnaissance vehicles]

The Rifle Volunteers (TA)

National Support Element:

8 Transport Regiment, RLC

207 (Vol) Field Hospital

21 Field Squadron RE (EOD)⁴¹

13 (Geographic) Squadron RE

518 STRE (Works) from 63 CRE (Works)

one STRE (Works) (Vol)

³⁹ 16 Signal Regiment, stationed in Germany, normally provides support to the Allied Command Europe Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC). Its organization in Germany is a headquarters squadron and the 230, 252 and 255 Signal Squadrons.

⁴⁰ The official RE deployment page does not show any of the regiment's assigned units (6 HQ Squadron RE, 3 Armoured Engineer Squadron RE, and 5 Field Squadron RE; it lacks a field support squadron RE) deployed, unless that page was only intended to show attached field support squadrons from other regiments.

⁴¹ Supplemented with personnel from 101 Engineer Regiment (EOD) (Vol).

[National Support Element, continued]

Elements from:

- Royal Military Police
- 6 Supply Regiment, RLC
- 11 Explosive Ordnance Disposal Regiment, RLC
- 24 Regiment, RLC
- 29 Regiment, RLC
- 1 Close Support Medical Regiment, Royal Army Medical Corps
- 104 (V) Regiment, RA⁴²

6 Battalion, REME

Other Units:

Lynx and Gazelle helicopters, Army Air Corps

Elements from:

- 21 Signal Regiment
- 23 Engineer Regiment
- 42 Engineer Regiment (Geographic)
- Military Works Force and Specialist Teams Royal Engineers

Multi-National Division (South-East) comprises other national contingents, including:

- Italy: mechanised brigade, marine company and Carabinieri detachment
- Netherlands: mechanised battalion group and Chinook helicopter detachment
- Denmark/Lithuania: infantry battalion group, incorporating Lithuanian detachment
- Romania: mechanised infantry battalion (attached to Italian mechanised brigade) and Military Police company
- Czech Republic: military police company at Basrah) and field hospital (both attached to HQ MND(SE) at Basrah) and transport and civil affairs personnel
- Norway: Engineer Company (attached to 1 Mechanised Brigade)
- Portugal: security company (attached to Italian mechanised brigade)
- New Zealand: Engineer detachment

MND(SE) remained responsible for the southern provinces of Basrah, Maysan, Dhi Qar and Al Muthanna.

The UK air component deployed included:

- Tornado GR4 attack/reconnaissance aircraft
- VC-10 tanker/transport aircraft (from 10 and 101 Sqns)
- Tristar tanker/transport aircraft (from 216 Sqn)
- C-17 transport aircraft (from 99 Sqn)
- Hercules transport aircraft (from 24, 30, 47 and 70 Sqns)
- Nimrod maritime patrol aircraft (from 120, 201 and 206 Sqns)
- Puma helicopters (33 Sqn)
- Chinook helicopters (from 7, 18 and 27 Sqns)
- HS-125 transport aircraft (from 32 (The Royal) Squadron)

A field squadron of the RAF Regiment remained to provide ground defence for the force.

On 27 May 2004 the MOD announced an increase of “around 360” in troops numbers to bring the UK forces in Iraq to around 8,900 personnel. 1st Bn The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders is scheduled to leave in July 2004, and will be replaced by 1st Bn The Black Watch [in Warrior Infantry Fighting Vehicles]. 1st Bn The Royal Highland Fusiliers, another light infantry battalion, would leave Iraq without replacement. Small numbers of additional Military Police will be sent, and 69 Gurkha Field Squadron QGE (from 36 Engineer Regiment) will be sent out for three months “to work on force protection.”

⁴² This regiment is equipped with the LML [lightweight multiple launcher] Strastreak HVM SAM. Its elements may have been deployed simply as additional personnel rather than with the SAM equipment.

On 17 June 2004, the Defence Secretary announced the additional deployment of 40 Commando Royal Marines to relieve 1st Bn Royal Highland Fusiliers.

CAMPAIGN MEDAL

Announced 23 February 2004. From the MOD announcement,⁴³ “The medal is made of cupro-nickel and bears on the obverse the crowned image of Her Majesty The Queen. The reverse shows an ancient Assyrian Lamassu sculpture above the word Iraq. The one-and-a-quarter inch wide ribbon is a sand colour with three central stripes of black, white and red.”

A clasp “19 MAR-28 APR 2003” is authorized for seven days continuous service in Kuwait or Iraq (Zone One) during the period, or for aircrews who flew two or more sorties into Zone One. Additional personnel qualify for the medal without the clasp, e.g., personnel in Iraq or Kuwait who did not complete seven days continuous service during that period, but with 30 days continuous service between 20 January and 24 March 2003, or 30 days continuous service from 23 April to 10 August 2003.

SOURCES:

There were two principal sources:

Ministry of Defence, Operation Telic, <http://www.operations.mod.uk/telic/forces.htm> and related pages
Ministry of Defence, *Operations in Iraq: First Reflections* (July 2003)

This was supplemented with information from:

British Army web page, <http://www.army.mod.uk/>,

especially <http://www.army.mod.uk/royalengineers/ops/telic/index.htm> [details on RE deployments]

Royal Air Force web page, <http://www.raf.mod.uk/>

RAF Regiment web page, <http://www.rafregiment.co.uk/default.htm>

Royal Navy web page, <http://www.royal-navy.mod.uk/static/content/index.php3?page=174>

Royal Fleet Auxiliary (RFA) web page, <http://www.rfa.mod.uk/rfa/html/frameset.html>

T.F. Mills, United Kingdom land forces web site, <http://regiments.org/milhist/uk/uk.htm>,

especially the page on the 2003 Iraq war, <http://regiments.org/milhist/wars/21stcent/03iraq.htm>

Alex Raditch, “British Army OOB Iraq 2003” (v. 3.0 April 8, 2003) from Orbat.com

⁴³ http://www.operations.mod.uk/telic/campaign_medal.htm.