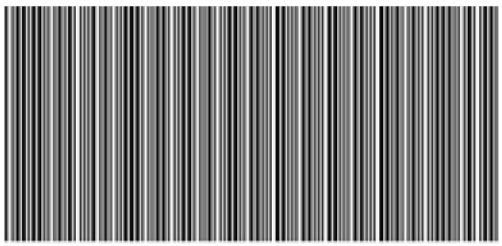
Prepared for OPEN publication in relation to the Independent Inquiry Relating to Afghanistan



RMP-221-0008618-A

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OFFICIAL SENSITIVE

PM(A)/04/02/08

26 May 17

HIPKINS TO Ass to OpNM

PJHQ J3 EUROPE and ASIA OT
Copy to:

PJHQ J9	Ops Dir [redacted] Ops 1	NORTHMOOR Gold
ADOC MP Commitments	DCOM BRITFOR	POLAD COMBRITFOR

OP NORTHMOOR – REQUEST TO EXTEND RMP OF4 CURRENTLY DEPLOYED TO OP TORAL

Issue

1. The requirement to extend an RMP OF4 (Lt Col Hipkins) beyond his current 45 day endorsed Op TORAL surge. This will enable the continued engagement in-theatre to finalise the operational and administrative arrangements to interview an OP NORTHMOOR witness in HKIA.

Recommendation

2. PJHQ is requested to note that:

a. Lt Col Hipkins deployed to Afghanistan on 16 Apr 17[1] and to date has made considerable progress in facilitating arrangements for the interview of an Afghan National, a witness in the OP NORTHMOOR investigation, in a Op RESOLUTE SUPPORT Base;

b. His 45 day endorsed Op TORAL Surge deployment is due to run out on 31 May however with the investigation at a crucial stage there are still final arrangements to be made which Lt Col Hipkins is best placed to sort out given the progress he has made to date through contacts and theatre knowledge; and

PJHQ is requested to agree:

c. To extend the Op TORAL surge from 45 days to 90 days. This will be subject to a review by the 60 day point.

Timing

3. **Urgent**. 45 day endorsed Op TORAL surge deployment is due to end on 31 May 17.

Background

4. Op NORTHMOOR is investigating allegations of unlawful killing of UK Detainees in Afghanistan and, in order to progress these investigations to the satisfaction of the courts, the RMP are required to interview witnesses to UK evidential standards.

5. On 16 April 17 Lt Col Hipkins deployed to Afghanistan on a 45 day Op TORAL endorsed surge and has been embedded in HQ RS. Over the period of his deployment he has built on previous work to facilitate the necessary arrangements to allow an Afghan witness to be interviewed. The UK civilian law firm[2] acting on behalf of the witness, an Afghan National has confirmed that their client has agreed to be interviewed in Afghanistan but will not be available until after Ramadan has finished.

[1] PJHQ FRAGO 085-17-dtd 05 Apr 17.
[2] Leigh Day & Co.

6. The investigation is at a crucial stage, there will be continued engagement with the civilian law firm representing the complainants in this case; who not unsurprisingly will have a number of questions regarding arrangements in theatre. Lt Col Hipkins will be best placed to answer these, given the crucial contacts he has made to date and the effect that he has had. We anticipate correspondence between Op NORTHMOOR and the law firm over the next several weeks, until both parties are in agreement, looking at the period early to mid-July as the tentative period of when the interview(s) could take place.

AH Op NORTHMOOR