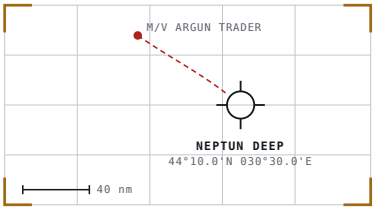
CLASSIFIED — RESTRICTED — REL FRA — EXERCISE — THIS IS A FICTIONAL DOCUMENT

OPERATION PONTIC SHIELD

NEPTUN DEEP

The Long Night — twelve hours, no moon, Romanian EEZ

FIG. 1 · NEPTUN DEEP BLOCK



WGS 84 · M501 SHEET 4-3

D-DAY	DURATION	FORCE	ROE
9 OCT 2026 · 1530Z	12 HOURS	6 FTR · 2 HELO · 1 UAV	PONTIC, ED 4

COMMAND: MODERN OPERATIONS · SCENARIO BY TOTOBIMBO · 2026 — OPORD 26-241 · 091200ZOCT26

OPERATION ORDER 26-241

OPERATION PONTIC SHIELD — PROTECTION OF THE NEPTUN DEEP FIELD, NIGHT 09/10 OCT 26

ORIGINATOR	Statul Major al Forțelor Aeriene / Centrul de Operații Aeriene, București
DATE-TIME GROUP	091200ZOCT26
SERIAL	SMFA/COA/OPO/26-241
ADDRESSEE	Commander, PONTIC SHIELD
INFO	Baza 86 Fetești · Baza 57 Mihail Kogălniceanu · Brigada 1 Rachete Sol-Aer · Détachement MORANE (FRA)
REFERENCES	A. OPLAN PONTIC SHIELD, 240800ZJUL26 B. ROE PONTIC, edition 4, 010001ZSEP26 C. INTSUM 26-282, 091100ZOCT26 D. Met area forecast BSNW, 091100ZOCT26
ANNEXES	A · B · C (appendix 1 only) · D · E · F · G · H · J · K · L
APPENDICES	B/1 Collection overlay · C/1 Operations overlay · E/1 Airspace profile Issued as separate landscape sheets. Register marks on each.
TIME ZONE	ZULU throughout. Local time (EEST, UTC+3) in brackets where given.
MAP REFERENCE	Series M501 sheets 4-2 / 4-3 · WGS 84 · positions in degrees and decimal minutes
COPY	Copy 3 of 11

RECORD OF CHANGES

NO	DTG	CHANGE	AUTHORITY	ENTERED BY
01	091430Z	Annex D revised: ATLAS 90 arrival slipped from 1900Z to 2130Z. Annex H para 4 refers.	COA/A3	Lt MĂRGINEAN

DISTRIBUTION

ADDRESSEE	COPIES	MEANS
Commander, PONTIC SHIELD	1–2	By hand
Baza 86 Fetești — operations	3–4	Secure fax
Baza 57 Mihail Kogălniceanu — operations	5–6	Secure fax
Brigada 1 Rachete Sol-Aer	7	Secure fax
Détachement MORANE, liaison officer	8–9	By hand, REL FRA
COA archive	10–11	Registry

> This order is issued under national command. It is **not** a NATO tasking and confers no Alliance status on any action taken under it. Reference B applies in full and is not modified by this order.

1. SITUATION

a. Enemy forces

(NR) Reference C refers and is reproduced at Annex B. In summary: two Geran-2 launch elements are assessed active, at Cape Chauda in Crimea and in the Kuban hinterland of Krasnodar Krai, with a Geran-3 element in western Crimea. Their reach covers the Danube delta and the whole Romanian seaboard.

(NR) At 091410Z the container vessel M/V ARGUN TRADER (IMO 9276541, Cameroon flag) ceased AIS transmission 46 nm south-east of Snake Island. She is assessed to be operating in support of the Black Sea Fleet [C3] and to be carrying unmanned surface vessels in a number that cannot be established [D4].

(NR) The fighter regiment at Saky holds Su-30SM2 at readiness. A Borisoglebsk-2 electronic warfare complex is reported at Cape Tarkhankut and is capable of denying GNSS across the operating area without warning [B2].

b. Friendly forces

(NR) Task organisation at Annex A. Six fighters, two medium helicopters, one unmanned ISR aircraft and one inbound transport. Ground-based air defence is held by Brigada 1 Rachete Sol-Aer and is not under the tactical command of PONTIC SHIELD; the Patriot battery at Capu Midia engages autonomously within its own engagement zone.

(NR) The French MORANE detachment operates under national French command for administrative purposes and under PONTIC SHIELD for tasking. Release of its aircraft for any engagement of a manned platform requires reference to the French liaison officer. This constraint has not been tested and should not be tested tonight.

c. Attachments and detachments

(NR) ATLAS 90 (A.400M, FRA) attaches to Baza 86 Fetești on arrival, expected 092130Z, for the duration of the resupply task only. See Record of Changes, serial 01.

d. Civil considerations

(NR) The Neptun Deep field carries **four hundred and twelve personnel** in the final fitting-out phase. There is no production to protect and no hydrocarbon inventory aboard. The supply vessel M/V SEA HORIZON lies alongside with partial evacuation capacity; she cannot lift the complement in one movement.

(NR) Merchant traffic in the operating area is dense and legitimate. Four to six hulls will be within the block at any time. Identification is the commander's responsibility and no error in it will be treated as a technical matter.

2. MISSION

(NR) **PONTIC SHIELD protects the Neptun Deep field and its personnel and defends national airspace against autonomous weapon incursion, from 091530Z to 100330Z, in order that the Romanian state retains freedom of action in its exclusive economic zone without becoming a belligerent.**

(NR) **PONTIC SHIELD protects the Neptun Deep field and its personnel and defends national airspace against autonomous weapon incursion, from 091530Z to 100330Z, in order that the Romanian state retains freedom of action in its exclusive economic zone without becoming a belligerent.**

3. EXECUTION

a. Commander's intent

(NR) You have six fighters for twelve hours and two of them see in the dark. That is the whole of the problem and no allocation you make tonight will be free.

(NR) **Purpose.** The field must still be standing at dawn and its people must still be alive. Everything else in this order is subordinate to that sentence.

(NR) **Method.** Hold the northern axis from first light out, because an aircraft on station is the surveillance system and Medgidia is not. Keep eyes over the block before anything is released into the water, not after it is reported. Meet surface craft with the gun, far out, and accept that the aircraft which comes down to shoot has stopped seeing.

(NR) **End state.** The field intact and manned. No Romanian aircraft lost. No border crossed in either direction. The ARGUN TRADER tracked, photographed and left alone. By morning this remains a Romanian matter and not an Alliance one.

(NR) I do not expect you to intercept everything and the staff will not judge you on a leaker. The easy answer is sitting at Capu Midia with a firing solution already available. Taking it ends the war you are here to avoid. Do not take it.

b. Concept of operations

(NR) The operation is conducted in one phase, defensive throughout, on two axes which compete for the same six aircraft.

(NR) **Northern axis.** A barrier patrol on the Sulina approach, established from H-hour, provides the low-level early warning that ground radar cannot. Weapons transiting Ukrainian territory are not engageable and will not be engaged. They become engageable at the national border and not before.

(NR) **Block axis.** A surface patrol over the Neptun Deep field, weighted to the hours of full darkness, detects and destroys unmanned surface craft as far from the field as the geometry allows. The scarce sensor is the OSF-IR of the MORANE detachment; the scarce weapon is nobody's, because both fighter types carry the same five gun passes.

(NR) **Weather is the governing factor and not the enemy.** Sea state 5 is forecast from about 092030Z to 092330Z. It grounds the IAR-330 and it grounds the unmanned craft equally. The evacuation decision must be taken before that window closes or it cannot be taken at all. Annex H refers.

c. Tasks to subordinate elements

ELEMENT	TASK
TIGRU flight	Establish and sustain the northern barrier patrol on station CAP NORTH from 091530Z. Identify and, on release of the ROE, destroy autonomous weapons entering national airspace on the delta axis. Be prepared to reinforce the block axis from 092300Z.
RAPACE flight	Provide the surveillance picture over the Neptun Deep block during hours of darkness. Priority of effort to detection and classification of surface contacts, not to interception on the northern axis. Be prepared to conduct gun engagement of autonomous surface craft.
VULTUR flight	Held at 30 minutes' readiness for evacuation of Neptun Deep. **Both aircraft are required** for the task and neither is to be committed to any other tasking without reference to this headquarters.
CORB 31	Maintain coastal ISR orbit. Priority to PIR 1 and PIR 2 (Annex B). Keep west of 030°00'E unless specifically released.
Brigada 1	Engage autonomous weapons entering the Patriot engagement zone under existing national authority. **The NSM battery at Capu Midia does not fire.**

d. Coordinating instructions

1. (NR) **H-hour is 091530Z** (1830 local). End of mission 100330Z (0630 local), or on order.
2. (NR) **Release of the rules of engagement against autonomous vehicles is the commander's own act.** Until it is made, no aircraft of this force will open fire and no weapon will be offered for release. It is recorded as a command decision with a time against it. Annex G refers.

3. (NR) **Coordination altitude for the block is FL100.** Above it, surveillance. Below it, surface engagement. An aircraft cannot do both at the same time and the commander is to decide which he is buying. Annex E and Appendix 1 to Annex E refer.
4. (NR) **Gun engagement of a surface craft is flown below 1000 ft AGL** in the terminal phase. Above roughly 3000 ft the weapon will not be offered against a target five metres long. Annex F, para 6.
5. (NR) Evacuation of Neptun Deep requires both IAR-330 serviceable and sea state 4 or below. The authority to order it is delegated to the commander PONTIC SHIELD. **It cannot be reversed.**
6. (NR) No-cross lines: the Romanian/Ukrainian frontier and the outer limit of Russian territorial waters, 12 nm from the Crimean coast. These are absolute and are not subject to hot pursuit.
7. (NR) Priority Intelligence Requirements at Annex B para 5, plotted at Appendix 1 to Annex B. Reporting of PIR answers is immediate and direct to COA, in clear if necessary.

4. SERVICE SUPPORT

a. Logistics

(NR) Fuel and ordnance at Baza 86 Fetești are sufficient for the period without resupply. Reconfiguration between air-to-air and strike loadouts is available on the ground at Fetești only, and consumes a minimum of forty minutes per aircraft. The base magazine holds the stores for the F-16 Sniper XR fits from H-hour (three pods, GBU-12 and Mk82).

(NR) ATLAS 90 delivers MORANE detachment stores (MICA EM and IR NG, Meteor, 1,250 l drop tanks, 30 mm), expected 092130Z. Rafale on the ground at Fetești may be re-armed or reconfigured thereafter. This does not create a capability that did not exist at H-hour; it restores one.

b. Medical

(NR) Role 1 at both bases. Casualties evacuated from Neptun Deep are received at Constanța. The platform medical officer holds for four hours unsupported.

c. Personnel recovery

(NR) Annex K refers. There is no dedicated combat recovery asset on station tonight. Recovery of a crew in the water east of 030°E is a maritime task and will take hours, not minutes.

5. COMMAND AND SIGNAL

a. Command

(NR) Commander PONTIC SHIELD exercises tactical command of all air assets listed at Annex A. Operational command is retained by COA. Succession of command: Commander PONTIC SHIELD; Senior Duty Officer COA; Commander Baza 86.

(NR) **This operation is conducted under national command and outside the NATO chain.** No report of this operation is made to Alliance channels during execution.

b. Signal

(NR) Annex J refers. Control and reporting centre is MEDGIDIA, callsign PARAPET. Emissions control is not imposed; the commander may impose it locally and is reminded that the platform's own radar is the only persistent sensor over the block.

> **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**
>
> (NR) Acknowledge receipt of this order and of Annexes A to L by immediate signal to COA, quoting serial SMFA/COA/OPO/26-241.

BĂLAN, Cristian
General de flotilă aeriană
Comandant, Centrul de Operații Aeriene

Authentication. ANDREI, D. — Maior — A3 Plans, COA. Original signed copy held in COA registry.

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A

Task Organisation

ANNEX A TO OPORD 26-241 · DTG 091200ZOCT26 · SMFA/COA/OPO/26-241

1. AIR — BAZA 86 FETEȘTI (44°23'N 027°50'E)

CALLSIGN	TYPE	QTY	READINESS	REMARKS
TIGRU 01–02	F-16AM Falcon MLU	2	5 min	M61A1 20 mm, 515 rounds — five bursts
TIGRU 03–04	F-16AM Falcon MLU	2	15 min	As above
TIGRU 05	F-16BM Falcon MLU	1	60 min	Two-seat. Held in reserve
RAPACE 11–12	Rafale C (FRA)	2	15 min	Détachement MORANE. Organic OSF-IR. GIAT 30 mm, 125 rounds — five bursts
ATLAS 90	A.400M Atlas (FRA)	1	—	Inbound Istres. Expected 092130Z. Transport only

2. AIR — BAZA 57 MIHAIL KOGĂLNICEANU (44°22'N 028°29'E)

CALLSIGN	TYPE	QTY	READINESS	REMARKS
VULTUR 21–22	IAR-330M Puma	2	30 min	BrightNite + NVG. **Both required for evacuation task**. Deck limit sea state 4
CORB 31	Bayraktar TB2 UCAV	1	airborne	Coastal orbit. Slow, no self-protection

3. GROUND-BASED AIR DEFENCE AND SURVEILLANCE — BRIGADA 1 RACHETE SOL-AER

> Under national air defence command. **Not** under tactical command of PONTIC SHIELD — listed for awareness of coverage, not for tasking.

SYSTEM	LOCATION	POSITION	COVERAGE REMARK
SAM Bty Patriot (PAC-2 GEM+ / PAC-3 MSE)	Capu Midia range	44°21.0'N 028°40.5'E	Engagement zone 60 nm. **Neptun Deep lies 79 nm distant and is not covered.** Constanța is covered; Tulcea at the edge
Radar AN/FPS-117	Medgidia	44°15.0'N 028°16.2'E	Horizon-limited to some 30 nm against a target at 60 m. No classification at that range
SAM Bty I-HAWK	Fetești	44°24.0'N 027°52.2'E	Airfield defence
SAM Plt KP-SAM Chiron ×3	Kogălniceanu	44°21.6'N 028°30.0'E	Very short range, point defence
SSM Bty Naval Strike Missile	Capu Midia	44°21.6'N 028°41.7'E	**DOES NOT FIRE.** Listed because it is in range and will be suggested to you

4. PROTECTED ASSETS

ASSET	POSITION	REMARK
NEPTUN DEEP production platform	44°10.0'N 030°30.0'E	Class B structure, 70,000 t. **412 personnel.** Weapons tight — the 12.7 mm mount is not to be used
M/V SEA HORIZON	44°09.0'N 030°31.2'E	Offshore supply vessel alongside. Partial lift only

Not available tonight: no air-to-air refuelling, no airborne early warning, no maritime patrol aircraft, no surface combatant east of 030°E. Requests have been submitted and are not expected to be met within the period.

B

Intelligence

ANNEX B TO OPORD 26-241 · DTG 091200ZOCT26 · ORIGINATOR COA/A2

SOURCE GRADING

All assessments in this annex are graded on the standard scale. Source reliability **A** reliable to **F** cannot be judged; information credibility **1** confirmed to **6** cannot be judged. A grading of C3 means a fairly reliable source reporting information that is possibly true. **Nothing in this annex is graded A1.**

1. SUMMARY OF THE ENEMY SITUATION

(NR) The pattern of the last eleven weeks is thirty-six incursions of national airspace by autonomous weapons, three of them destroyed by fighters in a single seventy-two hour period. On 20 August a Romanian F-16 destroyed with cannon fire an explosive-laden surface craft a few hundred metres from the Neptun Deep field. That is the precedent and it is the only one A1.

(NR) The departure of M/V ARGUN TRADER from Novorossiysk on 6 October, her track since, and the cessation of her AIS at 091410Z are assessed together as preparation for a surface action against the field on the night of 09/10 October C3.

2. ENEMY ORDER OF BATTLE, ASSESSED

ELEMENT	LOCATION	ASSESSMENT	GRADING
SSM element, Geran-2	45°02.3'N 035°54.7'E Cape Chauda, Crimea	Active. Bears on the Danube delta. Transit of some four and a half hours against tonight's wind	B2
SSM element, Geran-2	45°03.0'N 037°48.0'E Kuban, Krasnodar Krai	Active. Bears on Constanța. Longer leg, approaching six hours	B2
SSM element, Geran-3	45°09.0'N 035°45.0'E western Crimea	Jet variant. Transit under two hours. Employment not observed on this axis to date	C3
Fighter regiment, Su-30SM2	Saky-Novofedorivka	Held at readiness. A deterrent patrol on the EEZ boundary is expected in the early hours. It is not expected to cross	C2
EW complex, Borisoglebsk-2	45°21.0'N 032°30.0'E Cape Tarkhankut	Capable of area GNSS denial. Assume it will be used, and at the least convenient moment	B2
M/V ARGUN TRADER	45°00'N 030°50'E at 091410Z	Mother ship. Civilian registry, civilian crew, international waters. **Not engageable**	C3

3. THE SURFACE CRAFT

(NR) Five and a half metres by one and a half; explosive-laden; thirty knots; sitting at wave height. Radar return is marginal against sea clutter and there is no infrared signature worth the name until close. Structural tolerance is negligible: **one gun pass destroys one craft**. A missile does the same at four times the cost and at the expense of the air picture.

(NR) **They cannot operate above sea state 4.** This is a limit of the hull and not a preference. Annex H is therefore an intelligence document as much as a meteorological one.

(NR) Number carried: **between three and eight** D4, from hull volume and the single comparable event. This cell assesses five. *The maritime component does not concur and retains the full range.*

4. ENEMY COURSES OF ACTION

(NR) **Most likely.** Release of surface craft outside visual and radar detection range of the field, in more than one group, timed against the weather window rather than against the clock; concurrent employment of autonomous air weapons on the delta and Constanța axes to draw fighters north and west [C2].

(NR) **Most dangerous.** The full carried number released in a single group after the trough clears, arriving compressed, with GNSS denied and no moon [D3]. Two aircraft on station would not be enough. This cell cannot exclude it and cannot support it.

5. PRIORITY INTELLIGENCE REQUIREMENTS

> A PIR is a question the commander needs answered in order to decide something. Report answers immediately and directly, in clear if necessary. Do not wait to complete a picture.

PIR	QUESTION	DECISION IT INFORMS	NAI
PIR 1	Has ARGUN TRADER put craft into the water, and how many?	Weight of effort between the two axes; timing of the evacuation decision	01
PIR 2	Are surface contacts closing the field? On what bearing and at what speed?	Whether to commit the block patrol low, and how early	01, 02
PIR 3	Is the delta axis being used tonight, and by how many weapons?	Whether the northern barrier is held or released to the block	03
PIR 4	Does the Russian side intend to contest airspace over the EEZ with manned aircraft?	Posture of the fighter force; release of MORANE aircraft	04
PIR 5	Is GNSS being denied, over what area, and from when?	Weapon employment; navigation method for the IAR-330 if the evacuation is ordered	area

6. NAMED AREAS OF INTEREST

NAI	DESCRIPTION	BOUNDARIES	COLLECTOR
NAI 01	Assessed release area. The box in which the staff believes craft could be put into the water, given track and sea state. **It is an area, not a count.**	44°30'N–45°00'N 030°15'E–031°00'E	CORB 31 primary; RAPACE on transit
NAI 02	Inner approach to the field. Any surface contact here is closing and is assumed hostile once the ROE are released.	15 nm ring on 44°10'N 030°30'E	Block patrol
NAI 03	Delta approach corridor. Low-level air entry into national airspace from the north-east.	44°45'N–45°15'N 029°15'E–030°15'E	CAP NORTH; PARAPET
NAI 04	EEZ boundary orbit area. Manned activity here is the indicator for PIR 4.	44°30'N–44°45'N 031°15'E–031°45'E	CAP NORTH radar; PARAPET

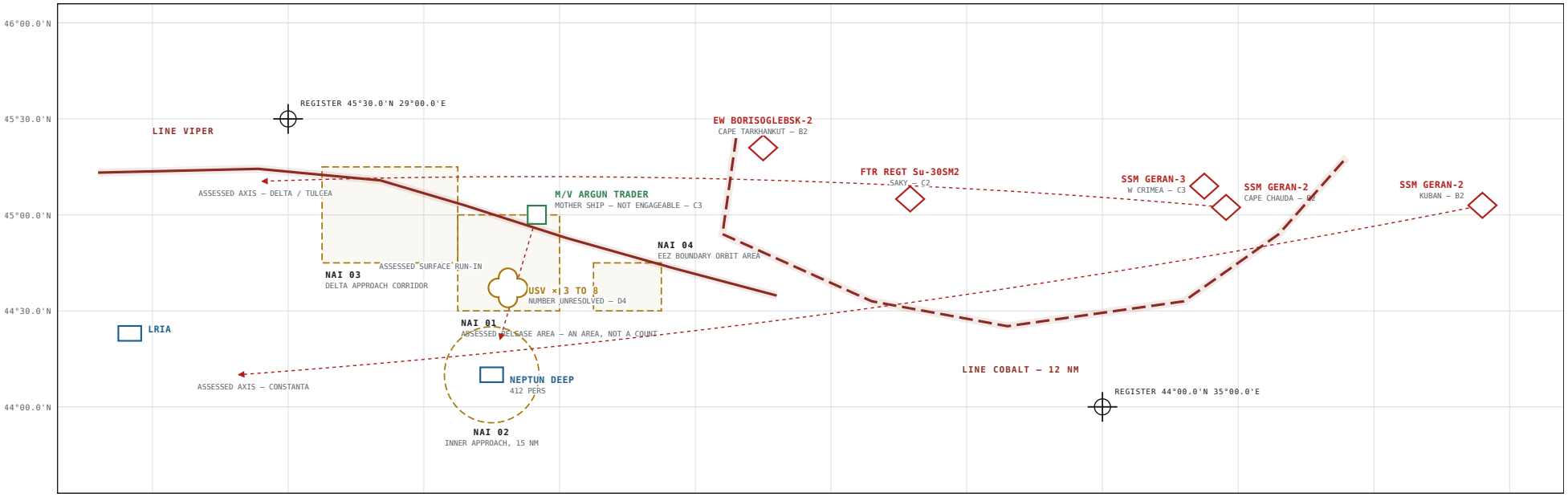
7. COUNTER-INTELLIGENCE AND INFORMATION

(NR) Attribution of tonight's events will be contested publicly whatever happens. Photographic and video evidence of the ARGUN TRADER, of any craft recovered, and of any engagement is of national value. **This does not authorise closing on her to obtain it.**

8. INTELLIGENCE GAPS

- Number of craft carried. Unresolved and likely to remain so until they are in the water.
- Whether the Geran-3 element is committed on this axis. No precedent.
- Whether the release of craft is remotely commanded or pre-programmed. Affects nothing tonight; affects everything next month.
- Imagery of the deck of ARGUN TRADER after 060000Z. Requested. Not received.

ANNEX B TO OPORD 26-241 — PAGE B-2 OF B-2



APPENDIX 1 TO ANNEX B

MAP SERIES	M501 SHEETS 4-2 / 4-3 / 5-1
SCALE	1:1 800 000 AT 45°N
DATUM	WGS 84 · DEG AND DEC MIN
DTG	091200ZOCT26
ORIGINATOR	COA / A2
SHEET	1 OF 1

COLLECTION OVERLAY

NAMED AREAS OF INTEREST AND ASSESSED ENEMY DISPOSITION · ALL PLACEMENTS ARE ASSESSMENTS

- NAMED AREA OF INTEREST
- ASSESSED AXIS OF THREAT
- NO-CROSS LINE
- SHEET LIMIT

APP-6 FRAME = AFFILIATION

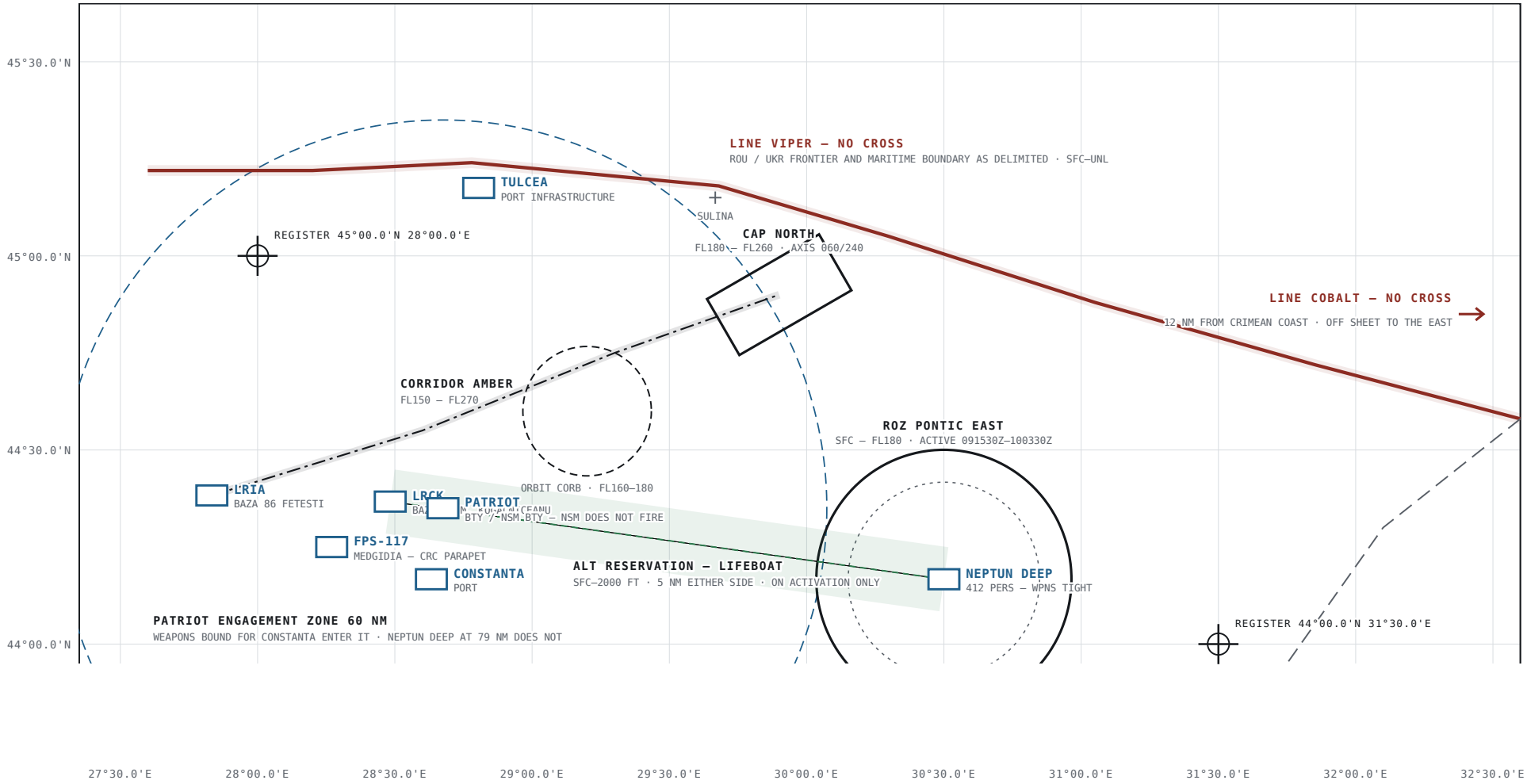
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- HOSTILE
- NEUTRAL
- UNKNOWN

GRADING · SOURCE A-F, INFORMATION 1-6 · SEE ANNEX B

GN MN 6°E 2026

0 — 50 — 100 NAUTICAL MILES

GEOGRAPHY IS NOT REPRODUCED. NOTHING ON THIS SHEET IS AN OBSERVATION EXCEPT THE POSITION OF ARGUN TRADER AT 091410Z.



APPENDIX 1 TO ANNEX C

MAP SERIES	M501 SHEETS 4-2 / 4-3
SCALE	1:1 000 000 AT 45°N
DATUM	WGS 84 · DEG AND DEC MIN
DTG	091200ZOCT26
ORIGINATOR	COA / A3 PLANS
SHEET	1 OF 1

OPERATIONS OVERLAY

OPORD 26-241 · OPERATION PONTIC SHIELD · NIGHT 09/10 OCT 26

- CONTROL MEASURE, ACTIVE
- ORBIT OR ADVISORY TRACK
- NO-CROSS LINE – ABSOLUTE
- GBAD ENGAGEMENT ZONE
- ALTITUDE RESERVATION, ON ACTIVATION

APP-6 FRAME = AFFILIATION

- FRIENDLY
- HOSTILE
- NEUTRAL
- UNKNOWN

GN MN 6°E 2026

0 25 50 NAUTICAL MILES

GEOGRAPHY IS NOT REPRODUCED. LAY THIS SHEET ON THE MAP AND REGISTER ON THE MARKS. GRATICULE AT 30 MINUTES.

D

Air Tasking Order — extract

ANNEX D TO OPORD 26-241 · ATO DAY ROMEO · 091530Z–100330Z

(NR) This is an **air defence** tasking order. It allocates aircraft, alert states and airspace; it does not allocate the night. Vulnerability periods are indicative and the commander re-tasks within the allocation without reference to this headquarters.

1. MISSION LINES

MSN	CALLSIGN	TYPE / CONFIG	VUL	STATION	TASK
4101	TIGRU 01	F-16AM — AMRAAM, 2×370 gal	1530Z–1930Z	CAP NORTH	DCA barrier, delta axis
4102	TIGRU 02	F-16AM — AMRAAM, 2×370 gal	1530Z–1930Z	CAP NORTH	DCA barrier, delta axis
4103	TIGRU 03	F-16AM — commander's option	on call	—	Alert 15. Relief or reinforcement
4104	TIGRU 04	F-16AM — commander's option	on call	—	Alert 15. Relief or reinforcement
4105	TIGRU 05	F-16BM — commander's option	on call	—	Alert 60. Reserve
4211	RAPACE 11	Rafale C — MICA NG, 3×1250 l	on call	ROZ PONTIC EAST	Surface surveillance and engagement, block axis
4212	RAPACE 12	Rafale C — MICA NG, 3×1250 l	on call	ROZ PONTIC EAST	Surface surveillance and engagement, block axis
4301	VULTUR 21	IAR-330M — SAR/evac fit	alert 30	MK 57	Evacuation, on order. **Pair task**
4302	VULTUR 22	IAR-330M — SAR/evac fit	alert 30	MK 57	Evacuation, on order. **Pair task**
4401	CORB 31	TB2 — EO/IR	airborne	44°36'N 029°12'E	ISR. PIR 1 and PIR 2
9001	ATLAS 90	A.400M — logistics	ETA 2130Z	LRIA	MORANE resupply (MICA, Meteor, 30 mm). Transit LRIA direct, no escort

2. IDENTIFICATION

CALLSIGN	MODE 1	MODE 2	MODE 3/A
TIGRU 01–05	31	4101–4105	7301
RAPACE 11–12	42	4211–4212	7302
VULTUR 21–22	43	4301–4302	7303
CORB 31	44	4401	7304

Mode 4/5 in accordance with the period crypto. Squawk 7700 on emergency, 7600 on radio failure. **Civil traffic in the block will squawk conspicuity codes and must not be treated as identified friendly on that basis alone.**

3. TANKER

(NR) **None allocated.** A request for KC-135 support from the multinational unit at Constanța was declined at 090930Z for competing tasking. Plan fuel on the assumption that what is on the aircraft at take-off is all of it.

E

Airspace Control Order — extract

ANNEX E TO OPORD 26-241 · ACO DAY ROMEO · EFFECTIVE 091500Z

1. AIRSPACE CONTROL MEANS

DESIGNATOR	TYPE	GEOMETRY	VERTICAL	REMARKS
CAP NORTH	Combat air patrol station	Centre 44°54'N 029°54'E 20 nm × 10 nm, axis 060/240	FL180–FL260	Barrier on the Sulina approach. Height is an advantage here: the look-down geometry against a target at 60 m is what makes the station worth holding
ROZ PONTIC EAST	Restricted operations zone	20 nm radius on 44°10'N 030°30'E	SFC–FL180	The block. Activated 091530Z to 100330Z. Entry by PONTIC SHIELD aircraft only
CORRIDOR AMBER	Transit corridor	Fetești – 44°33'N 028°36'E – 44°45'N 029°18'E – CAP NORTH	FL150–FL270	Outbound and recovery. Clear of the Patriot engagement zone
ORBIT CORB	UA orbit	44°36'N 029°12'E, 10 nm	FL160–FL180	Deconflicted by altitude from all manned traffic
LINE VIPER	No-cross line	Romanian / Ukrainian frontier including the Chilia branch and Snake Island	SFC–UNL	**ABSOLUTE.** Not subject to hot pursuit. A weapon transiting north of this line is not yours
LINE COBALT	No-cross line	12 nm from the Crimean coast	SFC–UNL	**ABSOLUTE.** Russian territorial waters
EEZ BOUNDARY	Advisory line	Romanian EEZ outer limit	–	Not a no-cross line. Manned activity beyond it is reportable under PIR 4

2. COORDINATION ALTITUDE

FL100 WITHIN ROZ PONTIC EAST

(NR) **Above FL100** — surveillance. Sensor geometry against small surface contacts is workable and the aircraft holds the picture for the force.

(NR) **Below FL100** — surface engagement. The aircraft is committed, its sensor horizon collapses, and it contributes nothing to the picture until it climbs again.

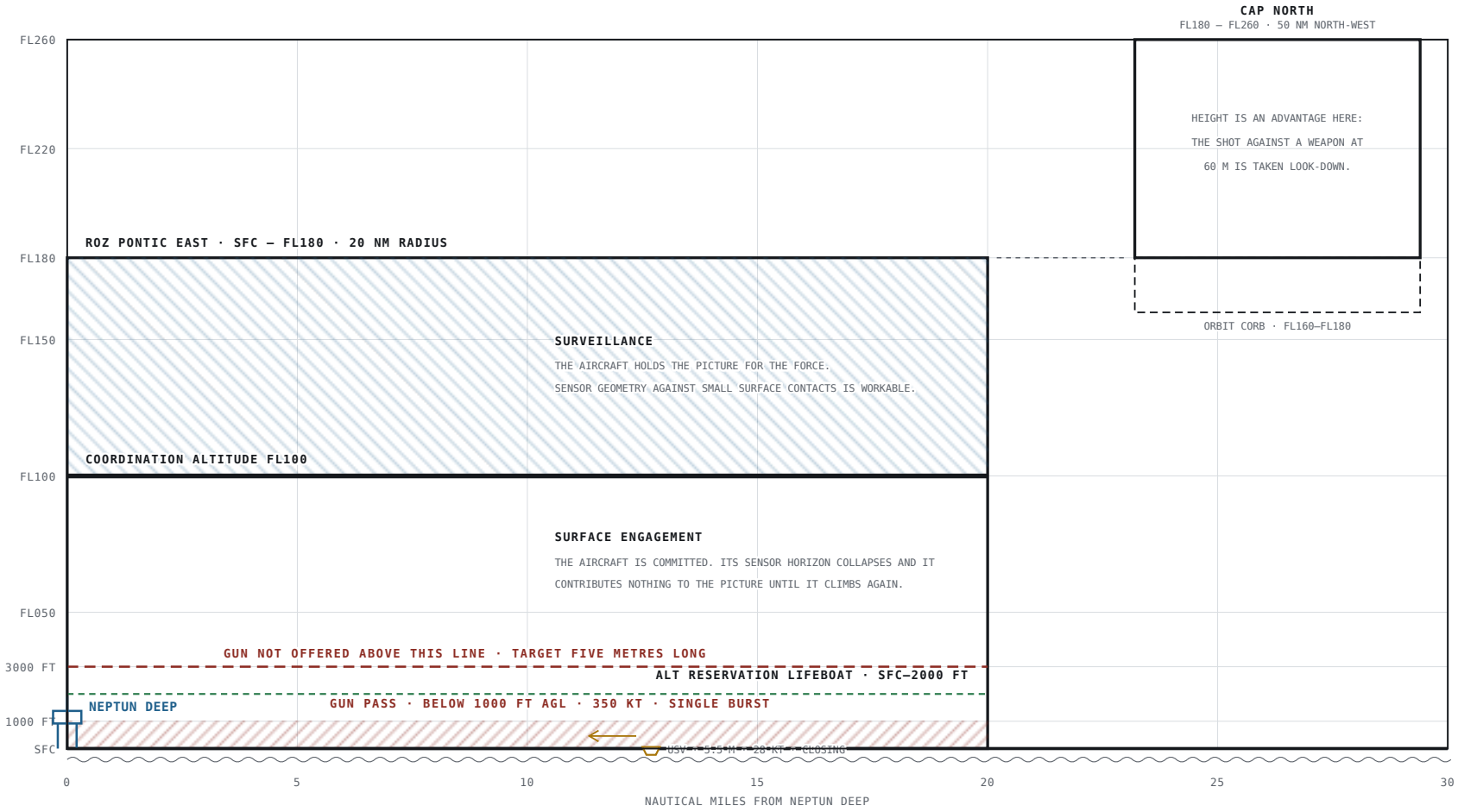
(NR) This is a **trade and not a procedure**. The commander is to decide each time which of the two he is buying, and with how many aircraft. Holding two aircraft high and none low is a decision; so is the reverse.

3. GROUND-BASED AIR DEFENCE COORDINATION

(NR) The Patriot engagement zone extends 60 nm from 44°21.0'N 028°40.5'E. **CORRIDOR AMBER is routed clear of it.** Aircraft operating inside the zone must be squawking correctly and in contact with PARAPET. Weapons transiting toward Constanța enter the zone and are the battery's business; the commander is not to commit fighters to them merely because they are visible.

4. ALTITUDE RESERVATION FOR THE EVACUATION TASK

(NR) On activation, the IAR-330 route Kogălniceanu — 44°10'N 030°30'E is reserved **SFC–2000 ft**, five nm either side of track, and all other traffic is excluded from it. Activation is by voice on PARAPET with the codeword at Annex J.



APPENDIX 1 TO ANNEX E	
PROJECTION	VERTICAL PROFILE, NOT TO HORIZONTAL SCALE
VERTICAL DATUM	FLIGHT LEVELS ON 1013.2 HPA
DTG	091200ZOCT26
ORIGINATOR	COA / A3 AIRSPACE
SHEET	1 OF 1

AIRSPACE PROFILE

THE COORDINATION ALTITUDE, SEEN IN SECTION · OPORD 26-241

Above FL100 the aircraft sees and cannot shoot. Below it the aircraft shoots and cannot see. **This is a trade and not a procedure.** The commander decides each time which of the two he is buying, and with how many aircraft. Holding two aircraft high and none low is a decision; so is the reverse.

HORIZONTAL AXIS IS RANGE FROM THE FIELD. CAP NORTH IS SHOWN FOR VERTICAL COMPARISON ONLY AND LIES 50 NM TO THE NORTH-WEST.

F

Special Instructions

ANNEX F TO OPORD 26-241 · SPINS EDITION 11 · EXTRACT FOR ATO DAY ROMEO

1. APPLICABILITY

(NR) These instructions are supplementary to reference B and do not modify it. Where this annex and the rules of engagement appear to conflict, **the rules of engagement govern** and the conflict is reported.

2. IDENTIFICATION CRITERIA — AIR

(NR) A contact may be declared an autonomous air weapon on the following, and on no fewer than two of them together:

1. Constant heading and speed for more than four minutes, with no response to interrogation.
2. Indicated airspeed between 50 and 120 kt at an altitude below 500 ft.
3. Radar cross-section consistent with a target of two metres or less.
4. Track origin consistent with a launch bearing reported by PARAPET.

(NR) **A contact meeting these criteria north of LINE VIPER is still not engageable.** Identification and authority are different questions.

3. IDENTIFICATION CRITERIA — SURFACE

1. Length under ten metres by visual or infrared estimate.
2. Speed over twenty knots on a steady closing bearing to the field.
3. No AIS transmission and no response on channel 16.
4. No navigation lights.

(NR) Fishing craft in this area do operate without AIS and occasionally without lights. **Speed and closing geometry are the discriminators**, not darkness alone.

4. ENGAGEMENT PROCEDURE — AUTONOMOUS AIR WEAPON

1. Report to PARAPET: position, heading, speed, altitude, identification basis.
2. Confirm the target is south of LINE VIPER and inside national airspace.
3. Confirm ROE serial 1 has been released (Annex G).
4. Engage at the commander's discretion. Missile employment is authorised on this axis.
5. Report result, expenditure and remaining state.

5. ENGAGEMENT PROCEDURE — AUTONOMOUS SURFACE CRAFT

1. Classify. A track is not a classification and the infrared image is the standard.
2. Report to PARAPET and to any other aircraft in ROZ PONTIC EAST.
3. **Engage with the gun.** Air-to-air missile employment against a surface target is authorised but is a last resort, is reported by name, and is reviewed after the event.
4. Engage as far from the field as the geometry allows. A craft destroyed at twenty miles has been destroyed once; a craft destroyed at two miles may have to be destroyed again.
5. Do not strafe toward the platform. Run-in axis to be offset a minimum of 30° from any bearing that carries the burst onto the structure.

6. GUN EMPLOYMENT — HEIGHT AND GEOMETRY

(NR) **The gun pass is flown low.** Against a target five metres long the weapon will not be offered above approximately 3000 ft, and the terminal phase is flown below 1000 ft AGL. Recommended: run-in at 350 kt, wings level, single burst, break away from the structure.

(NR) **An aircraft that has come down to gun has stopped holding the picture.** Do not bring the last high aircraft down. If only one aircraft is on station, the commander is choosing between seeing and shooting, and he is to make that choice deliberately.

(NR) Five bursts are carried. This is true of both aircraft types; the difference in rounds carried does not translate into a difference in passes available.

7. EMERGENCY AND SAFETY

- Ejection east of 030°E: sea temperature 17°C, survival time in an immersion suit measured in hours, without one in tens of minutes. Annex K.
- GNSS denial: revert to inertial and TACAN. Expect position error to accumulate. The platform is a reliable radar fix and a poor navigation aid.
- Bird activity on the delta approach is heavy at last light and at first light. Below 1000 ft this is a real hazard and not a formality.
- Taxiway BRAVO at Fetești is closed for resurfacing between the intersections with ALPHA and CHARLIE. NOTAM A1147/26 refers.

ANNEX F TO OPORD 26-241 — PAGE F-2 OF F-2

G

Rules of Engagement — aide-memoire

ANNEX G TO OPORD 26-241 · EXTRACT OF REFERENCE B, ROE PONTIC EDITION 4

(NR) This card is an extract and an aid to memory. **It does not replace reference B**, which is held at both operations rooms. Where the card is silent, the reference governs. Where the card and the reference differ, the reference governs and the discrepancy is reported to COA within the period.

ROE PONTIC — EDITION 4 — VALID 091530Z TO 100330Z — CARRY THIS CARD	
SERIAL 1	**Weapons free against autonomous vehicles**, airborne and surface, positively identified as such, inside the Romanian EEZ. **Effective only on release by Commander PONTIC SHIELD.** Until release, no aircraft of this force opens fire for any reason short of serial 2.
SERIAL 2	**Self-defence is never denied.** Demonstrated hostile act or demonstrated hostile intent against your aircraft may be answered with proportionate force at any time, released or not. You will be asked to demonstrate it afterwards.
SERIAL 3	**Manned aircraft are not to be engaged** except under serial 2. A radar lock is not a hostile act. A close pass is not a hostile act. Being uncomfortable is not a hostile act.
SERIAL 4	**M/V ARGUN TRADER is not to be engaged, boarded or fired across.** She is a civilian hull in international waters and there is no legal basis absent a demonstrated hostile act by her. Photograph her. Track her. Leave her.
SERIAL 5	**The Naval Strike Missile battery at Capu Midia does not fire.** No exception is delegated and none will be granted by voice.
SERIAL 6	**LINE VIPER and LINE COBALT are not to be crossed** by any aircraft of this force, at any altitude, for any reason, including pursuit of a weapon already engaged.
SERIAL 7	Destruction of an autonomous surface craft **by gun is the reference response**. Missile employment against a surface target is authorised, reported by name, and reviewed.
SERIAL 8	Warning shots are **not** authorised against autonomous vehicles. There is nobody aboard to warn.

RELEASE OF SERIAL 1

(NR) Release is a command decision, is made by the commander alone, and is recorded with a time against it. It is not delegated downward and it is not implied by the presence of a target. A commander who has not released serial 1 will find that his aircraft cannot open fire and that the weapon is not offered to him; this is the system working as intended and not a fault.

(NR) Release does not modify any other serial. In particular it does not touch serials 3, 4, 5 or 6, which remain in force for the whole period.

REPORTING

(NR) Every weapon release is reported to PARAPET with time, position, target description and identification basis. Every engagement of a target later assessed as civilian is reported immediately by any means to COA, in clear, and the aircraft is recovered.

ANNEX G TO OPORD 26-241 — PAGE G-1 OF G-1

H

Meteorological and environmental forecast

ANNEX H TO OPORD 26-241 · ORIGINATOR CMN / BSNW · ISSUED 091100ZOCT26

BOTTOM LINE

(NR) Sea state rises to **5** from about 2030Z, holds until about 2330Z and eases to 3 for the rest of the night. **Sea state 5 grounds the IAR-330 and it stops the unmanned craft equally.** The evacuation decision has a weather window and not a tactical one.

1. AREA FORECAST — NORTH-WESTERN BLACK SEA, 091200Z TO 100600Z

PERIOD (Z)	WIND	SEA STATE	SIG WAVE	CLOUD	VIS
1200–1800	320/12–18	2	0.6 m	SCT 3500	>10 km
1800–2030	330/18–24	3	1.0 m	BKN 3000	>10 km
2030–2330	340/25–32 G40	5	2.6 m	BKN 2200	8 km
2330–0600	330/14–20	3	1.2 m	SCT 3000	>10 km

Confidence in the timing of the peak: **moderate**. Confidence in the peak occurring: **high**. The model has been consistent over four runs. If it is wrong it will be wrong by an hour in the onset, not by a whole watch.

2. OPERATING LIMITS AFFECTED

PLATFORM OR SYSTEM	LIMIT	EFFECT
IAR-330M, deck operations	Sea state 4	Evacuation task unavailable while the peak holds
Unmanned surface craft (assessed)	Sea state 4	Cannot transit or attack during the same period
M/V SEA HORIZON, transfer alongside	Sea state 4	Boat transfer suspended
Infrared search, sea surface	—	Degraded by spray and whitecap clutter above sea state 3

3. ASTRONOMICAL DATA — 44°10'N 030°30'E

EVENT	ZULU	LOCAL
Sunset	1550Z	1850
Civil twilight end	1618Z	1918
Nautical twilight end	1651Z	1951
Moonset	1604Z	1904
Civil twilight begin	0405Z	0705
Sunrise	0433Z	0733

(NR) **Moon illumination 2.7 per cent at H-hour, falling to 0.3 per cent by end of mission.** New moon is on 10 October. There will be no useful ambient light on the water at any point in the period. An aircraft without an organic infrared sensor sees nothing on the sea tonight, and this is a statement of physics rather than of doctrine.

4. AERODROME FORECASTS

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LRIA 091100Z 0912/1012 33018G28KT 9999 BKN030 TEMPO 0918/1003 33025G40KT 8000 -RA BKN022
LRCK 091100Z 0912/1012 33020G30KT 9999 BKN028 TEMPO 0918/1003 34028G42KT 7000 -RA BKN020
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ANNEX H TO OPORD 26-241 — PAGE H-1 OF H-1

J

Communications

ANNEX J TO OPORD 26-241 · VALID 091500Z TO 100400Z

1. NETS

NET	PRIMARY	SECONDARY	USERS
Tactical air, northern axis	251.750 UHF	130.250 VHF	TIGRU flight, PARAPET
Tactical air, block axis	263.400 UHF	134.775 VHF	RAPACE flight, CORB 31, PARAPET
Command net	308.900 UHF	–	Commander PONTIC SHIELD, COA. Secure only
Helicopter / evacuation	140.500 VHF	243.000	VULTUR flight, NEPTUN DEEP, SEA HORIZON
Maritime safety	156.800 (ch 16)	–	Challenge of unlit surface contacts. Monitored, not guarded
Guard	243.000	121.500	All

2. CONTROL AND REPORTING

(NR) Control and reporting centre MEDGIDIA, callsign **PARAPET**. Tactical control of the northern axis is delegated to PARAPET. **The block axis is not controlled**: coverage does not reach it and the aircraft on station is the only sensor there. Aircraft over the block report by exception and are not to expect a picture from the ground.

3. CODEWORDS

CODEWORD	MEANING
SANDGLASS	Rules of engagement serial 1 released by the commander. Time to be logged by PARAPET
LIFEBOAT	Evacuation of NEPTUN DEEP ordered. Activates the altitude reservation at Annex E para 4
GRAVEL	Autonomous surface craft classified and closing the field
HORNET	Autonomous air weapon inside national airspace on the delta axis
STONEWALL	Manned Russian aircraft airborne and tracking toward the EEZ boundary
DEADLIGHT	GNSS denied. Revert to inertial and TACAN
CHALKLINE	Friendly aircraft approaching a no-cross line. Immediate turn required

4. AUTHENTICATION AND EMISSION CONTROL

(NR) Authentication tables in force for the period, held by the duty controller. Challenge is mandatory before any codeword is accepted by voice on a non-secure net. Emissions control is not imposed by this headquarters; the commander may impose it locally and is reminded that a silent aircraft over the block is also a blind one.

ANNEX J TO OPORD 26-241 — PAGE J-1 OF J-1

K

Personnel recovery

ANNEX K TO OPORD 26-241

1. ASSETS

(NR) **There is no dedicated combat recovery asset on station tonight.** The two IAR-330 are committed to the evacuation task and are not to be diverted to recovery without the commander's personal decision, which also cancels the evacuation option for the period of the diversion.

(NR) Romanian Naval Forces hold a search and rescue vessel at Constanța at four hours' notice. Transit to the block is a further four hours. **Plan on eight hours to a surface recovery east of 030°E** and plan accordingly before committing an aircraft low over the sea at night.

2. SURVIVAL DATA

PARAMETER	VALUE	REMARK
Sea temperature	17 °C	Measured, Constanța buoy, 090600Z
Air temperature	13 °C falling to 9 °C	Wind chill significant above 25 kt
Survival, immersion suit	12–18 h	Conscious and signalling for most of it
Survival, flight suit only	3–6 h	Useful consciousness considerably less
Sea state at peak	5	Recovery by small boat not practicable

3. PROCEDURE

1. Wingman marks the position and time of entry into the water, and reports to PARAPET on guard.
2. Remaining aircraft maintains contact for as long as fuel permits. **It does not descend below 1000 ft to do so.**
3. PARAPET alerts Constanța Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre.
4. Recovery inside Ukrainian or Russian waters is a diplomatic matter and is handled at national level. It is not attempted by this force.

4. EVASION

(NR) The nearest hostile shore is 160 nm from the block. Evasion ashore is not a realistic planning assumption. A crew in the water is the planning case.

ANNEX K TO OPORD 26-241 — PAGE K-1 OF K-1

L

References, maps and abbreviations

ANNEX L TO OPORD 26-241

1. MAPS AND GEODETIC DATA

ITEM	DETAIL
Series and sheets	M501, sheets 4-2 (Danube delta and approaches) and 4-3 (Constanța and the eastern block)
Datum	WGS 84. Positions in degrees and decimal minutes unless otherwise stated
Projection, annexed charts	Equirectangular, scaled on 45°N
Coastline source	Natural Earth 10 m land polygons, simplified for reproduction
Vertical datum	Altitudes above mean sea level. Flight levels on 1013.2 hPa

2. ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THIS ORDER

ACO Airspace Control Order
AGL Above ground level
ATO Air Tasking Order
CAP Combat air patrol
COA Centrul de Operații Aeriene
DCA Defensive counter-air
DTG Date-time group
EEZ Exclusive economic zone
EO/IR Electro-optical / infrared
EW Electronic warfare
GNSS Global navigation satellite system
IR Infrared
ISR Intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance
LRCK Mihail Kogălniceanu aerodrome
LRIA Fetești aerodrome
MSN Mission number
NAI Named area of interest
NOTAM Notice to airmen
NVG Night vision goggles
OPORD Operation order
OSF-IR Optronique secteur frontal, infrared channel
PIR Priority intelligence requirement
ROE Rules of engagement
ROZ Restricted operations zone
SAM Surface-to-air missile
SAR Search and rescue
SPINS Special instructions
SSM Surface-to-surface missile
UA Unmanned aircraft
USV Unmanned surface vessel
VUL Vulnerability period

3. ANNEXES NOT ISSUED WITH THIS COPY

(NR) The body of Annex C (Operations, full) and Annex M (Legal) are held at COA and are not distributed below this headquarters. **Appendix 1 to Annex C, the operations overlay, is distributed with this copy** and is the only part of Annex C the commander receives. Annex I is not used, in accordance with convention, to avoid confusion with the numeral.

(NR) **The three overlays are issued as separate landscape sheets and carry no geography.** Each is laid on the map sheet and registered on the two marks printed on it. Appendix 1 to Annex E is a vertical section and has no register marks, for the obvious reason.

PROVENANCE

This is a fictional document produced for the Command: Modern Operations scenario **Neptun Deep, 2026 — The Long Night**. It is written from inside the air operations centre at 091200Z: it states what a staff believed at that hour, which is not the same as what turned out to be true.

The civilian vessel names, the IMO number, all personal names, callsigns, frequencies, codewords, serials and intelligence products are invented. Military units, bases, weapon systems and their characteristics are real; their presence on this date is a projection. No part of this document reflects any actual order, tasking or assessment of any armed force.

ANNEX L TO OPORD 26-241 — PAGE L-1 OF L-1 — END OF ORDER