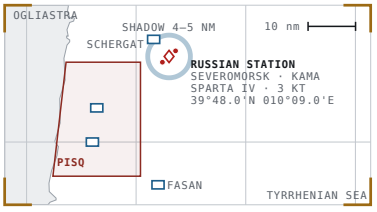
SECRET — REL NATO — EXERCISE — THIS IS A FICTIONAL DOCUMENT

OPERATION NURAGHE

SARDINIA STATION

Three Russian ships, four possible reasons, two firing windows, and a mistral on the way

FIG. 1 · OGLIASTRA, 031600Z



WGS 84 · IIM 916 / BA 1985

D-DAY	DURATION	FORCE	ROE
3 NOV 2026 · 1600Z	36 HOURS	3 SHIPS · 4 AIR · 2 P-8A	WEAPONS TIGHT, ALL DOMAINS

COMMAND: MODERN OPERATIONS · SCENARIO BY TOTOBIMBO · 2026 — OPORD 26-044 · 031400ZNOV26

OPERATION ORDER 26-044

OPERATION NURAGHE — WHY A RUSSIAN GROUP HOLDS STATION OFF OGLIASTRA; THE QUIRRA RANGE AND THE CABLES, 3–5 NOV 26

ORIGINATOR	Commander in Chief Naval Fleet (CINCNAV), Santa Rosa, Rome
DATE-TIME GROUP	031400ZNOV26
SERIAL	CINCNAV/OPS/TG452/26-044
ADDRESSEE	Commander Task Group 452.1 (CTG 452.1), embarked ITS SPARTACO SCHERGAT
INFO	MARCOM Northwood · CTF 67 / Commander Patrol and Reconnaissance Force Sixth Fleet (Sigonella) · Poligono Interforze del Salto di Quirra (PISQ range control) · Comando Operazioni Aerospaziali (COA) · EUNAVFOR MED Irini (Rome) · Guardia Costiera — MRSC Cagliari
REFERENCES	A. Standing national operation MEDITERRANEO SICURO, directive CINCNAV 26-01 B. ROE MEDITERRANEO SICURO, edition 3, NURAGHE supplement C. INTSUM CINCNAV 26-307, 031200ZNOV26 D. UNCLOS arts 20, 32, 58, 79, 87, 95, 96, 110, 113 E. PISQ NOTAM, NATO live-missile firing of 4 NOV F. METEOMAR marine forecast, 031200ZNOV26 G. EUNAVFOR MED Irini OPLAN, shadow-fleet extract
ANNEXES	A · B · C · D · E · F · G · H · J · K · L · M
APPENDICES	B/1 Collection overlay · C/1 Operations overlay Bound as landscape sheets after Annexes B and C.
TIME ZONE	ZULU throughout. Local time is CET (UTC+1).
MAP REFERENCE	IIM 916 · IIM 917 · BA 1985 · WGS 84 · positions in degrees and decimal minutes
COPY	Copy 2 of 18

RECORD OF CHANGES

NO	DTG	CHANGE	AUTHORITY	ENTERED BY
01	031230Z	Annex A paragraph 4 and Annex D paragraph 1 amended on the reply of CTF 67: **two P-8A sorties** from Sigonella are available on request for the operation. **A third only if NATO can spare it**, and not while the allies lack confidence in our handling. Annex K paragraph 5 refers.	CINCNAV/N3	CF MELIS
02	031330Z	Annex F paragraph 2: PISQ confirms **two NATO firing windows on 4 NOV, three hours each**, planned about 0800Z and about 1800Z. The exact times stand in the NOTAM relayed at H-hour and may differ from the plan by up to half an hour.	CINCNAV/N3	CF MELIS
03	031345Z	Annex D paragraph 5: Sigonella holds **sonobuoys for four P-72A sorties** for the operation. The 41st Wing has set the P-72A crews a limit of **22 flying hours** between them. No resupply before 6 NOV.	CINCNAV/N4	TV SERRA

DISTRIBUTION

ADDRESSEE	COPIES	MEANS
CTG 452.1, embarked ITS SPARTACO SCHERGAT	1–3	Secure signal
Commanding officers, ITS VIRGINIO FASAN and ITS CIGALA FULGOSI	4–5	Secure signal
41st Wing, Sigonella (GRIFO 1 and 2)	6	Secure signal, extract: Annexes A, D and G
COA, Poggio Renatico — for ORACLE 1, Pratica di Mare	7	Secure signal, extract: Annexes A, E and G
CTF 67, Sigonella (POSEIDON on request)	8	Secure signal, extract: Annexes D and G, REL NATO
PISQ range control, Perdasdefogu	9	Secure fax, extract: paragraph 3 and Annex F
MARCOM Northwood	10	Secure signal, extract: paragraphs 1 to 3, Annexes B and F, REL NATO
EUNAVFOR MED Irini, Rome	11	Secure signal, extract: Annex H, REL EU
Guardia Costiera, MRSC Cagliari	12	Secure fax, extract: paragraph 1d, Annexes F and H
Comando Operativo di Vertice Interforze (COVI)	13–14	Secure signal, paragraphs 1 to 5, Annexes J and K
CINCNAV registry	15–18	Registry

> This order is issued in the Italian national chain, under the standing operation MEDITERRANEO SICURO. It is **not** a NATO operation and it alters the peacetime status of no unit. ESPS CRISTOBAL COLON and the NATO firing at Salto di Quirra are listed for coordination only; the P-8A aircraft come under tactical control of CTG 452.1 while on task and under nobody's command but their own. **The Russian group is in international waters and is doing nothing unlawful by staying there.** The task is to find out why it stays, to prove it, and to say so to Rome; not to make it leave. The Government expects to read the assessment from the Navy before it reads a guess in the press.

1. SITUATION

a. Adversary forces

(NR) No state of hostilities exists. The heading is doctrinal. The ships below belong to the Russian Federation Navy and to its auxiliary services, and are to be treated as a navy operating lawfully on the high seas until it does otherwise.

(NR) The destroyer **SEVEROMORSK** (Udaloy I), the replenishment oiler **KAMA** and the Ministry of Defence cargo ship **SPARTA IV** have held station about **25 nm east of the Ogliastra coast** for two days, at about three knots, around 39°48.0'N 010°09.0'E [A1]. The group is not transiting and has given no reason. There is no weather to shelter from. The two auxiliaries transmit AIS; the destroyer does not.

(NR) The same three ships did the same thing off this coast in February, then moved up to Capo Comino and the Gulf of Orosei. On 9 February SPARTA IV switched her AIS off for most of a day. **Nobody established why** [A1]. SEVEROMORSK escorted the Improved Kilo KRASNODAR through the Mediterranean in January [A1]; the boat's position today is not known.

(NR) **Adversary courses of action.** The staff has four explanations for the station and cannot yet choose between them. **They are not exclusive: more than one may be under way.** Each is set out at Annex B paragraph 5, with what would prove it.

COA	ACTIVITY	WHAT IT WOULD MEAN
SUBMARINE	A submarine working on the undersea cables under the group's cover	A diesel boat under the group, then on the Tyrrhenian Link or the SAPEI / Janna corridor: survey, tapping, or damage. **The most dangerous to the country**
ELINT	Signals collection on the NATO firing at Salto di Quirra	The group, or SPARTA IV, takes position facing the range and records the radars and datalinks of the firing
TRANSFER	An oil transfer at sea with a shadow-fleet tanker	KAMA takes cargo from, or gives it to, a tanker without AIS, out of sight of ports and inspectors
PRESENCE	A show of presence only	The group is there to be seen, to test our reactions and to occupy our ships. Nothing else is under way

(NR) **Deception is expected in every case.** The destroyer has drawn Italian units off before with sudden runs at speed, active sonar and close manoeuvres. A contact that appears where the group wants us to look is not yet a finding.

a. Adversary forces (continued) — posture

(NR) The destroyer's conduct towards shadowing ships in the last two years has been constant [B2]: she **crosses the bow** of a ship that comes within about a mile, orders it on channel 16 to keep clear, and films. She **jams** the navigation and radars of aircraft that come close. **She has never fired**, and her surface and subsurface weapons are assessed held. Moscow's line after the October incidents in the Baltic and off Ushant is stated in the opening message at H-hour and is not repeated here.

b. Friendly forces

(NR) Task organisation at Annex A: two frigates, one offshore patrol vessel, one embarked anti-submarine helicopter, two P-72A maritime patrol aircraft at Sigonella, and ORACLE 1, the Air Force's SIGINT aircraft at Pratica di Mare. **Two US Navy P-8A sorties** can be asked of CTF 67; Record of Changes serial 01.

(NR) **NATO firing at Salto di Quirra.** ESPS CRISTOBAL COLON lies stopped inside the PISQ danger area at 39°30.0'N 009°48.0'E, with the Quirra batteries ashore, for the live-missile exercise of 4 November. Two windows, Annex F. She is not under command and does not move for this operation.

(NR) **EUNAVFOR MED Irini** watches shadow-fleet tankers in the central Mediterranean, and boarded one west of Pantelleria in August. It takes over the track of any such tanker handed to it, Annex H. The **Guardia Costiera** (MRSC Cagliari) keeps the fishermen informed and holds the search and rescue responsibility.

c. Attachments and detachments

(NR) HAWK 21 is embarked in VIRGINIO FASAN. GRIFO 1 and 2 attach from the 41st Wing on the commander's call; ORACLE 1 from COA. **No submarine, no second ASW frigate and no tanker aircraft are available.** CARLO BERGAMINI is in refit; the Augusta-based submarine is committed elsewhere. Annex A paragraph 6 records what was asked for.

d. Civil considerations and environment

(NR) **The cables.** The western branch of the **Tyrrhenian Link** (Terna, 1,000 MW, Quartu Sant'Elena to Termini Imerese, laid late 2025) runs east-south-east from the Gulf of Cagliari; the **SAPEI / Janna** corridor carries power and telecommunications between north-east Sardinia and the mainland. **Neither passes under the Russian holding area.** Reference points TYRRHENIAN LINK 1 and SAPEI / JANNA 2 mark the stretches the staff would watch; both lie outside the territorial sea. Terna and Sparkle watch their lines and will report a fault.

(NR) **The fishermen.** Boats from Arbatax and Tortolì work inside the PISQ danger area at night, **without AIS**, and drift into it without warning. They are hailed and escorted out; they are not threatened. **The ferries** to Olbia and Arbatax and the Cagliari traffic keep to their lanes and transmit AIS.

(NR) **The nights are dark.** The moon, a thin waning crescent, rises only after 0045Z. **A mistral is forecast** for 4 November: north-westerly force 7 to 8, sea state 6 at its height, for most of the day and into the second night. Annex L.

(NR) **Opinion.** The Ogliastra mayors, the regional government, *L'Unione Sarda* and the Rome press watched the February station and will watch this one. Every approach by a Russian ship to the range, and every Italian ship close to a Russian one, will be on the evening news.

2. MISSION

(NR) **TG 452.1 shadows the Russian group holding station off Ogliastra from 031600Z to 050400Z, determines and proves why it is there, and reports that assessment to Rome by the times this order sets, while keeping the Salto di Quirra range safe for the NATO firing and the undersea cables under watch, in order that the Government can answer on facts and not on suspicion, without an incident at sea and without escalation.**

3. EXECUTION

a. Commander's intent

(NR) Three Russian ships are doing nothing, conspicuously, twenty-five miles off our coast, on the week NATO fires at Quirra. In February we watched them for a week and never found out why. **This time Rome wants an answer**, and it wants the answer to be true.

(NR) **Purpose.** An assessment that Rome can stand behind in front of Moscow, Brussels and the Italian press: what the group is doing, and what we saw that proves it. If the honest answer is that it is only there to be seen, that is an answer too, and it has to be earned like any other.

(NR) **Method. Watch everything, commit to nothing early.** Keep a ship on the group day and night; keep the anti-submarine effort on the approaches and on the cables, not only under the destroyer; put the SIGINT aircraft where it can hear the range; look for any ship that comes to meet KAMA. **Weigh every graded report for what it is**, and ask the analysts where the evidence stands before Rome asks you. **Spend the aircraft hours as if the second night mattered more than the first**, because it may. **Keep the range clear** for both windows: that is our job, not NATO's. **Do not be drawn**: into a close-quarters fight with the destroyer, into a hunt she has laid for us, or into a report that the facts do not yet support.

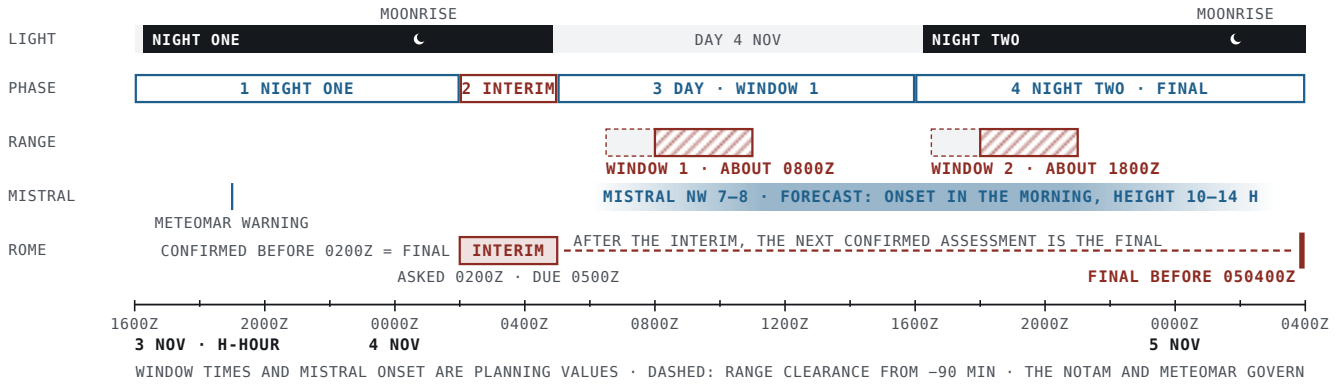
(NR) **End state.** Rome holds a final assessment sent before 050400Z and supported by what the task group observed. Any submarine found near a cable has been held until she leaves, and the cables are intact. Both windows have fired, or were lost for reasons Rome can explain. Any shadow-fleet tanker met has been handed to Irini. No incident has been charged to Italy, no Italian weapon fired, and the task group is whole.

(NR) **We do not fire first.** The destroyer will cross our bows and tell us to go away; she is entitled to be there and so are we. **I accept a later answer before a wrong one**, and I accept no answer at all before an incident that gives Moscow the story it came for.

b. Concept of operations

(NR) The operation is conducted in a single defensive posture, in four phases set by the clock and by Rome, with three continuous tasks running through all of them. Annex C sets out the phases, decision points and control measures; Appendix 1 to Annex C draws them.

SYNCHRONISATION



(NR) **Phase 1 — Night one: establish (031600Z to 040200Z).** SCHERGAT takes the shadow orbit. FASAN takes STATION FASAN SOUTH with HAWK 21. CIGALA FULGOSI takes the range guard. Launch the first P-72A sortie on the approaches and the cables, put ORACLE 1 on its orbit to baseline the group's emitters, and ask for the first SIGINT analyses. Take an AIS picture. **Expect the destroyer to try something in the first hours of the night.**

(NR) **Phase 2 — Interim assessment (040200Z to 040500Z).** Rome will ask at 0200Z for an interim assessment by 0500Z. Ask the analysts for the state of the evidence, then answer: **an activity, or "not yet determined"**. The interim does not bind the final. Night work continues.

(NR) **Phase 3 — Day: window 1 and the mistral (040500Z to 041600Z).** Clear the danger area from ninety minutes before window 1 (about 0800Z) and keep it clear to the end. Watch who takes position facing the range, and listen. Recover HAWK 21 before the height of the mistral; plan the aircraft round it. Daylight is for identification and photographs.

(NR) **Phase 4 — Night two: window 2 and the final assessment (041600Z to 050400Z).** Clear the range for window 2 (about 1800Z). The group may move north towards Capo Comino, as it did in February: if it does, the shadow orbit follows the RUSSIAN STATION reference point. Rome will call for the final assessment during the night. **Send it before 050400Z**, with a secondary activity if the evidence supports one.

(NR) **Continuous — the cables.** Both watched, neither forgotten: the southern by FASAN and the southern ASW area, the northern by the maritime patrol aircraft. **Continuous — the range.** The danger area cleared before each window, fishermen escorted out, and no Russian ship left inside it at the opening. **Continuous — Rome.** The Government will face Moscow, Madrid, Brussels, the Region, the fishermen and the press within the period. Annex K sets out how CTG 452.1 answers them.

c. Tasks to subordinate elements

ELEMENT	TASK
SPARTACO SCHERGAT	Flagship. **Shadow the group** on the orbit of 4 to 5 nm around the RUSSIAN STATION reference point, day and night; move the orbit with the point if it moves. Report its composition, movements, emissions and every change in AIS. Be the warship that turns a Russian ship out of the danger area before a window, Annex F. **No fire-control illumination of a Russian unit.**
VIRGINIO FASAN	Anti-submarine frigate. **STATION FASAN SOUTH** with the towed sonar, covering the south-eastern approach and the Tyrrhenian Link; STATION FASAN NORTH on order. Be ready to keep company with a large contact without AIS. Parent ship of HAWK 21.
HAWK 21	NH90 NFH, dipping sonar and sonobuoys. Hunt within STATION FASAN SOUTH or on a datum, on the commander's call. **Recovered before the height of the mistral. Torpedoes stay on the rack.**
CIGALA FULGOSI	Offshore patrol vessel. **Range guard.** Keep the PISQ danger area under watch; from ninety minutes before each window, hail and escort out every fishing boat inside it. Report the area clear to PISQ range control. Liaison with the Guardia Costiera.
GRIFO 1 / 2	P-72A maritime patrol aircraft, Sigonella. **The submarine**, on the ASW areas and on the approaches; the surface picture out to the reporting lines. **22 flying hours between the two crews and four sonobuoy loads** for the whole operation: Annex D paragraph 5. **Weapons held.**
ORACLE 1	SIGINT aircraft, Pratica di Mare. **ORBIT ORACLE**, outside 25 nm of the group. The group's emitters and SPARTA IV's receivers, above all in the hours around each firing window. Annex E.
POSEIDON 1 / 2	US Navy P-8A, Sigonella, **on request** through CTF 67, under tactical control for about 5 hours, transit included. The submarine, where the P-72A cannot be. A third sortie only if NATO can spare it.
ESPS CRISTOBAL COLON	Not under command. The NATO firing ship, stopped inside the danger area. **Not to be asked to move.**

d. Coordinating instructions

1. (NR) **H-hour is 031600Z** (1700 local). End of operation 050400Z, or on order. Times in the opening message at H-hour (the NOTAM windows, Moscow's line, what NATO can spare) take precedence over this order.
2. (NR) **Weapons tight in every domain; subsurface weapons on HOLD** for every unit. We do not fire first. Annex G.
3. (NR) **Shadowing distance: 4 to 5 nm from the RUSSIAN STATION reference point.** The group stays well inside it. Closer adds nothing but risk.
4. (NR) **No Italian ship closes SEVEROMORSK within 0.5 nm by the Italian ship's own movement**, at any time and for any reason. An Italian ship that finds herself closing to 1.5 nm by her own movement opens the range at once. When the destroyer crosses our bow, hold course and speed and let her pass: **her manoeuvres are hers, ours are ours**, and Moscow will claim every one of ours.

5. (NR) **ASW flying hours and sonobuoys are a hard limit.** The two P-72A crews have 22 flying hours between them, counted from take-off to landing, transit included, and Sigonella holds sonobuoys for four sorties. A fifth sortie flies with radar and cameras only. Sigonella warns at eight and at four hours left; at none the crews are ordered home. **Plan the second night before you spend the first.**
6. (NR) **Jamming.** Aircraft within about 15 nm of SEVEROMORSK are to expect GNSS and radar jamming that halves what their sensors give; further out if Moscow has hardened its line. Stand off, or accept it.
7. (NR) **Range clearance procedure**, Annex F: from ninety minutes before a window, CIGALA FULGOSI clears fishing boats; a warship within 3 nm turns a Russian ship out of the area; PISQ range control lists who is inside an hour before the opening. **A Russian warship inside the area at the opening cancels the window; a fishing boat postpones it.**
8. (NR) **Assessments to Rome**, Annex J paragraph 3: one of four statements, **selected then confirmed**. The **first** assessment confirmed between 0200Z and 0500Z on 4 NOV, while Rome holds nothing yet, is the interim (NOT YET DETERMINED may be sent instead). **The next assessment confirmed after it is the final**, even before 0500Z. An assessment confirmed before 0200Z is already the final, and counts as the interim. The final closes the question. After the final, one secondary activity may be added. Show of presence is never a secondary.
9. (NR) **Do not report an activity the evidence does not yet carry.** The analysts will state the evidence for each activity on request, not more often than every two hours, Annex B paragraph 8. A late assessment that holds is worth more to Rome than an early one that does not.
10. (NR) **A shadow-fleet tanker is not boarded by this task group.** Hold her in sight and hand her track to EUNAVFOR MED Irini as she leaves, Annex H.
11. (NR) **Mistral.** On the METEOMAR warning, recover HAWK 21 before the height of it. No dipping sonar at the height. Annex L.
12. (NR) PIRs at Annex B paragraph 6, plotted at Appendix 1 to Annex B. Reporting is immediate. Codewords at Annex J.
13. (NR) Every close pass, bow crossing, hail and jamming episode is recorded by video and bridge log. **The record is what the Government publishes**, and there is nothing to publish without it.

4. SUSTAINMENT

a. Logistics

(NR) Fuel states at H-hour are sufficient for the period at shadowing speeds. **No replenishment ship is assigned**; Cagliari and La Maddalena are the ports of refuge, and a ship detached to either is a ship the picture does without. Aircraft cycle from Sigonella (about 265 nm, an hour's transit each way for the P-72A) and Pratica di Mare (about 155 nm). **The transit is paid in the same flying hours as the search.**

b. Medical

(NR) Role 1 afloat in SCHERGAT and FASAN. Role 2 ashore at Cagliari (Ospedale Brotzu), reached by HAWK 21 or by the Guardia Costiera helicopter from Decimomannu. A casualty in a Russian ship or a fishing boat is treated exactly as our own.

c. Search and rescue

(NR) MRSC Cagliari coordinates. Sea temperature 19°C. **In the mistral, after dark, a person in the water is found by light and beacon or not at all.**

5. COMMAND AND SIGNAL

a. Command

(NR) CTG 452.1 exercises tactical command of the ships at Annex A paragraph 1 and tactical control of the aircraft at paragraphs 2 to 4 while on task. Operational command is retained by CINCNAV. The P-8A remain under US command and are tasked through CTF 67. Succession of command: CTG 452.1; Commanding Officer SPARTACO SCHERGAT; Commanding Officer VIRGINIO FASAN.

(NR) **The assessment sent to Rome is the commander's own act.** It is recorded with a time and the evidence behind it, and is not delegated.

b. Signal

(NR) Annex J. Maritime reporting to the CINCNAV operations centre, Santa Rosa, on the command net; info PISQ range control for anything bearing on the range, and MRSC Cagliari for anything bearing on the fishermen.

(NR) **Reports to Rome.** Rome (CINCNAV, and through COVI the Government) requires:

REPORT	WHEN	CONTENT
INTERIM ASSESSMENT	requested 040200Z due by 040500Z	One activity, or NOT YET DETERMINED. Does not bind the final. **A silence is noticed in Rome**
FINAL ASSESSMENT	before 050400Z	One of: SUBMARINE NEAR THE CABLES, ELINT ON THE QUIRRA FIRING, OIL TRANSFER AT SEA, SHOW OF PRESENCE ONLY. Rome will call for it during the second night
SECONDARY ASSESSMENT	after the final	A second activity, once, if the evidence supports it. Not after a final of show of presence
SITREP	every 4 hours	Group, range, cables, aircraft hours and sonobuoys remaining

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

(NR) Acknowledge receipt of this order and of Annexes A to M by immediate signal, quoting serial CINCNAV/OPS/TG452/26-044.

BERTOLDI, Enrico
Ammiraglio di Squadra
Comandante in Capo della Squadra Navale
Commander in Chief Naval Fleet

Authentication. CASULA, M. — Capitano di Vascello — N3 Operations, CINCNAV. Original signed copy held in CINCNAV registry, Santa Rosa.

A

Task Organisation

ANNEX A TO OPORD 26-044 · DTG 031400ZNOV26 · CINCNAV/OPS/TG452/26-044

1. TASK GROUP 452.1 — SURFACE

> Positions are those expected at H-hour, 031600Z, and are not stations. Tactical command CTG 452.1.

UNIT	TYPE	POSITION 1600Z	REMARKS
SPARTACO SCHERGAT F 598	FREMM, general purpose frigate	39°51.6'N 010°04.8'E	**Flagship.** Shadowing the group, heading 090, 6 kt. Hull-mounted sonar, 76 mm and 127 mm guns, Aster
VIRGINIO FASAN F 591	FREMM, anti-submarine frigate	39°21.0'N 010°06.0'E	South of the group, heading 000, 8 kt. **CAPTAS-4 towed sonar.** Parent ship of HAWK 21
HAWK 21	SH-90A (NH90 NFH), embarked	in FASAN	HELRAS dipping sonar, DIFAR/DICASS sonobuoys, MU90 held. Ready on deck
CIGALA FULGOSI P 490	Comandante-class offshore patrol vessel	39°37.2'N 009°49.2'E	Off the range, heading 180, 8 kt. **Range guard.** Boats, loud hailer, VHF

2. MARITIME PATROL — 41ST WING, SIGONELLA

CALLSIGN	AIRCRAFT	BASE	STATE	REMARKS
GRIFO 1	P-72A MPA — radar, EO turret, sonobuoys, MU90 held	Sigonella	ready	First sortie of the night on the commander's call
GRIFO 2	P-72A MPA — as above	Sigonella	ready	Relief or second hunter. **22 flying hours between the two crews**

3. SIGNALS INTELLIGENCE — COA, PRATICA DI MARE

CALLSIGN	AIRCRAFT	BASE	STATE	REMARKS
ORACLE 1	SIGINT aircraft	Pratica di Mare	ready	ORBIT ORACLE, Annex E. No weapons, no sonobuoys

4. ON REQUEST — NATO, CTF 67 SIGONELLA

CALLSIGN	AIRCRAFT	BASE	REMARKS
POSEIDON 1 / 2	US Navy P-8A, sonobuoys, weapons held	Sigonella	Two sorties on request. Airborne 30 to 60 minutes after it. About 5 hours under our control, transit included, then home. Record of Changes serial 01
POSEIDON 3	US Navy P-8A	Sigonella	**Only if NATO can spare it.** Longer to arrive. Costs NATO a reinforcement elsewhere; refused while the allies are not confident of our handling. Annex K

5. NATO AND OTHER AGENCIES — FOR COORDINATION ONLY

UNIT OR AGENCY	POSITION 1600Z	REMARKS
ESPS CRISTOBAL COLON (F 105), Spanish frigate	39°30.0'N 009°48.0'E	Firing ship of the NATO live-missile exercise. Stopped inside the danger area. Not under command
PISQ range control, Perdasdefogu	ashore	Owns the danger area and the windows. Announces the state of each window. Annex F
EUNAVFOR MED Irini, operational HQ Rome	—	Takes over the track of any shadow-fleet tanker handed to it. Annex H
Guardia Costiera, MRSC Cagliari	ashore	Search and rescue, fishermen, notices to mariners. AIS feed
Terna and Sparkle network control	ashore	Watch the Tyrrhenian Link and the SAPEI / Janna corridor. Report any fault through CINCNAV

6. SHIPPING OF INTEREST AND NEUTRAL SHIPPING

VESSEL	POSITION 1600Z	REMARK
SEVEROMORSK, Udaloy I destroyer	39°48.0'N 010°09.0'E	Russian Navy. No AIS. Holding station at about 3 kt. **Of interest**
KAMA, replenishment oiler	39°46.8'N 010°07.2'E	Russian Navy auxiliary. AIS on. **Of interest**
SPARTA IV, cargo ship	39°49.2'N 010°10.8'E	Russian Ministry of Defence. AIS on, so far. **Of interest**
F/V SANTA BARBARA, F/V STELLA MARIS	inside the danger area	Fishing, Arbatax. No AIS. To be escorted out before each window
F/V SAN GIORGIO, F/V NUOVA SPERANZA	off Arbatax and Orosei	Fishing. No AIS. Others will come out during the period
Ferries and merchant traffic	—	MOBY TOMMY, CRUISE SARDEGNA, GNV AZZURRA, TIRRENIA 7, GRANDE ITALIA, CORSICA VERA and others on the Olbia, Arbatax, Cagliari and Genoa–Sicily lanes. AIS on. Legitimate

7. NOT AVAILABLE FOR THIS OPERATION

(NR) **No submarine**: the only boat free this week is committed to another national task. **No second anti-submarine frigate**: CARLO BERGAMINI in refit at La Spezia. **No replenishment ship. No second SIGINT aircraft. No more sonobuoys or P-72A hours** before 6 November. **More than two P-8A sorties** only if NATO can spare them, Annex K.

(NR) These requests are recorded so that the commander knows they were made.

8. NATIONAL NOTES

NATION	NOTE
ITA	The assessment to Rome is the commander's. The Government answers Moscow and the allies on it
USA	The P-8A fly under US rules. They search, report and hold; they do not attack under this order
ESP	ESPS CRISTOBAL COLON under Spanish command for the NATO exercise. Madrid will ask whether the firing is safe

ANNEX A TO OPORD 26-044 — PAGE A-2 OF A-2

B

Intelligence

ANNEX B TO OPORD 26-044 · DTG 031400ZNOV26 · ORIGINATOR CINCNAV N2 WITH CII, COA AND MARCOM

SOURCE GRADING

Reports are graded on the standard scale: source reliability **A** reliable to **F** cannot be judged; information credibility **1** confirmed to **6** cannot be judged. A2 reliable, probably true; B2 usually reliable, probably true; C3 fairly reliable, possibly true; C4 fairly reliable, doubtful. **A graded report can be wrong, and a report that a thing was not seen is not proof that it is absent.** Matters of public record are marked A1.

> Serial 01 of this annex is this text. Serial 02, the intelligence background brief for the commander and his staff, is issued separately and is consistent with it.

1. SUMMARY

(NR) The same group held station off this coast from 3 to 9 February, shadowed by SPARTACO SCHERGAT and then EMILIO BIANCHI, by P-72 aircraft and by the SIGINT aircraft from Pratica di Mare. It moved north to Capo Comino and the Gulf of Orosei. SPARTA IV switched her AIS off on 9 February from 0722Z to 1355Z. **The reason was never confirmed** A1: shelter, pressure, a rendezvous, a breakdown, a test of our reactions were all said, and none was shown.

(NR) Since then three things have changed A1: the Tyrrhenian Link has been laid; live firing has resumed at Salto di Quirra; and shadow-fleet tankers have been seen off Sardinia, one of them boarded under Irini west of Pantelleria on 2 August. In September the United Kingdom, Norway and the United States made public a GUGI operation off Svalbard in the spring, in which submersibles rehearsed laying a device on undersea cables.

(NR) **This cell does not rank the four explanations.** The evidence to rank them does not yet exist, and a ranking written now would be read as a finding. What follows says what each would look like, and where to look.

2. THE GROUP

SHIP	POSITION 1600Z	ASSESSMENT	GRADING
SEVEROMORSK, Udaloy I	39°48.0'N 010°09.0'E	Escort and commander of the group. Hull and towed sonars, anti-submarine helicopter, guns, point air defence, heavy jamming fit. **Will shoulder and film; is not expected to fire**	B2
KAMA, Boris Chilikin class	39°46.8'N 010°07.2'E	Oiler. Can give or take fuel alongside at sea. Unarmed. Not a target of any kind	B2
SPARTA IV, Ro-Ro cargo	39°49.2'N 010°10.8'E	Ministry of Defence logistics ship on the Syria and Libya runs. **Has carried extra antennas before**; has switched her AIS off before	B2

(NR) The group moves between holding points **one to three miles** from the reference point, every hour or so, at three knots A2. That is not a ship waiting for weather.

3. ASSESSED ORDER OF BATTLE BEYOND THE GROUP

ELEMENT	POSITION	ASSESSMENT	GRADING
SSK, Project 636.3 Improved Kilo	UNLOCATED	**Presence possible, not established.** KRASNODAR was escorted by SEVEROMORSK in January. If present: slow, deep, under the group's noise, then on a cable	C4
Shadow-fleet product tanker	UNLOCATED	**Presence possible, not established.** If one comes: from the east or the south, AIS off, towards KAMA	C4
Russian air	–	None expected. SEVEROMORSK's helicopter may fly by day	B3

4. THE DESTROYER'S CONDUCT

1. **Bow crossing.** When a ship comes within about a mile, she crosses its bow at some four hundred metres and orders it on channel 16 to keep clear. It is filmed. **It is her manoeuvre, not ours.**
2. **Jamming.** GNSS and radar jamming of aircraft that come within about 15 nm; further when Moscow's line is harder.
3. **Runs.** She has left a group at speed, sonar transmitting, to draw a shadow or a patrol aircraft after her, then come back.
4. **The range.** A Russian warship that sits in a danger area at the opening of a window stops the firing. She knows it. She leaves when a warship is alongside her and the NOTAM is read to her.
5. **She has never fired**, and she has never needed to.

5. THE FOUR EXPLANATIONS — WHAT WOULD PROVE EACH

COA	INDICATORS	WHAT PROOF LOOKS LIKE
SUBMARINE	A submarine contact on the approaches or near a cable; a slow contact loitering over a cable; a fault reported by Terna or Sparkle	A contact **held** long enough to classify, over or near a cable; a cable operator's alert; a signature match
ELINT	The group or SPARTA IV moving to face the range before a window; SPARTA IV's AIS off; receivers sweeping the Quirra radar frequencies	Collection **documented during a firing**: emitters and datalink in step with the launches, seen and heard at the time
TRANSFER	A large contact without AIS inbound from the east or south; KAMA leaving the group; a ship stopped alongside her	A **photograph** of the two ships alongside; an oil sheen at the spot afterwards; the tanker's identity
PRESENCE	Every lead that goes nowhere	**The absence of the other three, looked for properly.** It is proved by searching, not by waiting

(NR) **Most dangerous.** A cable cut under our noses, or an Italian ship in a collision with the destroyer in front of her cameras. *This cell notes that the second begins with something we do.*

6. PRIORITY INTELLIGENCE REQUIREMENTS

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

PIR	QUESTION	DECISION IT INFORMS	NAI
PIR 1	Is a submarine working under the group or on a cable? Which cable?	Where the ASW effort and FASAN go; the assessment	01, 02, 03, 05
PIR 2	Does the group collect on the Quirra firing? Who takes position facing the range, and what do they emit?	Where ORACLE 1 and a ship are before each window; the assessment	01, 04
PIR 3	Does a ship without AIS come to KAMA? From where, and when does she leave?	Where the aircraft search at night; the photograph; the hand-over to Irini	01, 06, 07
PIR 4	Does the group enter the danger area before a window?	Which ship goes alongside to turn her out	01, 04
PIR 5	Does the group move, and where to?	Where the shadow orbit goes; which cable is nearer	01, 08
PIR 6	When does the mistral set in, and how long is its height?	When HAWK 21 is recovered; when the aircraft fly	area

7. NAMED AREAS OF INTEREST

NAI	DESCRIPTION	BOUNDARIES	COLLECTOR
NAI 01	RUSSIAN STATION. The group, and anyone who joins it. **The question is purpose, not presence.**	39°41'N–39°55'N 010°02'E–010°19'E	SCHERGAT, ORACLE 1
NAI 02	CABLE SOUTH. Tyrrhenian Link, 8 nm ring on the reference point TYRRHENIAN LINK 1.	8 nm ring on 39°04.8'N 009°57.0'E	FASAN, HAWK 21, MPA
NAI 03	CABLE NORTH. SAPEI / Janna corridor, 8 nm ring on SAPEI / JANNA 2.	8 nm ring on 40°57.0'N 010°03.0'E	MPA, P-8A
NAI 04	QUIRRA WATCH. Water just outside the danger area, facing the range, where a collector would sit.	39°30'N–39°41'N 010°01'E–010°08'E	ORACLE 1, CIGALA, SCHERGAT
NAI 05	SUBSURFACE APPROACH SE. Assessed sector from the open Tyrrhenian to the group. **An area, not a position.**	from 39°18.0'N 011°00.0'E to the group	FASAN, MPA
NAI 06	SURFACE APPROACH EAST. A large contact without AIS inbound to KAMA.	along 39°44'N east of 010°22'E	MPA radar, ORACLE 1
NAI 07	SURFACE APPROACH SOUTH. As NAI 06, from the Sicily channel side.	along 010°21'E south of 39°38'N	FASAN, MPA radar
NAI 08	CAPO COMINO. Where the group went in February.	40°24'N–40°36'N 009°56'E–010°14'E	SCHERGAT

8. COLLECTION PLAN AND ANALYSIS

SOURCE	WHAT IT CAN GIVE	LIMITS
Own ships and aircraft	Tracks, contacts, photographs, the group's movements and AIS state	Annex D for ranges. Jamming near the destroyer. The mistral
ORACLE 1	The group's emitters; SPARTA IV's receivers; what switches on when the range fires	Must be airborne and on orbit **before** a window, not after. Annex E
AIS picture, Guardia Costiera	Every ship transmitting, with position and speed	On request. Shows only who chooses to be seen
SIGINT analysis of recent intercepts	A graded reading of what the group's traffic suggests	**Four requests for the operation.** Answer in 30 to 60 minutes. **Graded; may be wrong**
CINCNAV analysts — evidence summary	For each activity: NO INDICATION, WEAK, MODERATE or STRONG	On request, **not more than every two hours**; ready in 15 to 30 minutes. It never says which is true. WEAK includes leads that went nowhere
Terna and Sparkle	An alert on a cable; a fault; the nature of the damage	Report what their instruments see, when they see it
PISQ range control	Who is inside the danger area before each window	An hour before each opening. Annex F

9. REPORTING A NEGATIVE

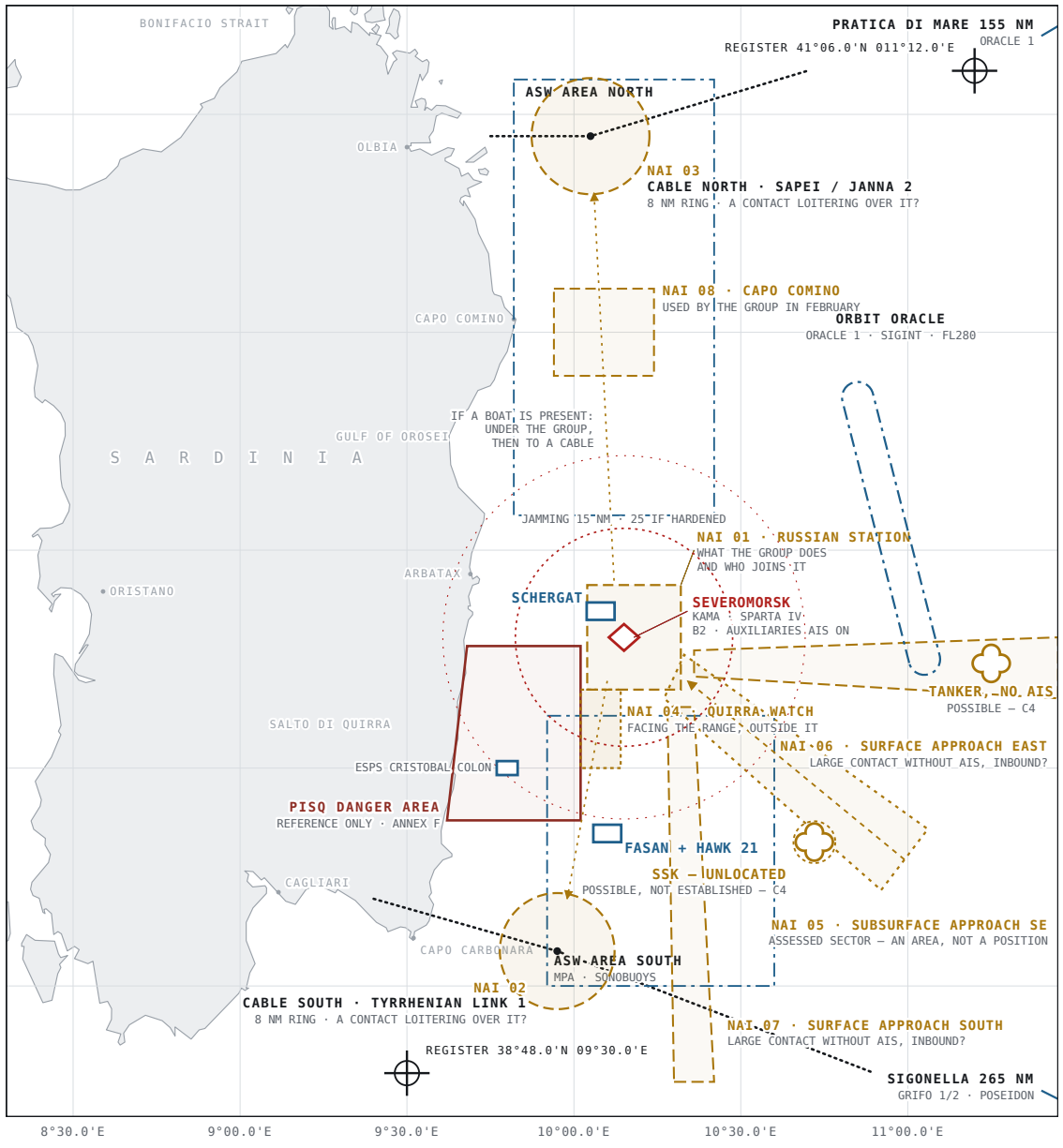
(NR) Sensors report what they did **not** find as well as what they did, beginning **"NO SIGN OF"**. A negative from a sensor that was in the right place at the right time is evidence. A negative from one that was not is nothing. **Show of presence is what remains when the other three have been looked for properly and have not held up**; it is not what remains when nobody looked.

10. COUNTER-INTELLIGENCE AND INFORMATION

(NR) The group films everything. **Assume every Italian approach is on Russian television within the hour**, cut to show our ship closing. Our own record, Annex J paragraph 5, is the only answer to it. Assume every non-secure net is read by SEVEROMORSK in real time.

11. INTELLIGENCE GAPS

- Why the group is here. **That is the question the operation exists to answer.**
- Where KRASNODAR is. No contact since January.
- Whether a tanker is expected, and from where.
- Whether SPARTA IV carries collection equipment this time.
- When the group will move, and whether north again.



COASTLINE NATURAL EARTH 1:10M, FOR ORIENTATION ONLY · LAY ON THE CHART AND REGISTER ON THE MARKS · GRATICULE 30 MINUTES

APPENDIX 1 TO ANNEX B

CHARTS	IIM 916 · IIM 917 · BA 1985
SCALE	APPROX 1:1 500 000 AS BOUND
DATUM	WGS 84 · DEG AND DEC MIN
DTG	031400ZNOV26
ORIGINATOR	CINCNAV / N2 MARITIME INTELLIGENCE
SHEET	1 OF 1

COLLECTION OVERLAY

NAIS, COLLECTORS AND ASSESSED DISPOSITION
EVERY PLACEMENT OF AN UNKNOWN IS AN ASSESSMENT

- NAMED AREA OF INTEREST
- ASSESSED SUBSURFACE APPROACH SECTOR
- SURFACE APPROACH TO WATCH
- POSSIBLE MOVEMENT, IF PRESENT
- FRIENDLY COLLECTION AREA OR ORBIT
- ASSESSED JAMMING RADIUS
- UNDERSEA CABLE (APPROXIMATE)
- PISQ DANGER AREA (REFERENCE)

NAMED AREAS OF INTEREST · ANNEX B PARA 7

NAI 01	RUSSIAN STATION PIR 1 3 4 · SCHERGAT, ORACLE 1
NAI 02	CABLE SOUTH, TYRRHENIAN LINK 1 PIR 1 · FASAN, HAWK 21, MPA
NAI 03	CABLE NORTH, SAPEI / JANNA 2 PIR 1 · MPA, P-8A
NAI 04	QUIRRA WATCH PIR 2 · ORACLE 1, CIGALA, SCHERGAT
NAI 05	SUBSURFACE APPROACH SE PIR 1 · FASAN, MPA
NAI 06	SURFACE APPROACH EAST PIR 3 · MPA RADAR, ORACLE 1
NAI 07	SURFACE APPROACH SOUTH PIR 3 · FASAN, MPA RADAR
NAI 08	CAPO COMINO PIR 5 · SCHERGAT

APP-6 FRAME = AFFILIATION

- FRIENDLY (ITALY, NATO)
- RUSSIAN — NOT HOSTILE TODAY
- NEUTRAL / CIVILIAN
- UNKNOWN / ASSESSED

GN
DECL 3°E 2026

0 — 20 — 40 NAUTICAL MILES

GRADING · SOURCE A–F, INFORMATION 1–6 · ANNEX B
NOTHING HERE IS AN OBSERVATION: UNIT POSITIONS ARE THOSE EXPECTED AT 031600Z. PIRS ARE NOT ANSWERED BY WATCHING THE GROUP ALONE.

C

Operations

ANNEX C TO OPORD 26-044 · DTG 031400ZNOV26 · ORIGINATOR CINCNAV/N3

1. PHASING

PHASE	FROM	AIM	ENDS WHEN
1 NIGHT ONE	031600Z	Shadow established; ASW on the approaches and a cable; ORACLE 1 baseline; first SIGINT requests; AIS picture	040200Z, Rome's request
2 INTERIM	040200Z	State of the evidence asked; interim assessment, or NOT YET DETERMINED, sent to Rome	Interim sent, or 040500Z
3 DAY · WINDOW 1	040500Z	Range cleared and held for window 1 (about 0800Z–1100Z); the group watched and heard around it; HAWK 21 recovered before the mistral; daylight identification	041600Z
4 NIGHT TWO · FINAL	041600Z	Range cleared for window 2 (about 1800Z–2100Z); the group followed if it moves; **final assessment before 050400Z**, with a secondary if the evidence carries one	050400Z
CONTINUOUS	031600Z	Cables watched; range kept safe; no incident; Rome answered	050400Z

2. DECISION POINTS

DP	TRIGGER	DECISION	INFORMATION REQUIRED
DP 1 ASW	H-hour; then each P-72A landing	Where the next sortie searches, and when it launches. **Hours for the second night kept back**	PIR 1. Hours and sonobuoy loads left
DP 2 DATUM	A submarine contact	Hold it with what, and for how long; is it where the group wants us to look?	Where the contact is relative to the group and to a cable; is the destroyer running?
DP 3 INTERIM	Rome's request, 040200Z	An activity, or NOT YET DETERMINED	An evidence summary asked in time to read it before 0500Z
DP 4 RANGE	Ninety minutes before each window	Which hull turns a Russian ship out; who escorts the fishermen	PIR 4. Who is inside the area
DP 5 MISTRAL	METEOMAR warning	Recover HAWK 21; move the P-72A effort to before or after the height	PIR 6. Onset and its error
DP 6 P-8A	Any time	Ask CTF 67 for a sortie, and for which task	A task worth a P-8A for about 5 hours, transit included. **One asked for nothing is noticed**
DP 7 FINAL	Rome's call during night two; **at the latest 050400Z**	The final assessment; then any secondary	An evidence summary; the record of what was seen

3. SHADOWING THE GROUP

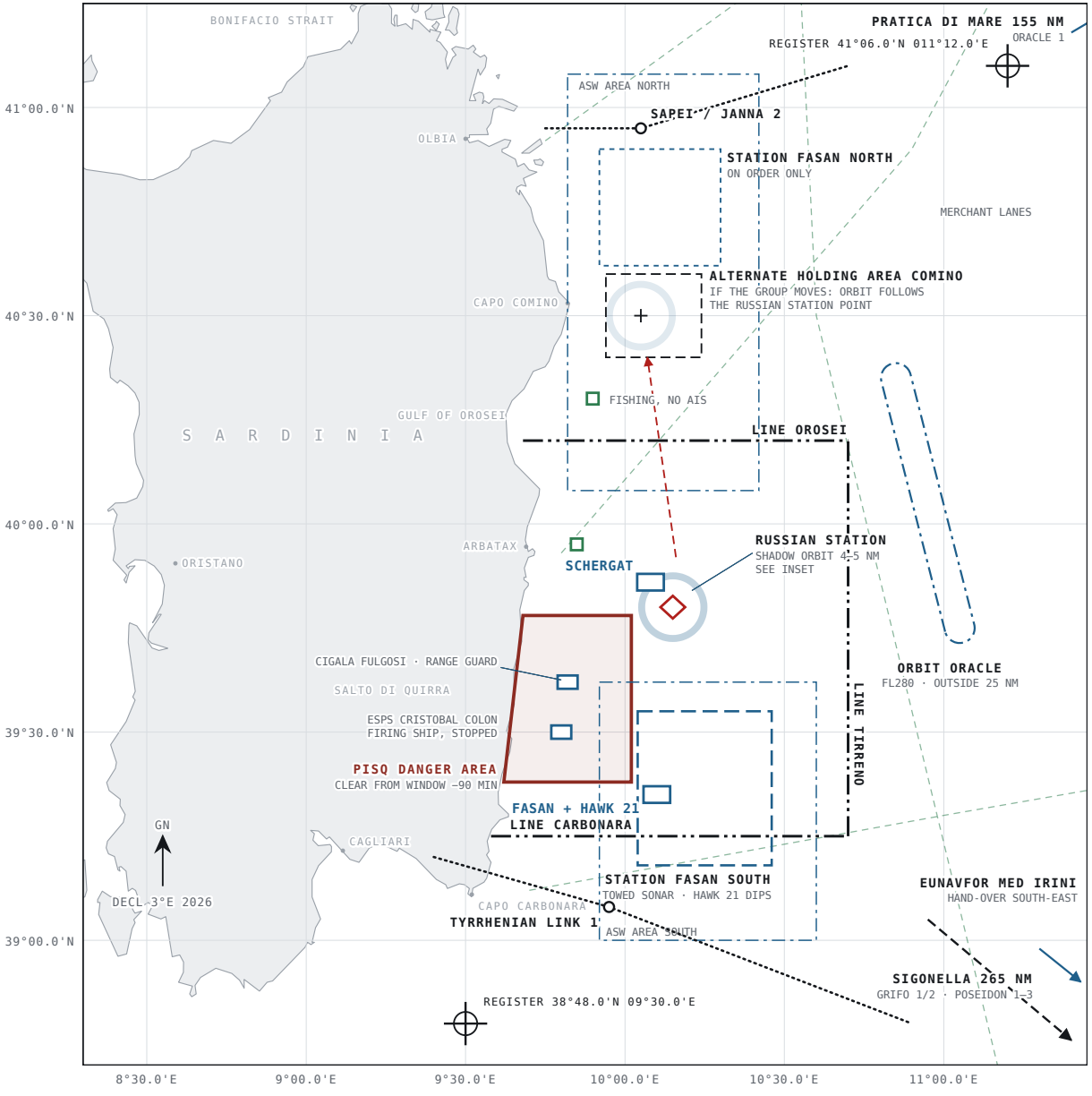
(NR) SCHERGAT keeps the group in sight and on radar from the **shadow orbit, 4 to 5 nm from the RUSSIAN STATION reference point**. The group holds one to three miles from the point, so the orbit keeps her at least a mile from any of them, usually two or more. The reference point is moved by CINCNAV if the group moves; **the orbit moves with it**. From the orbit she can reach the danger area in under an hour and go alongside a ship heading for it. She does not follow the destroyer on a run: FASAN and the aircraft report it, and SCHERGAT stays with the auxiliaries.

4. CONTROL MEASURES

DESIGNATOR	TYPE	GEOMETRY	REMARKS
RUSSIAN STATION	Reference point	39°48.0'N 010°09.0'E moved by CINCNAV	Centre of the group's holding area. **The shadow orbit is drawn on it**
SHADOW ORBIT	Surface station	4–5 nm ring on RUSSIAN STATION	SCHERGAT. Never inside 0.5 nm of SEVEROMORSK by own movement
PISQ DANGER AREA	Danger area, sea	quadrilateral on the reference points NW, NE, SE, SW	West side a straight line from SW to NW. Annex F paragraph 1. **Clear from 90 minutes before each window.** Annex F
TYRRHENIAN LINK 1	Reference point	39°04.8'N 009°57.0'E	Southern cable. Highlighted. Landing at 39°12.0'N 009°24.0'E; TYRRHENIAN LINK 2 at 38°48.0'N 010°54.0'E
SAPEI / JANNA 2	Reference point	40°57.0'N 010°03.0'E	Northern corridor. Highlighted. SAPEI / JANNA 1 at 40°57.0'N 009°45.0'E; 3 at 41°06.0'N 010°42.0'E
STATION FASAN SOUTH	Surface station	39°11'–39°33'N 010°02'–010°28'E	FASAN and HAWK 21. Between the group, the south-eastern approach and the southern cable
STATION FASAN NORTH	Surface station	40°37'–40°54'N 009°55'–010°18'E	On order only. The northern corridor
ASW AREA SOUTH	MPA area	39°00'–39°37'N 009°55'–010°36'E	GRIFO, POSEIDON. SFC–1,500 m
ASW AREA NORTH	MPA area	40°05'–41°05'N 009°49'–010°25'E	GRIFO, POSEIDON. SFC–1,500 m
ORBIT ORACLE	Air orbit	39°45.0'N 011°03.0'E – 40°21.0'N 010°51.0'E	ORACLE 1, FL280. Outside 25 nm of the group. Annex E
LINE OROSEI	Reporting line	40°12'N, coast to 010°42'E	Report the group, or any contact without AIS, crossing it
LINE CARBONARA	Reporting line	39°15'N, coast to 010°42'E	As above. A northbound contact without AIS is reported FLASH
LINE TIRRENO	Reporting line	010°42'E from 39°15'N to 40°12'N	As above. A westbound contact without AIS is reported FLASH
HOLDING AREA COMINO	Alternate holding area	40°24'–40°36'N 009°56'–010°14'E	Where the group went in February. If it goes there, the shadow orbit follows
KILO DATUM	Reference point	laid on contact	Laid by the plot on first submarine contact; moved while contact is held

5. WHEN THE GROUP MOVES

(NR) If the group gets under way north, **SCHERGAT goes with it** and reports its crossing of LINE OROSEI. The northern cable is then the nearer; **consider STATION FASAN NORTH**. The range and its window stay CIGALA FULGOSI's. If the destroyer alone runs, at speed and with her sonar transmitting, **it is a run until it is shown to be something else**: report it, do not chase it.



APPENDIX 1 TO ANNEX C

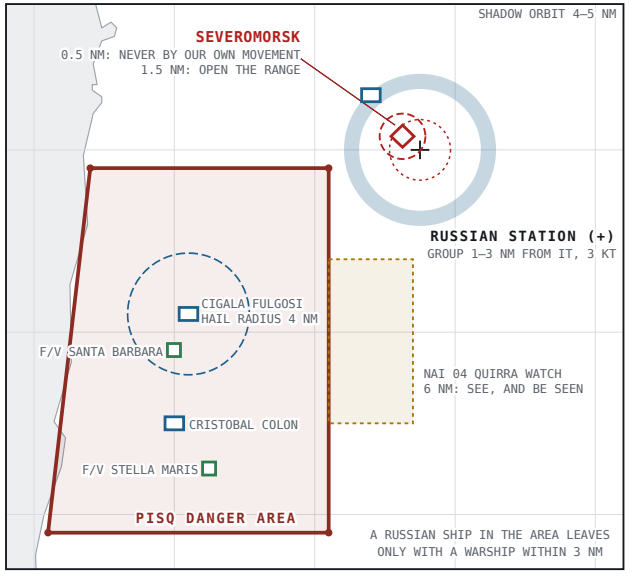
CHARTS	IIM 916 · IIM 917 · BA 1985
SCALE	APPROX 1:1 500 000 · INSET 1:500 000
DATUM	WGS 84 · DEG AND DEC MIN
DTG	031400ZNOV26
ORIGINATOR	CINCNAV / N3
SHEET	1 OF 1

OPERATIONS OVERLAY

OPORD 26-044 · OPERATION NURAGHE · 3–5 NOV 26

- PISQ DANGER AREA (SEA)
- SHADOW ORBIT 4–5 NM ON RUSSIAN STATION
- SHIP STATION (DASHED THIN: ON ORDER)
- ASW AREA / ORACLE ORBIT
- REPORTING LINE
- ALTERNATE HOLDING AREA
- UNDERSEA CABLE (APPROXIMATE)
- MERCHANT LANE (REFERENCE)

INSET · RUSSIAN STATION AND THE RANGE · DISTANCES OF CONDUCT



FRIENDLY · RUSSIAN · CIVILIAN · UNKNOWN

MAIN MAP SCALE

0 — 20 — 40 NAUTICAL MILES

INSET SCALE

0 — 5 — 10 NAUTICAL MILES

COASTLINE NATURAL EARTH 1:10M, FOR ORIENTATION ONLY · LAY ON THE CHART AND REGISTER ON THE MARKS · DISTANCES IN NAUTICAL MILES

D

Anti-submarine warfare and maritime air

ANNEX D TO OPORD 26-044 · TASKING FOR 031600Z–050400Z · 41st WING AND CTF 67 IN SUPPORT

(NR) A maritime support tasking. It allocates aircraft, readiness and areas; CTG 452.1 re-tasks within the allocation without reference. **The anti-submarine effort is finite and is spent once.** Plan it over the whole operation, not the first night.

1. MISSION LINES

MSN	CALLSIGN	TYPE AND FIT	VUL	STATION	TASK
4521	GRIFO 1	P-72A — radar, EO, sonobuoys, MU90 held	on call	ASW AREA SOUTH or NORTH	Submarine; surface picture to the reporting lines. PIR 1, 3
4522	GRIFO 2	P-72A — as above	on call	ASW AREA SOUTH or NORTH	Relief of 4521, or second area
4531	ORACLE 1	SIGINT aircraft	on call	ORBIT ORACLE	Annex E. PIR 2
4541	HAWK 21	SH-90A — dipping sonar, sonobuoys	on call	STATION FASAN SOUTH, or a datum	Close hunt. Not at the height of the mistral
6701–02	POSEIDON 1/2	P-8A — sonobuoys, radar, weapons held	on request	as tasked	Submarine; wide-area surface search. About 5 h under our control, transit included
6703	POSEIDON 3	P-8A	if spared	as tasked	Annex K paragraph 5

2. AIRSPACE AND CONTROL

(NR) Military control by COA and by SCHERGAT for aircraft on task over the group. ASW areas SFC to 1,500 m. **The PISQ danger area is closed to our aircraft below FL150 during a window**, Annex F. Civil traffic transits at altitude.

3. SUBMARINE DETECTION — PLANNING RANGES

SENSOR	PLANNING RANGE	REMARK
POSEIDON 1/2/3, sonobuoy field	10 nm	Only while on task. The best sensor available
VIRGINIO FASAN, CAPTAS-4	10 nm	Continuous, but slower to gain a contact than an aircraft field
GRIFO 1/2, sonobuoy field	8 nm	**Only on a sortie that took sonobuoys**
HAWK 21, dipping sonar	4 nm	Airborne only. None at the height of the mistral
SPARTACO SCHERGAT, hull sonar	4 nm	Little against a quiet diesel boat. She shadows; she does not hunt

(NR) **Degradation.** A boat creeping over a cable is harder to hold than one in transit. A jammed aircraft loses about half its effectiveness. The height of the mistral degrades sonobuoys and hull sonars. If the Kilo signature recorded earlier this autumn is in the library, as the opening message will say, a real Kilo is classified faster.

4. THE SUBMARINE — HELD, NOT ATTACKED

(NR) On first contact the plot lays **KILO DATUM** and moves it while contact is held. A contact lost is reported with its last datum. **Hold a contact near a cable**: a boat that knows she is held, for half an hour or so in all, is assessed to break off and leave, and the contact is the evidence Rome can publish. **No weapon is released under any circumstances short of Annex G serial 3.**

5. THE ASW BUDGET

RESOURCE	FOR THE OPERATION	RULE
P-72A flying hours, GRIFO 1 and 2 together	22 h	Counted airborne, **transit included** (about an hour each way from Sigonella). Warning at 8 h and 4 h left. At none: both crews ordered home and their sensors no longer count
Sonobuoy loads, Sigonella	4 sorties	Each P-72A take-off draws one load. **A sortie without a load flies with radar and cameras only**
P-8A sorties, CTF 67	2 (+1)	On request. The third only if NATO can spare it. Only one in all if NATO says it cannot
HAWK 21	–	Limited by the deck and the weather, not by a budget

(NR) **A planning shape, not an order.** One P-72A sortie a night on the area the evidence points to; a P-8A where the P-72A cannot be, or to cover the other cable; FASAN's towed array continuous; HAWK 21 on a datum. Twenty-two hours is about four sorties of three and a half hours on task, once the transit (about an hour each way) is counted. **A crew out of hours before the second night leaves the second night to the P-8A.**

6. WEAK CONTACTS AND DECOYS

(NR) Expect weak sonobuoy and dipping-sonar contacts that fade: biologics, wrecks, a fishing boat's noise. **Expect the destroyer to offer a submarine**: a contact under the group, intermittent, while her own sonar is transmitting, is to be reported with a grading and not chased with the whole effort. A contact that holds, moves as a submarine moves, and goes where a cable is, is a different matter.

7. SURFACE SEARCH

(NR) Every MPA sortie also builds the surface picture to the reporting lines. **A large contact without AIS** moving towards the group, or stopped near KAMA, is reported FLASH with position, course and speed, and photographed from within **8 nm** if she lies alongside. A fishing boat without AIS is a fishing boat once it has been looked at.

8. JAMMING

(NR) Within about 15 nm of SEVEROMORSK aircraft are to expect GNSS and radar jamming; within 25 nm if Moscow has hardened its line. Search the approaches and the cables from outside it where the task allows; accept it where the task does not, and grade what comes back accordingly.

E

Signals intelligence and ELINT collection

ANNEX E TO OPORD 26-044 · WITH COA AND THE CII · REL NATO

1. THE QUESTION

(NR) Whether the group is collecting on the NATO firing (PIR 2), and what its traffic says about the rest. A collector does not need to enter the danger area to record the range: **the best seat is just outside it, facing the batteries**, NAI 04, with the firing ship and the target drones in the line of sight.

2. ORACLE 1

ITEM	INSTRUCTION
Orbit	ORBIT ORACLE, 39°45.0'N 011°03.0'E to 40°21.0'N 010°51.0'E, FL280. About 40 nm from the group: **inside receiving range, outside the jamming**
Priority	**On orbit before each window** and through it: the hour before the opening, when receivers are tuned, and the firing itself, when emitters and datalinks switch on with the launches
Night one	A baseline of the group's emitters when nothing is firing. What changes later is what matters
Listen for	SPARTA IV's receivers sweeping the Quirra radar bands; datalink and emissions in step with the firing; the destroyer's radars and jammers
Endurance	A long day on station, not two. Plan the sorties round the two windows

3. EYES ON THE LISTENING SEAT

(NR) A signal alone is graded; **a signal with a ship seen doing it is evidence**. If the destroyer or SPARTA IV takes position facing the range before a window, put a ship or an aircraft **within about 6 nm** of her from an hour before the opening to the close: her position against the danger area, SPARTA IV's AIS state, her antennas, photographed. SCHERGAT from the shadow orbit, or CIGALA FULGOSI from the range guard, can do it without leaving her task.

4. SIGINT ANALYSIS ON REQUEST

(NR) The analysts at the CII read recent intercepts and return **a graded assessment in 30 to 60 minutes**. **Four requests are available for the operation.** An assessment can be wrong; a high grade is not a certainty and a low one is not a dismissal. Use them early enough to act on them, and late enough to have something to read.

5. AIS

(NR) The Guardia Costiera AIS picture, on request, lists every ship transmitting: the ferries, the traders, KAMA, and SPARTA IV **if she is transmitting**. A ship that switches off near a window, or a large ship that never switched on, is reported.

6. EMISSION CONTROL

(NR) Our own radars and datalinks are recorded by the group as much as theirs by us. Normal emissions for navigation and safety; no fire-control radar on any Russian unit; **nothing that the group can present as targeting**.

F

Range coordination — Salto di Quirra

ANNEX F TO OPORD 26-044 · WITH PISQ RANGE CONTROL · EXTRACT OF REFERENCE E

BOTTOM LINE

(NR) **The NATO firing is Italy's to protect.** A window lost because our own range was not clear is noticed in Madrid, Brussels and Naples, and the Region counts what the range costs. **A Russian warship inside the danger area at the opening cancels the window. A fishing boat inside it postpones the window by an hour, and cancels it if still there.**

1. THE DANGER AREA

(NR) The sea danger area of the Poligono Interforze del Salto di Quirra for this firing is the quadrilateral joining the reference points **PISQ DANGER AREA NW** 39°46.8'N 009°40.8'E, **NE** 39°46.8'N 010°01.2'E, **SE** 39°22.8'N 010°01.2'E and **SW** 39°22.8'N 009°37.2'E: north and south sides along the parallels, east side along the meridian of 010°01.2'E, west side a straight line from SW to NW, close along the coast. ESPS CRISTOBAL COLON fires from inside it; the Quirra batteries from ashore; the targets are drones.

2. THE WINDOWS

WINDOW	PLANNED	LENGTH	REMARK
WINDOW 1	about 040800Z	3 h	Exact time in the NOTAM relayed at H-hour. Mistral possibly setting in
WINDOW 2	about 041800Z	3 h	After dark. Mistral possibly at its height

3. CLEARANCE PROCEDURE

WHEN	ACTION	BY
W − 120 min	Watch NAI 04 and the group: who is moving towards the range	SCHERGAT, ORACLE 1
W − 90 min	**Clearance begins.** Every fishing boat inside is hailed on VHF 16 and escorted out, by a warship **within 4 nm** or an aircraft **below 1,500 m within 3 nm**	CIGALA FULGOSI; HAWK 21 or MPA
W − 90 min	A Russian ship heading into the area is met. **She leaves only when a warship is alongside, within 3 nm**, and reads her the NOTAM on channel 16. No weapon, no illumination	SCHERGAT, or the nearest warship
W − 60 min	PISQ range control lists everything inside the area, with the fishing boats' positions	PISQ
W	Opening: **FIRING**, **POSTPONED** one hour, or **CANCELLED**	PISQ
W to W + 3 h	Area kept clear to the end. Boats that drift in are escorted out again	CIGALA FULGOSI

(NR) Boats **drift into the area without warning**, in the dark, in the hours before a window. Clearing it once at W − 90 is not enough; keep looking until the window closes. A boat is escorted, never threatened, and her skipper's name goes to MRSC Cagliari.

4. AIRSPACE

(NR) During a window the area is closed to our aircraft below FL150. HAWK 21 and the MPA clear boats **before** the opening, not during the firing.

5. IF THE DESTROYER COMES IN

(NR) She will come fast and late, to make the window our problem. **Be alongside before she arrives**, keep between 1.5 and 3 nm, read the NOTAM, and let her choose to turn. **The 0.5 nm rule still applies**: she may close us; we do not close her.

G

Rules of engagement — aide-memoire

ANNEX G TO OPORD 26-044 · EXTRACT OF REFERENCE B

(NR) This card is an extract and an aid to memory. **It does not replace reference B.** Where the card is silent or differs, the reference governs.

TG 452.1 — VALID 031600Z TO 050400Z — CARRY THIS CARD	
SERIAL 1	**Weapons tight in every domain: air, surface, subsurface and land.** No unit opens fire, illuminates in fire control or launches a weapon short of serial 3.
SERIAL 2	**Subsurface weapons on HOLD**, for the task group and for every aircraft under its control. No torpedo and no depth charge, for any reason. A submarine is hunted to be held, not attacked.
SERIAL 3	**Self-defence is never denied**, against the unit that fires, and only that unit. **Italy does not fire first.** A bow crossing, an order on channel 16, jamming, a fire-control radar: none of these is a hostile act.
SERIAL 4	**No Italian ship closes a Russian warship within 0.5 nm by the Italian ship's own movement.** An Italian ship closing to 1.5 nm by her own movement opens the range.
SERIAL 5	**No Russian ship is stopped, boarded, fired across or obstructed.** A Russian ship heading into the danger area is met alongside and informed; she turns out of her own choice.
SERIAL 6	**No boarding by this task group**, of any ship. A shadow-fleet tanker is followed and handed to Irini, Annex H.
SERIAL 7	**Fishing boats** are hailed and escorted. No warning shot, no force.
SERIAL 8	**No weapon is directed at SEVEROMORSK, KAMA, SPARTA IV**, or any vessel in their company, other than under serial 3.

A NOTE ON POSTURE

(NR) The destroyer's task is to make an Italian commander either back off or do something that the television can use. **Her bow crossing is an argument, not an attack.** A close pass by one of our ships, however well meant, becomes an Italian incident in Moscow's version within the hour; a round fired for any reason becomes the only story of the week, and hands Moscow a hostile group off our coast.

REPORTING

(NR) Every bow crossing, close pass, jamming episode and fire-control lock-on is reported with time, position and the distances involved. **Record who closed whom.** Any injury to any person is reported immediately, in clear.

ANNEX G TO OPORD 26-044 — PAGE G-1 OF G-1

H

Legal — law of the sea, cables and Irini

ANNEX H TO OPORD 26-044 · WITH THE LEGAL ADVISER, CINCNAV · EXTRACT OF REFERENCES D AND G

1. WHERE THE GROUP IS

(NR) The holding area lies about 25 nm off the coast, **beyond the territorial sea**. There every state enjoys freedom of navigation (UNCLOS arts 58 and 87). **Holding station there is lawful**, however unwelcome. Italy may watch, follow, photograph and record; it may not order the group away.

2. WHO THE SHIPS ARE

(NR) SEVEROMORSK is a warship; KAMA and SPARTA IV are state ships on non-commercial service. **All three enjoy complete immunity** (arts 32, 95 and 96): no stopping, no boarding, no inspection, no arrest. Any complaint about their conduct is made by Rome to Moscow.

3. THE CABLES

(NR) Laying and keeping cables on the continental shelf is a freedom of all states (arts 58 and 79); wilful damage to a cable is an offence that states must punish (art. 113). Both cable reference points lie outside the territorial sea. **A submarine near a cable there has committed nothing until she damages it**, and a submerged warship retains her immunity. Italy's answer is to be there, to hold her, and to make the record public; not to attack her.

4. THE TERRITORIAL SEA

(NR) A submarine in the territorial sea must navigate on the surface and show her flag (art. 20). A submerged contact **inside the 12 nm limit** is reported FLASH; this order authorises no action against it.

5. A SHADOW-FLEET TANKER

IF THE TANKER…	STATUS	WHAT TG 452.1 DOES
Transmits AIS and a valid flag	Subject to her flag state only	Observes, photographs, reports
Transmits nothing, and her flag is doubtful	Possibly without nationality (art. 110(1)(d))	Observes, photographs, reports. **Hands her track to Irini** as she leaves
Lies alongside KAMA	The transfer is not itself unlawful on the high seas	Photographs it: **the evidence is for the courts and the sanctions, not for us**

6. HAND-OVER TO EUNAVFOR MED IRINI

(NR) Irini has the mandate and the legal file to visit a ship without nationality, as it did west of Pantelleria on 2 August. The hand-over is offered **once the tanker is leaving**, while one of our ships is within **25 nm** of her or an aircraft within **40 nm**, so that Irini receives a live track and not a memory. Report: name if seen, position, course, speed, photographs. **The decision to board is Irini's, not ours.**

7. THE FISHERMEN AND THE RANGE

(NR) The danger area is promulgated by NOTAM and by avviso ai naviganti under the authority of the Capitaneria di Porto. A fishing boat inside it is informed, then escorted out. A Russian warship inside it cannot be compelled; she is informed, and the window decision is PISQ's.

8. EVIDENCE

(NR) Photographs, sonar recordings, SIGINT products and bridge logs are kept unedited, time-stamped and with their sources. **What Rome can say in public depends on what the force can produce.**

J

Communications and reporting

ANNEX J TO OPORD 26-044 · VALID 031600Z TO 050400Z

1. NETS

NET	PRIMARY	SECONDARY	USERS
Command	Secure satellite	HF secure	CTG 452.1, CINCNAV operations centre. Secure only
Task group	Link 16 / voice	264.600 UHF	SCHERGAT, FASAN, CIGALA FULGOSI, HAWK 21
Maritime air	Link 16	249.850 UHF	GRIFO, POSEIDON, ORACLE 1, SCHERGAT
Range	VHF 72	secure phone	PISQ range control, CIGALA FULGOSI, CRISTOBAL COLON
Bridge to bridge	VHF 16	VHF 06	Hailing, NOTAM, fishermen. **Guarded and recorded throughout**

2. CODEWORDS

CODEWORD	MEANING
CORAL	Submarine contact. KILO DATUM follows, with grading
ANCHOR CHAIN	Submarine contact held over or near a cable. Followed by the cable
LOOSE END	Submarine contact lost. Last datum follows
CUTLINE	Cable operator alert or fault. Followed by the cable and the operator's words
GALLERY	A Russian ship in position facing the range (NAI 04)
BLACKOUT	SPARTA IV, or any ship of the group, has switched her AIS off
HOSEPIPE	A ship without AIS alongside KAMA, or closing her
SHEEN	Oil in the water
BATON	Track handed to EUNAVFOR MED Irini
SWEEP	Danger area clear. Followed by the window
TRESPASS	A Russian ship heading into, or inside, the danger area
BOWWAVE	SEVEROMORSK has crossed our bow. Followed by the distance
MAESTRALE	METEOMAR mistral warning received. Followed by the forecast onset
GRANITE	An Italian unit has been fired upon. Annex G serial 3 applies

3. THE ASSESSMENT TO ROME

(NR) **Four statements, no others.** SUBMARINE NEAR THE CABLES · ELINT ON THE QUIRRA FIRING · OIL TRANSFER AT SEA · SHOW OF PRESENCE ONLY. For the interim only: NOT YET DETERMINED.

(NR) **Sent in two steps.** The commander selects a statement, then confirms it. **A statement selected and not confirmed has not reached Rome.** Selecting a different statement replaces the selection.

ASSESSMENT	WINDOW	RULE
INTERIM	040200Z–040500Z	Asked by Rome at 0200Z. **The first assessment confirmed in this window while Rome holds nothing yet**, or NOT YET DETERMINED. **Does not bind the final.** No answer by 0500Z is itself an answer, and a bad one
FINAL	before 050400Z	**The next assessment confirmed after the interim**, even before 0500Z. **One confirmed before 0200Z is already the final** and also counts as the interim. After 0500Z with no interim sent, the first confirmed is the final. It closes the question
SECONDARY	after the final	One more activity, once. **Not SHOW OF PRESENCE**, and not after a final of SHOW OF PRESENCE

(NR) Rome will call for the final during the second night and will call once more before the deadline. **Ask the analysts for the state of the evidence before you answer**, and send with the assessment what supports it.

4. OTHER REPORTS

(NR) SITREP to CINCNAV every four hours. FLASH for CORAL, ANCHOR CHAIN, CUTLINE, TRESPASS, HOSEPIPE, SHEEN and GRANITE, and for any casualty. Rome hears of every bow crossing from CINCNAV **before** it hears of it from TASS.

5. EMISSION CONTROL, AUTHENTICATION AND THE RECORD

(NR) Challenge before any codeword is accepted on a non-secure net. Bridge video and audio in SCHERGAT and FASAN, HAWK 21's and the MPA's imagery and channel 16 are recorded from the first hour. **Nothing is edited.**

K

Public affairs and political coordination

ANNEX K TO OPORD 26-044 · WITH COVI AND THE PRESIDENCY OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

1. THE CHAIN

(NR) CTG 452.1 → CINCNAV → COVI → the Minister of Defence and Palazzo Chigi, with the Farnesina informed. Rome speaks; the task group does not. **What the commander decides at sea moves opinion far more than anything said in Rome.**

2. WHAT ROME IS WATCHING

(NR) The Government weighs three things: Italy's **standing abroad**, **opinion at home** and **the allies' confidence**. It will not give the commander figures. Palazzo Chigi will say when one of them is falling dangerously, and it will say so twice. **A third time, there is no longer a government to report to**, and the operation ends.

3. EVENTS AND ANSWERS

(NR) Demands will reach the commander through CINCNAV throughout: Moscow on freedom of navigation, MARCOM Northwood for the picture, Madrid on the safety of the firing, ANSA and the evening news, *L'Unione Sarda* and the Ogliastra mayors, the President of the Region, the fishermen of Arbatax, TASS, COPASIR on the cables, Terna and Sparkle, the Kremlin, Brussels on Irini and the shadow fleet, the markets on power prices, and Palazzo Chigi's own briefings. **Each comes with the answers that would serve and a window of half an hour.** A demand left unanswered costs. The levers are:

LEVER	SERVES	NEEDS
Press briefing	Opinion at home	Not more than every ninety minutes
Summon the Russian ambassador	Standing abroad; a little allied confidence	Not more than every three hours
Brief the allies	Allied confidence	Not more than every two hours
Release the shadowing photographs	Opinion; allied confidence	**Once.** Afterwards the Government is committed in public: the final assessment then matters twice over, whether it proves right or wrong

4. THE ASSESSMENT AND THE PRESS

(NR) **Do not let the press decide the assessment.** The Region wants the fishermen left alone, the mayors want the Russians gone, Moscow wants an incident, and the markets want the cables safe. None of them is evidence.

5. NATO AND THE P-8A

(NR) Two P-8A sorties are Italy's for the asking. A third is a request to NATO for something it may need elsewhere this week, **depending on how the Baltic and Ushant went**; it is refused while the allies are not confident of our handling, and may be asked again after an hour. **A sortie called for and spent on nothing is noticed in Naples.**

6. LINES TO TAKE

- Italy respects the freedom of navigation of every state, including Russia's, and expects the same respect for its range and its cables.
- The Navy is following the Russian ships closely and professionally, as it did in February.
- The NATO exercise at Quirra is conducted safely, with the sea area kept clear.
- The Italian Navy has not fired and will not fire first.

L

Meteorological and oceanographic forecast

ANNEX L TO OPORD 26-044 · ORIGINATOR METEOMAR / CNMCA · ISSUED 031200ZNOV26

BOTTOM LINE

(NR) A quiet first night and a **mistral** to come. **North-westerly force 7 to 8 is expected over the Sardinian and Tyrrhenian seas on 4 November**, setting in during the morning and lasting most of the day and into the second night. The models disagree on the onset by several hours. **METEOMAR will issue a warning with a forecast onset during the evening of 3 November**; the forecast time is a forecast, with its own error.

1. AREA FORECAST — EAST OF SARDINIA, CAGLIARI TO OLBIA

STAGE	DURATION	WIND	SEA STATE	HELICOPTER	SONAR
Now	until onset	variable 5–10 kt	3 (slight)	Normal	Normal
Rising	about 1 h	NW 25–30, rising	5 (rough)	**Recover HAWK 21**	Degrading
Height	10 to 14 h	NW 34–40, G 50	6 (very rough)	**No deck operations, no dipping**	Sonobuoys and hull sonars degraded
Easing	about 1.5 h	NW 25	5 (rough)	With care	Recovering
After	to end	NW 12–16	4 (moderate)	Normal	Normal

Air 16°C. Visibility good, excellent in the mistral. Confidence in the sequence: **high**. Confidence in the onset time: **low** until the warning. Fixed-wing aircraft fly through it.

2. ASTRONOMICAL AND OCEANOGRAPHIC DATA — 39°48'N 009°54'E

ITEM	3 NOV	4 NOV	5 NOV
Nautical twilight begins	—	0452Z	0453Z
Sunrise	—	0552Z	—
Sunset	1616Z	1615Z	—
Nautical twilight ends	1716Z	1715Z	—
Moonrise	—	about 0045Z	about 0152Z
Moon	Waning crescent, about 27 % lit. **Dark nights until moonrise**		
Sea temperature	19°C at the surface; mixed layer 50–70 m, deepening in the mistral		
Depths	Shelf narrow off Ogliastra; over 1,000 m within 15 nm of the coast. Cables on the slope and the shelf		

3. AERODROME FORECASTS

LICZ 031100Z 0312/0412 VRB05KT 9999 FEW030
LIRE 031100Z 0312/0412 02006KT 9999 SCT035
Extended forecasts withheld pending the mistral warning.

ANNEX L TO OPORD 26-044 — PAGE L-1 OF L-1

M

References, charts and abbreviations

ANNEX M TO OPORD 26-044

1. CHARTS AND REFERENCE POINTS

ITEM	DETAIL
Charts	IIM 916 and 917 (east coast of Sardinia), BA 1985 (Tyrrhenian Sea, southern part)
Datum	WGS 84. Degrees and decimal minutes unless otherwise stated
Reference points on the plot	TYRRHENIAN LINK (landing), 1 and 2 · SAPEI / JANNA 1, 2 and 3 · PISQ DANGER AREA NW, NE, SE and SW · RUSSIAN STATION (moved with the group) · KILO DATUM on contact. TYRRHENIAN LINK 1 and SAPEI / JANNA 2 highlighted

2. ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THIS ORDER

AIS Automatic identification system
ASW Anti-submarine warfare
CII Joint intelligence centre
CINCNAV Commander in Chief Naval Fleet
CNMCA National meteorological centre
COA Air operations command; course of action
COPASIR Parliamentary intelligence committee
COVI Joint operations command
CTF / CTG Commander task force / group
DP Decision point
DTG Date-time group
ELINT Electronic intelligence
FREMM European multi-mission frigate
GNSS Satellite navigation
MPA Maritime patrol aircraft
MRSC Maritime rescue sub-centre
NAI Named area of interest
NOTAM Notice to airmen and mariners
PIR Priority intelligence requirement
PISQ Salto di Quirra joint range
SIGINT Signals intelligence
SSK Diesel-electric submarine
UNCLOS UN Convention on the Law of the Sea
VUL Vulnerability period

3. OVERLAYS

(NR) Appendix 1 to Annex B (collection) and Appendix 1 to Annex C (operations) are bound after their annexes. The coastline is drawn for orientation only; lay each on the chart and register on its marks. The operations overlay carries an inset of the station and the range at a larger scale. Annex I is not used.

PROVENANCE

A fictional document for the Command: Modern Operations scenario **Sardinia Station, 2026 — The Ogliastra Watch**, third scenario of the *Europe 2026* campaign, by totobimbo. It is written from inside a headquarters at 031400Z and states what a staff believed at that hour, which is not the same as what is true.

All personal names, callsigns, frequencies, codewords, serials, events, quotations and intelligence products are invented, as is any submarine or tanker mission. Military units, bases and aircraft types, the Salto di Quirra range, the Tyrrhenian Link, SAPEI and Janna cables, Terna, Sparkle and EUNAVFOR MED Irini are real; their presence and actions on this date are a projection. The February 2026 station off Ogliastra and the August boarding west of Pantelleria are real; the reason for the February station was never established. No part of this document reflects any actual order or assessment of any armed force.

ANNEX M TO OPORD 26-044 — PAGE M-1 OF M-1 — END OF ORDER