

LIBYA WORKING GROUP  
FILE

Talking Points for the DCI  
29 January 1986

Libyan Military Reaction and Threat to US Operations

The Libyan military approach to the US operations in the Tripoli Flight Information Region (FIR) has been increasingly cautious. Tripoli clearly is attempting to avoid a clash with the US outside the Gulf of Sidra.

- Last week, several Mig-23 and Mig-25 interceptors were sent to identify the US fighters in the FIR.
- Over the weekend, Libyan aircraft increasingly concentrated on reconnaissance of the Gulf of Sidra and defensive patrols, with fewer approaches to US fighters.
- This week, Libyan fighters have been ordered not to approach US aircraft outside the Gulf of Sidra.
- No Libyan Navy ships have approached our fleet--a notable difference from the energetic Libyan Navy reaction to ships that lingered in the central Mediterranean in years past.

Tripoli has used the general alert that has been in effect all month to refine and tighten its command and control.

- The national Air Defense Headquarters in Tripoli has, for example, asserted more direct control of the coastal air defense sectors than had been heretofore demonstrated.
- This probably reflects Qadhafi's desire to avoid an accidental clash sparked by a local commander. Lapses in military professionalism continue to occur, however, and the potential for an accidental clash remains.

The readiness of the Libyan air, naval, and air defense forces remains high, largely because they have carefully paced themselves over the last two weeks.

- They probably can sustain this level of operations for at least another week and can achieve a peak operations tempo with no further preparation. At their peak, the Libyan Air Force can scramble as many as 125 separate fighter aircraft a day, and sortie over 20 ships with about a dozen missile boats and submarines operating near the Gulf.
- All of Libya's fighter pilots are capable of firing their



air-to-air missiles. Perhaps 10% are capable of holding their own in encounters with US fighter pilots. We believe the squadron of Syrian Mig-23 pilots in Libya will take orders and fight as if they were Libyans. They are better than the average Libyan pilot, but not the best in the country. The greatest air threat is posed by Libya's 15 or so Flogger-Gs, the new variant of the MiG-23 that became operational in Libya last summer.

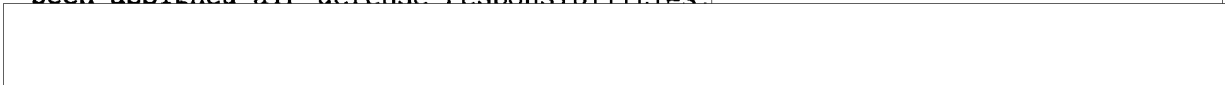
- Probably only one quarter of Libya's 31 missile ships can fire its missiles. Training, manning, and maintenance shortfalls prevent a more effective rate. We have no information as to which missile ships pose the greatest threat.




25X1

Libya's new SA-5 complex at Surt has become operational and has been assigned air defense responsibilities.


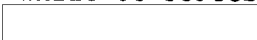
25X1  
25X1




- It is probably capable of acquiring, designating, and firing at a target, but probably cannot handle several targets in rapid succession or reload quickly.

-  the Libyans have operational control and are manning the complex; both they and the Soviets believe they can fire a missile.

25X1

- The Soviets have asked the Libyans not to operate the SA-5s while US forces are in the area, but   Tripoli is ignoring the request.

25X1  
25X1

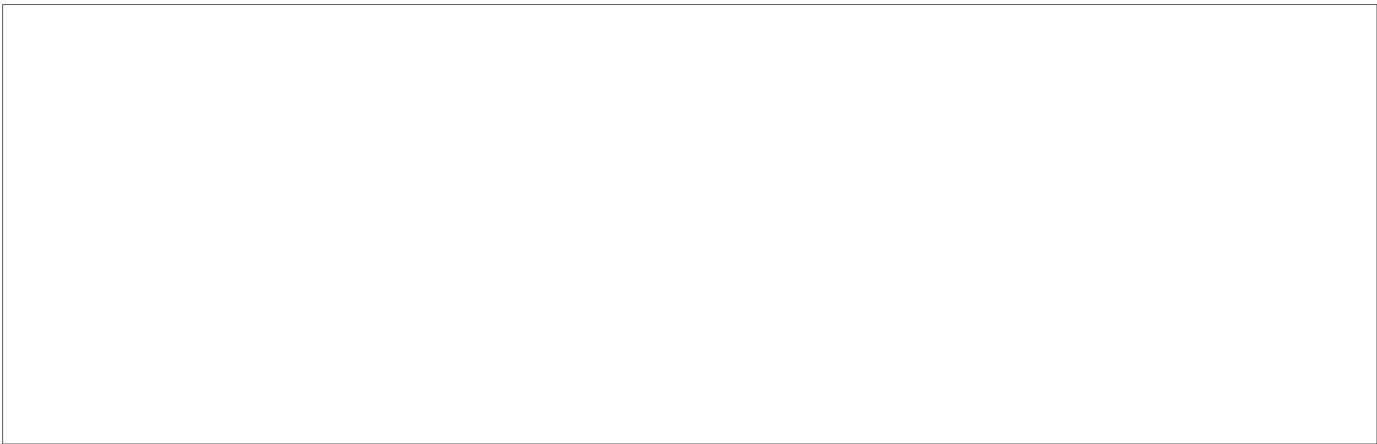
- Further SA-5 complexes are intended, and additional SA-5 equipment has been delivered to Libya 

25X1  
25X1



Tripoli's tactics for opposing a US air penetration of the Gulf show a misperception of the capabilities of its SA-5s.

25X1





DISTRIBUTION:

- Copy 1 - DCI
- Copy 2 - DDI
- Copy 3 - NIO/NESA
- Copy 4 - NIO/CT
- Copy 5 - D/NESA
- Copy 6 - NESA/AI
- Copy 7-10 - NESA/AI/M

DDI/NESA/AI/M,



29 Jan 86

SECRET