



Clandestine Threat Command

Future Planning and Capabilities

Operation Altair - Gold Commander's Strategy

Contents

[TOC \o "1-3" \h \z \u]

Gold Commander Strategy

The UK faces an increased threat from illegal migration through small boat crossings and other high-risk clandestine entry methods, plus the organised crime groups (OCG) that facilitate organised immigration crime (OIC). OCGs have no respect for life or the integrity and security of sovereign borders. This strategy outlines the purpose and scope of Operation Altair and the role of the Gold Command Structure in responding to the threat posed by small boat crossings ('the threat') by coordinating a cross-government, multi-agency operational response.

The Gold Commander (GC) assumes and retains command for Operation Altair or any critical incident involving small boats [and other forms of high risk clandestine entry to the UK], holding overall responsibility and authority for the Gold Strategy and any tactical parameters that the Silver or Bronze Commanders should follow. The GC is responsible for ensuring any tactics deployed are proportionate to the risks identified, meet the objectives of the GC strategy and are legally compliant, as well as coordinating the Gold Command group response.

Operational Campaign Plan (OCP)

The UK Government response to small boats is led by the Clandestine Channel Threat Command (CCTC), through the Operational Campaign Plan (OCP) which aims to deliver the Strategic End State as follows: ***Migrants have been dissuaded from using small boats or other high-risk means to reach the UK illegally and the route is unviable for organised criminals to profit from.***

The OCP consists of five strategic objectives. These are not listed in priority order and carry equal weight:

1. **Reduce supply** - Reduce the pool of people in Calais seeking to illegally cross the Channel, by reducing inward flows to France and dispersing those already in the Calais area.
2. **Remove opportunity** - Minimise the opportunities and resources available to those seeking clandestine entry, by bearing down on facilitators and hardening border security.
3. **Prevent entry** - Stop attempts to cross the border illegally, including by intercepting and returning boats in the Channel and through other detection activity at ports.
4. **Increase deterrence** - Reform the asylum system, increase penalties and maximise returns – thereby removing the incentives for people to seek to reach the UK via small boat or other dangerous methods.

5. **Control arrivals** - Robust, resilient management of arrivals, from first contact onwards, to ensure safety, exploit opportunities for criminal investigation and maximise returns.

What is Operation Altair?

Operation Altair is a cross-Government, multi-agency response to the threat of illegal migration in small boats ('the threat'). It forms part of the overarching CCTC OCP, in particular strategic objectives two (Prevent Entry) and five (Control Arrivals).

Operation Altair Strategic Aims

1. **Save Lives** – Provide welfare and medical support to all migrants to prevent death or injury. Ensure the wellbeing, welfare and necessary support of all staff engaged in these events.
2. **Secure the UK Border** – Stop the threat from circumventing or compromising the integrity of the UK border; maximise the opportunity to detect unknown threats, ensuring all intelligence opportunities are exploited including, where possible, the fast time sharing with French partners.
3. **Public Confidence** – Improve public confidence in the UK Government's ability to secure the UK Border and promote national prosperity; ensure an effective media/communications strategy is deployed in respect of unfolding events.
4. **Vulnerability** - Recognise and identify those people who may be vulnerable or "at risk" and/or victims of exploitation, or alternatively those who may pose a risk to others.

Scope of and commencement of Operation Altair

The scope of Operation Altair includes directing all operational activity required to deliver a safe and effective response to the threat, balancing delivery across the strategy's four aims. It includes all air, sea and land-based activity across UK Government, up to and including the handover of migrants into the Home Office asylum system. Operation Altair will be implemented immediately, commencing on 21 December 2020 in readiness for the risks and opportunities which occur at the end of transition on 31 December 2020. As Operation Altair is an overarching response, Operation Haldon, Operation Deveran and any other existing operations relating to the small boats threat will either cease or be absorbed as part of Operation Altair, fully integrating into its command structures.

Operation Altair also includes international engagement to influence and understand French operational planning/responses and coordinate a UK/France response.

Annex A: Operation Altair

Operation Altair - Gold Commander's Strategy

The operational command cell will lead and co-ordinate the focus towards the detection, disruption and deterrence of small boats and high-risk clandestine entry. This will include ensuring necessary resources are stood up in preparation for small boat arrivals, with resourcing and contingency plans in place to respond to the threat. This will be informed by weather assessments of crossing likelihood and intelligence/information relating to any anticipated crossings.

The objectives of Operation Altair are:

1. To deliver the CCTC OCP Strategic end state (as it pertains to small boats) through the mobilisation of all necessary operational capabilities and personnel across UK Government and related agencies.
2. To establish and operate a multi-agency command structure, co-ordinating to ensure operations are delivered in a way which maximises impact and achieves synchronisation across agencies.
3. To coordinate the deployment of all maritime, surface, aerial and land-based personnel and assets to deliver a SOLAS ["Safety of Life At Sea", an international maritime treaty] operation in respect of small boats arrivals, supporting the Maritime and Coastguard Agency who have primacy for SOLAS.
4. When there is no known risk to life, to coordinate all necessary resources and capability to maximise opportunities for the collection of intelligence and evidence for criminal prosecution.
5. To deliver the operation in a manner which maximises public confidence in the Government response, including by working with Home Office Press office, CCTC and Ministers on agile and proactive communications activity.

Annex B: Op Altair Command Structure

As a multi-agency response, Operation Altair will involve a combination of direct tasking, commissioning and influencing relationships within the command structure, respecting the operational independence of partner agencies, for the in-land response to small boat events, including influence (but not direct tasking) of potential maritime (e.g. Cutters) and aerial assets (e.g. fixed wing drones).



Annex C: Specific Deliverables Required for mobilisation

1. Recruit a dedicated Gold and Silver Cadre who are properly trained and familiar with all aspects of the CCTC OCP and operational elements which make up Operation Altair, and the cross-Government capability that comprises the entire operation.
2. A multi-Agency Ops room fully established in the Coastguard HQ in Dover, with sufficient staffing, IT, mapping, charts, etc to realise the full benefit of co-location. This is the preferred location of the silver commanders (and team).
3. A Silver tactical plan refreshed daily and reflecting the resourcing and operational posture of each capability / personnel element reflected in the command structure (note, this should not just list numbers of assets / people but also how they will be used, where they will be deployed, and specific risks and limitations to deployment).
4. Coordinate with partners at a Bronze (operational) level, identifying the correct and regular (daily) 'drum beat' for mobilisation meetings (looking ahead to the next 24 hours), current situation reporting.

Operation Altair - Gold Commander's Strategy

5. Regular (daily) debrief, looking back at the previous 24 hours activity, resources, issues, risks – to cover but not limited to what we did well (and should do again) and what we can do better – looking at all aspects of the operation and if strategic aims were met.
6. Establish an intelligence fusion function to ensure that operations are driven by operational shift briefs which share intelligence, information and data at all times, across planning, mobilisation, debriefing and performance review.
7. A bespoke set of daily and weekly Met Office products which cover the likely risks and limitations to all aspects of the operation (air, sea and land).
8. Capability enhancements which are required to deliver the new maritime posture described in the CCTC OCP (Emergency Rescue Vessel, Uplift in BF Maritime personnel and capability, additional surveillance / ISTAR capability)
9. Assurance of the uplift in French capability funded by the UK Government.
10. Communication and Engagement with relevant government departments, agencies and partners to ensure all understand the scope and responsibility of Operation Altair and are aligned and supportive to achieving its objectives.