

**TOP SECRET
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conducted. With regard to air assets, a wing of 60 aircraft with a supporting package is the minimum component in a US force. Similarly, the size of US naval packages means that the minimum viable contribution to a US naval task group would comprise eight major warships and associated support. Such a deployment would be at the extreme end of UK capacity and it is more likely that niche military capabilities such as Special Forces will be the focus of the UK effort.

10. Defence scientists may have a key role to play. It may be that the extraterrestrials and/or their craft have some critical weakness. Identifying and exploiting this could be the key to victory.

11. The UK operational endstate will have been achieved when it becomes clear that the extraterrestrials pose no threat, or when a threat materialises and is completely neutralised.

Presentation/Media

12. Various science fiction films, TV programmes and books have acclimatised the public to the reality of extraterrestrials. Opinion polls consistently show that over 50% of people believe some UFOs are extraterrestrial in origin. The limited number of psychological studies undertaken on this issue suggests that if the government announces the imminent arrival of extraterrestrials (as it will have to do pre-emptively, to better control the news agenda), societal panic or collapse is unlikely. Essentially, you do not shock people by telling them something that they already believe.

13. Computer games have also played a key part in acclimatising people to the reality of extraterrestrial life – and in particular, the idea that aliens might be hostile. The Sony PlayStation first person shooter franchise *Resistance* illustrates this point and the latest version - *Resistance: Burning Skies* – is a particularly good example. Given the popularity of such games with young people likely to form the basis of resistance should our military be defeated, it is interesting to speculate whether classified information about weapons and tactics that may be useful in fighting an alien occupation could be embedded into the gameplay.

14. A major PR risk is that the MoD's previous line on UFOs (that we have no evidence they are extraterrestrial, that there is no cover-up and that the UFO phenomenon more generally is of no defence significance) will come under scrutiny. Such issues are likely to be overshadowed by the magnitude of the wider situation, but if raised, can be dealt with by pointing out that these lines were true at the time and that the personnel responsible for our previous statements made them in good faith. Furthermore, broadcaster and journalist Nick Pope tends to be the media's first port of call on all UFO-related stories, on the basis of his previous position as head of MoD's UFO project. Though technically no longer employed by MoD, he is still bound by the Official Secrets Act and can be pre-briefed on how to play the situation in interviews and articles, so as to limit any reputational damage to HMG and MoD.

Codeword/Classification

15. The codeword for this operation is Operation RESISTANCE: BURNING SKIES. The classification is Top Secret.

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