SPINS

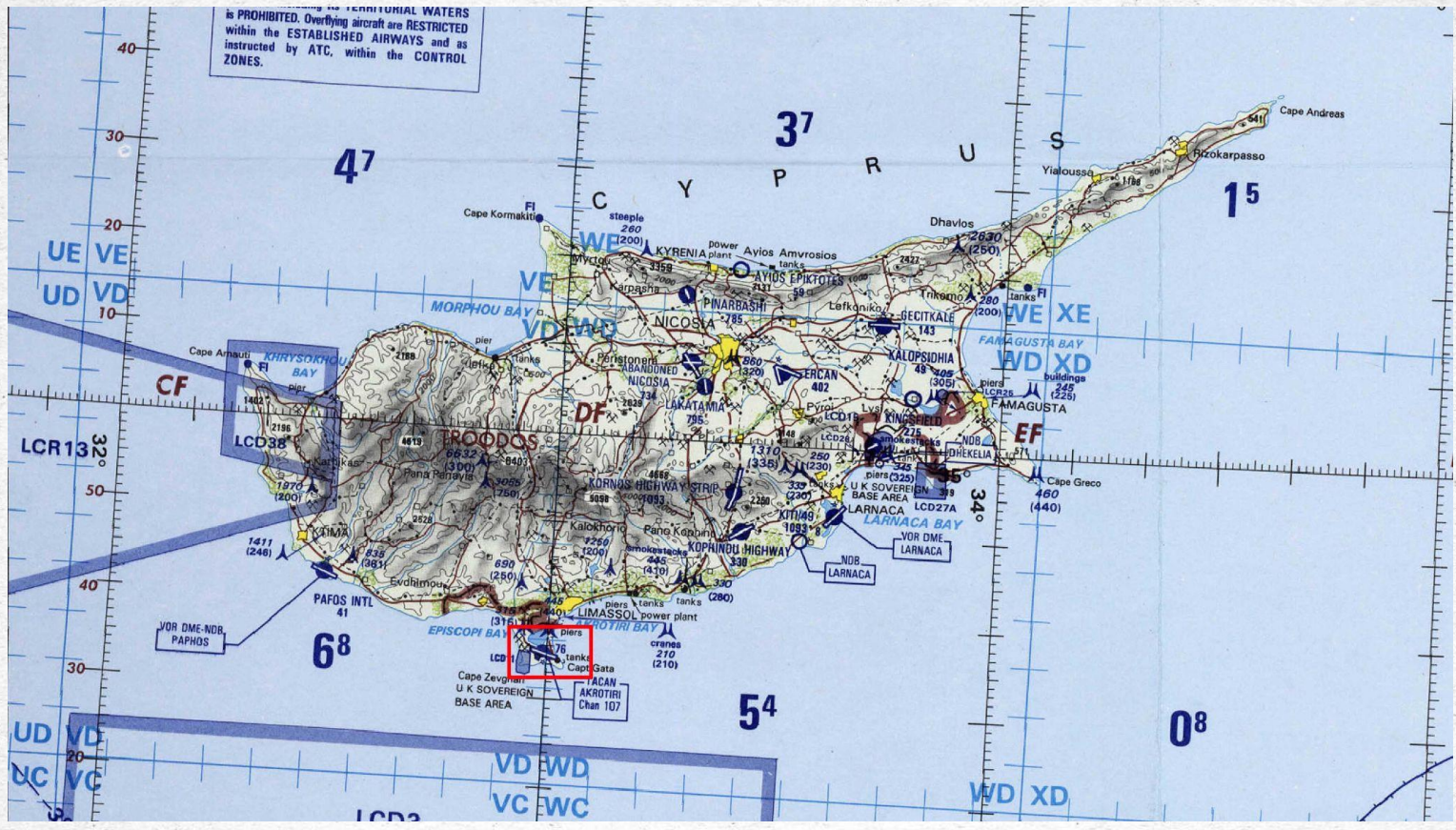
RAF Akrotiri

&

The Syrian Theatre of Operations

RAF Akrotiri

RAF Akrotiri is a Royal Air Force base, located on a peninsula on the south side of the island of Cyprus. RAF Akrotiri lies within the Akrotiri Sovereign Base Area, which is a British Overseas Territory.



RAF Akrotiri is a very busy airbase, in addition to the UK detachments stationed here, French, US and German JSTF forces are also being based at Akrotiri.

The political situation on Cyprus is complex. Following a Greek led coup in 1974, Turkish forces invaded the island. The resulting conflict left the island divided in two, with the southwest under the control of the Cypriot Government and the northeast under the de-facto (and internationally unrecognized) control of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. The two sides are divided by a UN buffer zone. This is a complex and unique situation in which two NATO members came into conflict with one another, the effects of which linger in relations between the two to this day.

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Aerodrome data:

Coordinates (Rwy midpoint)	*N34 35.421, E032 59.268*
Elevation	*65 FT MSL*
Runway Headings	*106° / 286°*
Runway Length	*8276 FT*
Runway Width	*150 FT*
Yankee Taxiway Width	*78 FT*
Whisky Taxiway Width	*46 FT*
PAPI	*Rwy 10 & Rwy 28*
ILS	*Rwy 28 - 109.70*
TACAN	*107X (Coords N34 34.765, E032 57.769)*
Akrotiri Ground	*122.100 AM*
Akrotiri Tower	*130.100 AM*
Akrotiri Departure	*124.200 AM*
Akrotiri Approach	*123.600 AM*
Akrotiri Emergency	*133.300 AM*
ATIS	*125.000 AM*

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

TACAN is offset 1.4nm SW of the runway.

The 79th FS Akotiri detachment has been assigned facilities at Golf Dispersal.

Warships may be active in coastal waters.

Local flying clubs located on salt flats north of Akrotiri.

Heavy commercial air traffic in operation across Cyprus.

HAZARD - Cape Gata Lighthouse - N34 33.833 E033 01.796 - 76 FT AGL (230 FT MSL).

HAZARD - Radio Masts - N34 36.911 E033 00.040 - 320 FT AGL (345 FT MSL).

HAZARD - Radio Mast - N34 36.788 E032 56.517 - 356 FT AGL (378 FT MSL).

HAZARD - Wind Turbines - N34 37.830 E032 55.818 - 152 FT AGL (175 FT MSL).

HAZARD - Radar Station - N34 34.297 E033 00.259 - 75 FT AGL (242 FT MSL).

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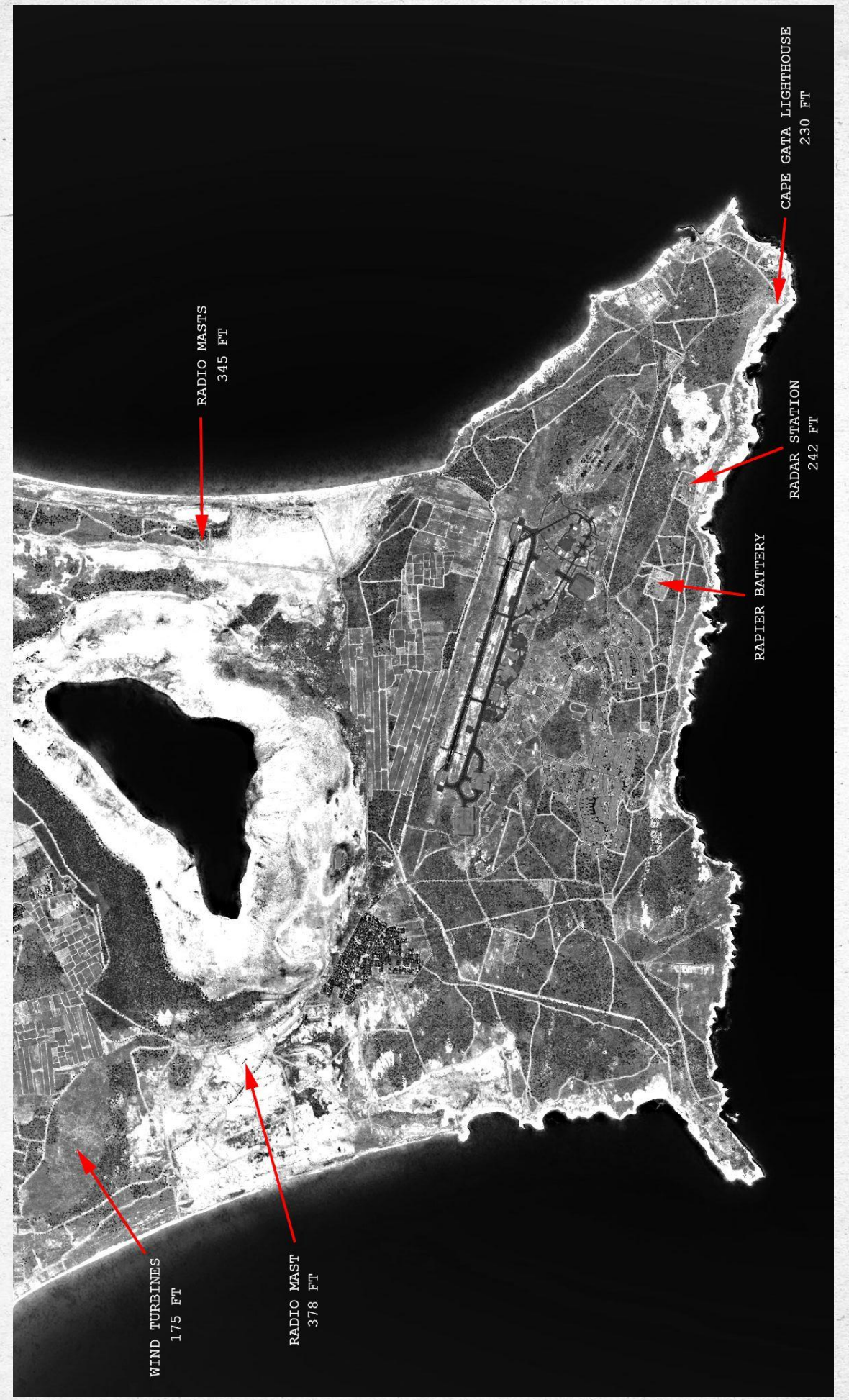
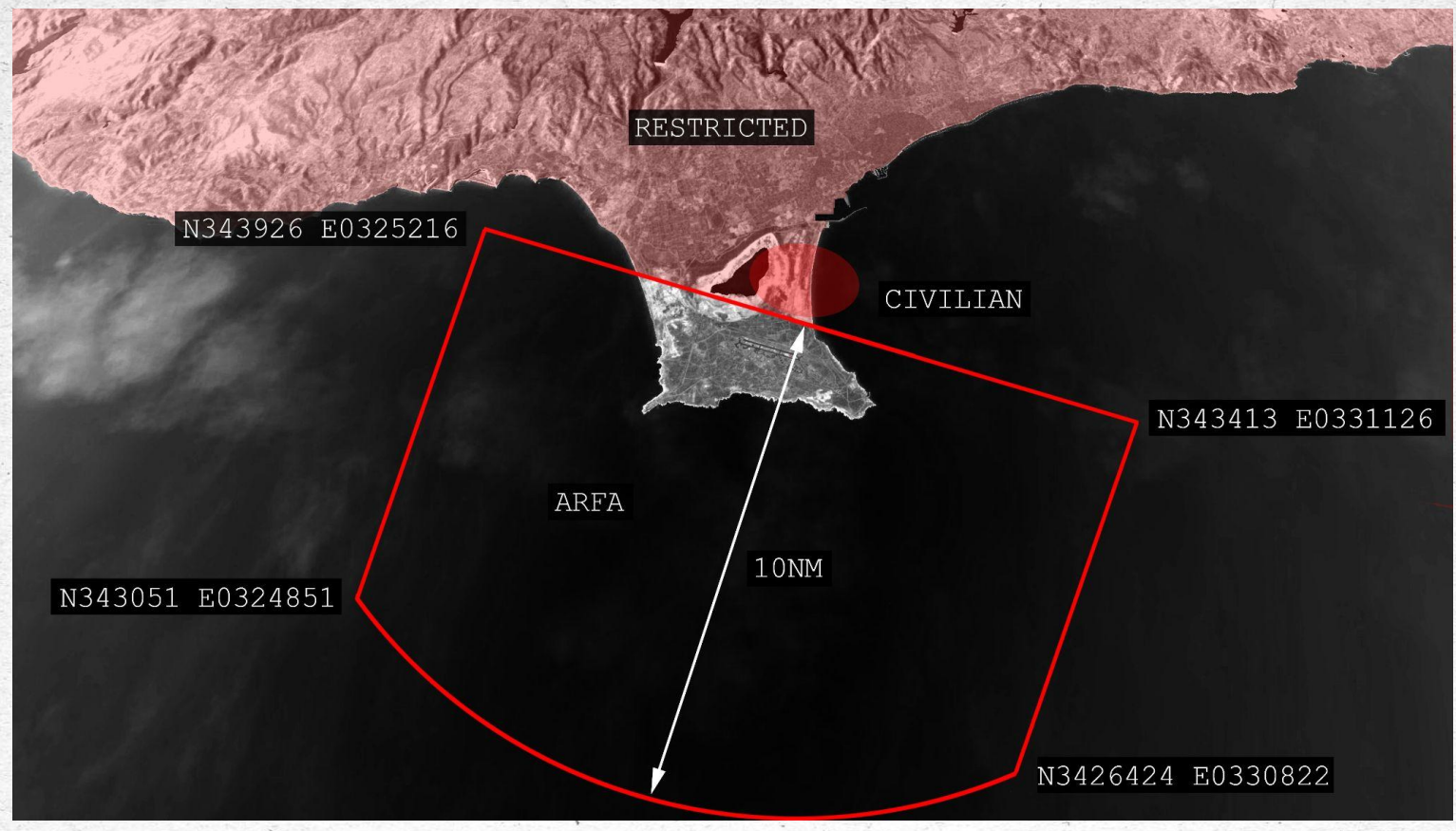


Akrotiri Airspace:

RAF Akrotiri lies within the Akrotiri Restricted Flying Area (ARFA). The boundaries of the ARFA are defined as shown on the following chart:



The ARFA extends from ground level up to FL30. Aircraft are not permitted to enter ARFA unless cleared to do so by Akrotiri ATC.

Note light civilian air traffic is often present on the northern boundary of ARFA due to the presence of a local flying club.

Military aircraft are not permitted to overfly the Cyprus mainland and must stay within the northern limits of the ARFA, to avoid this occurrence aircraft should not make turns to the north of the Akrotiri runway.

Akrotiri Tower controls airspace within ARFA out to 7 miles from the Akrotiri TACAN and up to FL20.

Akrotiri Approach controls airspace within 50 miles of the Akrotiri TACAN, up to FL90, excluding airspace under the control of Akrotiri Tower.

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Departures and arrivals into RAF Akrotiri will use one of three navigation points - MEZUS, ANANE and IREFA.

MEZUS	-	N34 25.05, E032 03.53
ANANE	-	N34 17.92, E032 43.68
IREFA	-	N34 25.05, E033 25.13

Aircraft departing and arriving at RAF Akrotiri will be directed to these navigation points at an altitude specified by Akrotiri Departure and Arrivals.

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Ground Procedures:

All aircraft movements on the ground must be made under the direction of Akrotiri Ground (122.100 AM). Akrotiri Ground will also issue clearances for engine starts.

Aircraft must not commence engine start or taxi without prior clearance.

Departure Procedures:

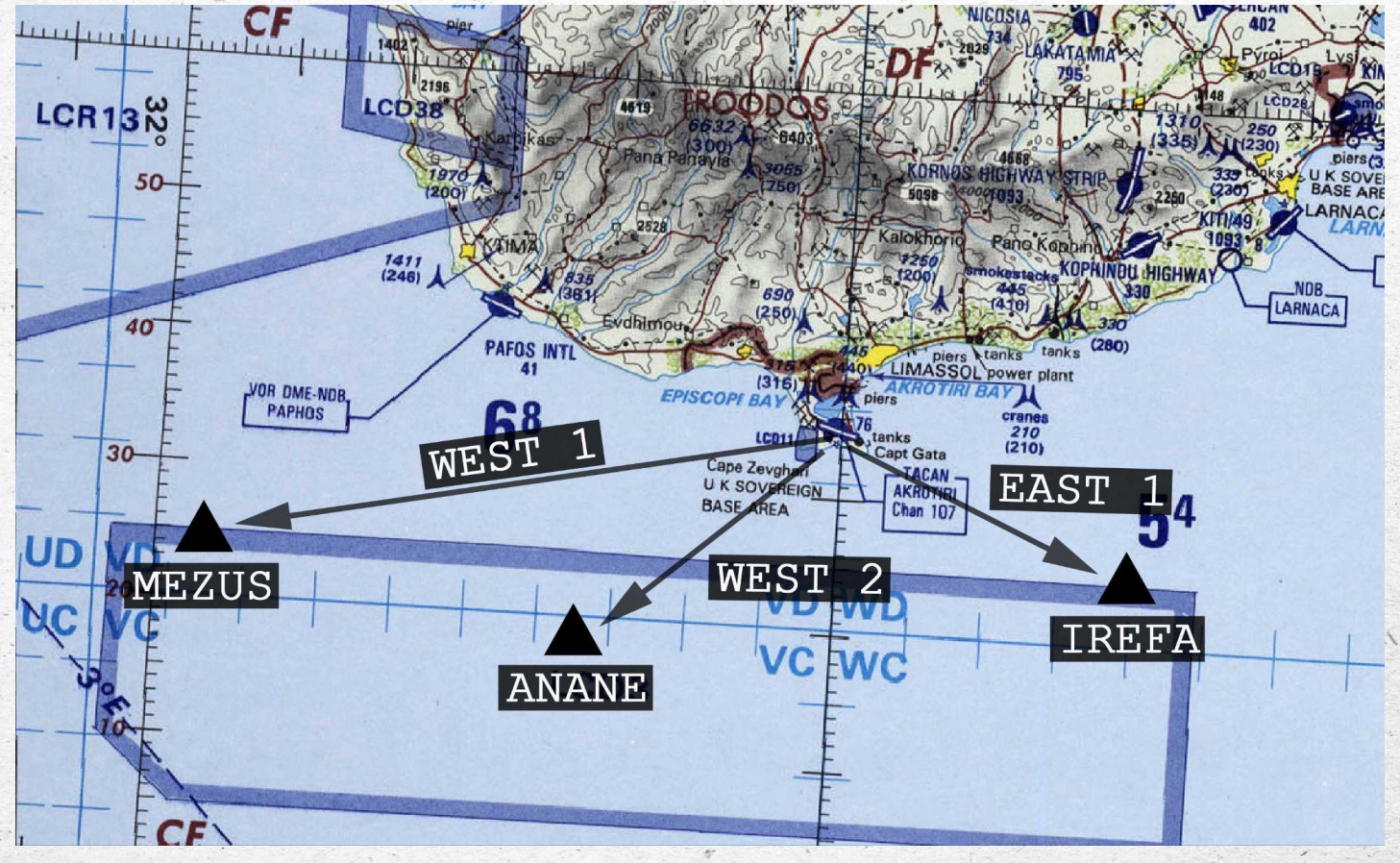
Aircraft must not enter the runway without clearance from Akrotiri Tower (130.100 AM).

Unless directed otherwise the preferred runway for departures is runway 10.

Upon takeoff from either runway, aircraft must maintain the runway heading until feet wet due to the presence of obstacles in the base vicinity. Turns to the north into Cypriot airspace are strictly forbidden. Once airborne aircraft will contact Akrotiri Departure (124.200 AM) for further instructions.

Departure will be via one of the following routes:

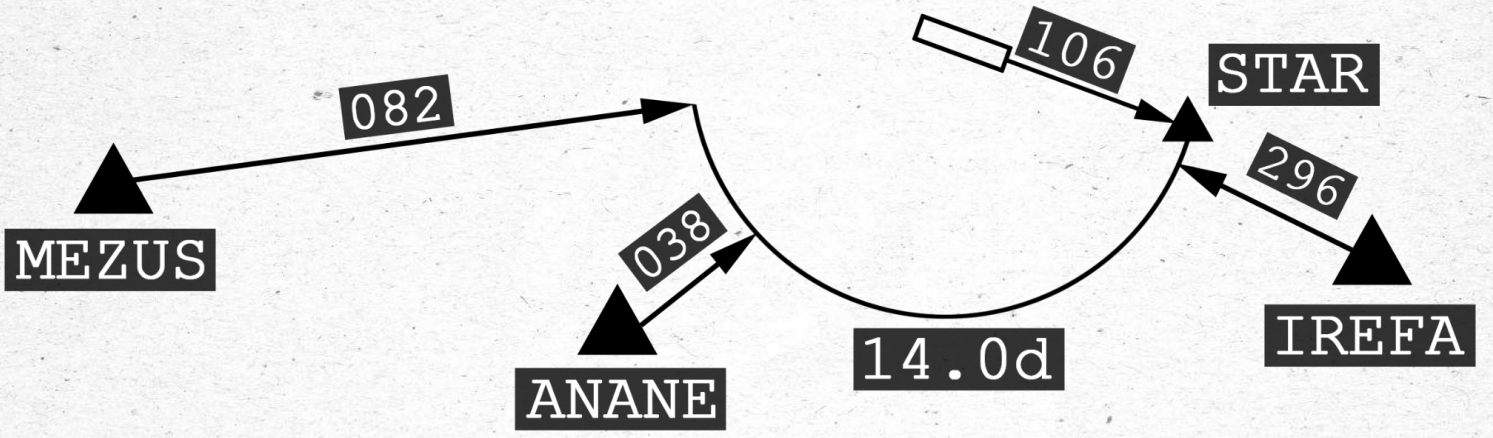
WEST 1 → MEZUS	WEST 2 → ANANE	EAST 1 → IREFA



During departure aircraft must remain below FL30 until cleared to climb by Akrotiri Departure. Instructions from Akrotiri Departure must be followed until handed off by departure. At this point aircraft will fall under control of the theater ABCCC or AWACS.

Approach Procedures:

Standard procedure is to contact Akrotiri Approach (123.600 AM) once within 50 miles of RAF Akrotiri. Aircraft must not approach or enter ARFA without clearance.



Upon contact with Akrotiri Approach, inbound aircraft will be directed to either MEZUS, ANANE or IREFA at a specified altitude.

Upon arrival at the designated navigation point, the inbound aircraft will be vectored towards Akrotiri via either MEZUS STAR, ANANE STAR or IREFA STAR.

MEZUS STAR: From MEZUS follow AKR 082° to the 14.0d arc then turn 90° right and maintain the 14.0d arc to intercept STAR on the 106 radial.

ANANE STAR: From ANANE follow AKR 038° to the 14.0d arc then turn 90° right and maintain the 14.0d arc to intercept STAR on the 106 radial.

IREFA STAR: From IREFA follow AKR 296° to the 14.0d arc then turn 90° right and maintain the 14.0d arc to intercept STAR on the 106 radial.

Upon arrival at STAR, aircraft will be directed to hold in the Akrotiri pattern or directed to the initial point for landing.

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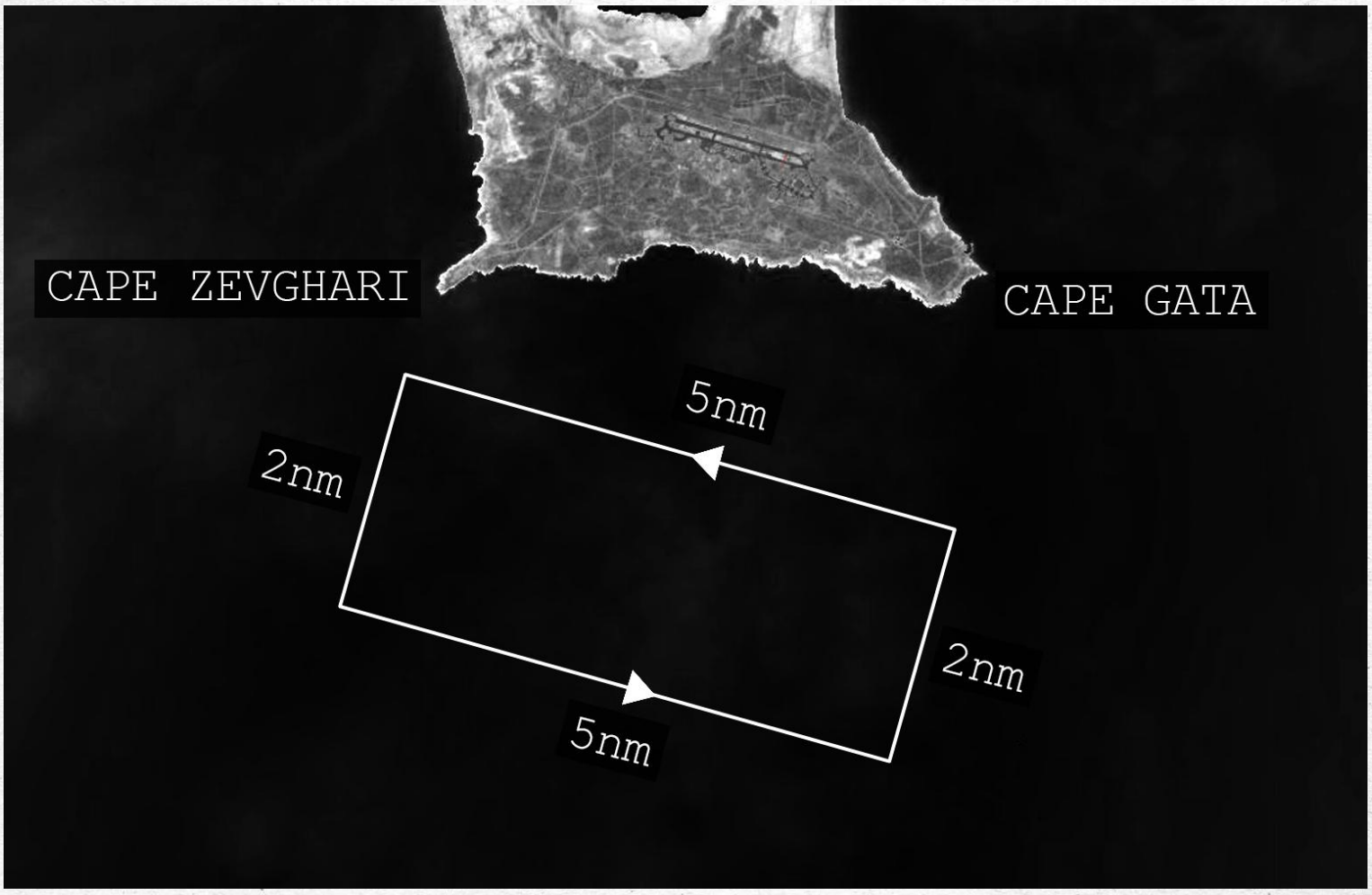
Traffic Pattern:

The traffic pattern at RAF Akrotiri is located south of the Akrotiri peninsula, with the upwind and downwind legs extending 5 miles between Cape Gata and Cape Zevghari.

Minimum altitude in the pattern is 3000 Ft MSL. Maximum altitude is 9000 Ft MSL.

Aircraft in the pattern should avoid overflying the Akrotiri peninsula. To avoid conflicting with departing or inbound traffic they should also remain within the 12.0d arc for Akrotiri.



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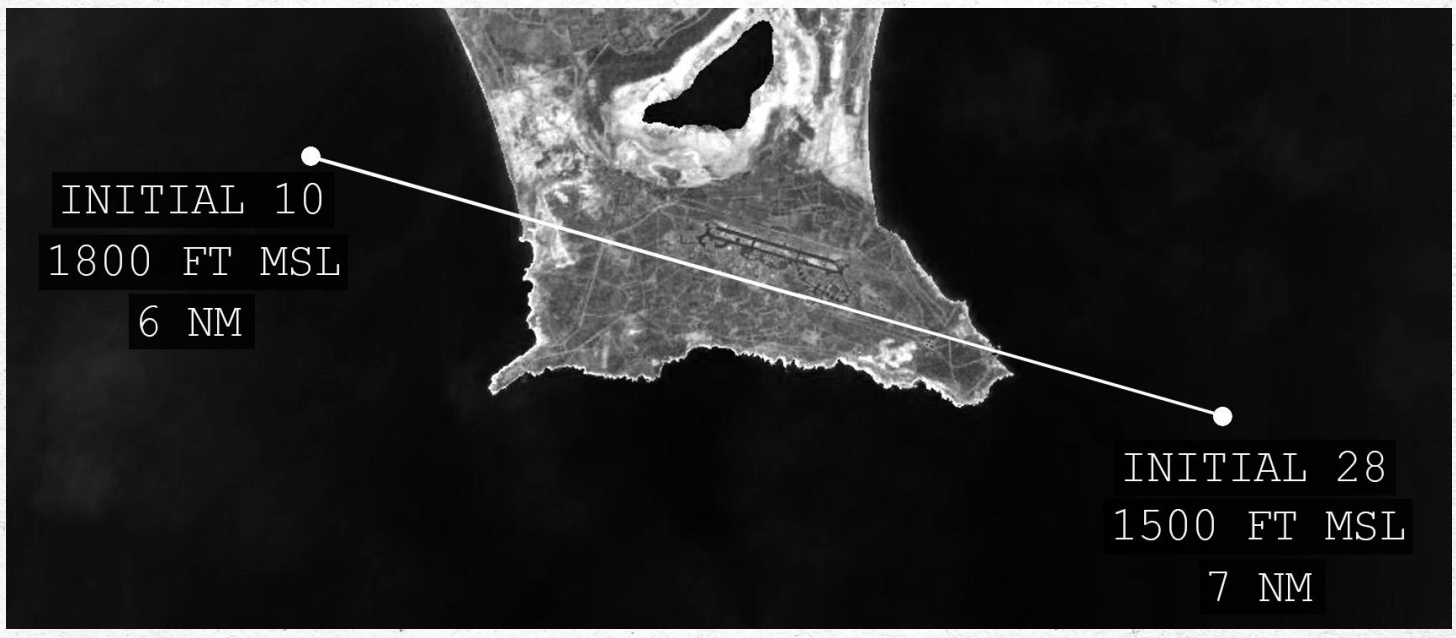
Landing Procedures:

Once cleared to initial by Akrotiri Approach, aircraft will proceed to either Initial 10 or Initial 28 as directed.

Initial 10 is located 6nm from the Akrotiri TACAN on the 106/286 radial at an elevation of 1800 Ft MSL.

Initial 28 is located 7nm from the Akrotiri TACAN on the 106/286 radial at an elevation of 1500 Ft MSL.

Note due to the TACAN beacon's offset position, both initial points are slightly south of the runway heading.



Aircraft approaching Initial 10 from STAR must ensure they remain south of the Akrotiri Runway as they transit across the Akrotiri Peninsula, observing a 750 Ft AGL minimum altitude for obstacle avoidance and a 2000 Ft MSL maximum altitude to deconflict from the Akrotiri pattern.

Aircraft must not descend through ARFA's 3000 Ft MSL ceiling until cleared to their initial points by Akrotiri Approach.

Once aircraft arrive at the initial point they must contact Akrotiri Tower for landing clearance. Unless directed otherwise, the preferred runway for landings is runway 28. If performing an overhead break, aircraft must observe a minimum altitude of 750 Ft MSL over the Akrotiri peninsula (with the exception of the glidepath) due to obstacles in close proximity to the base. All overhead breaks must be performed to the south, turning to the north of the base is forbidden.

Emergency Procedures:

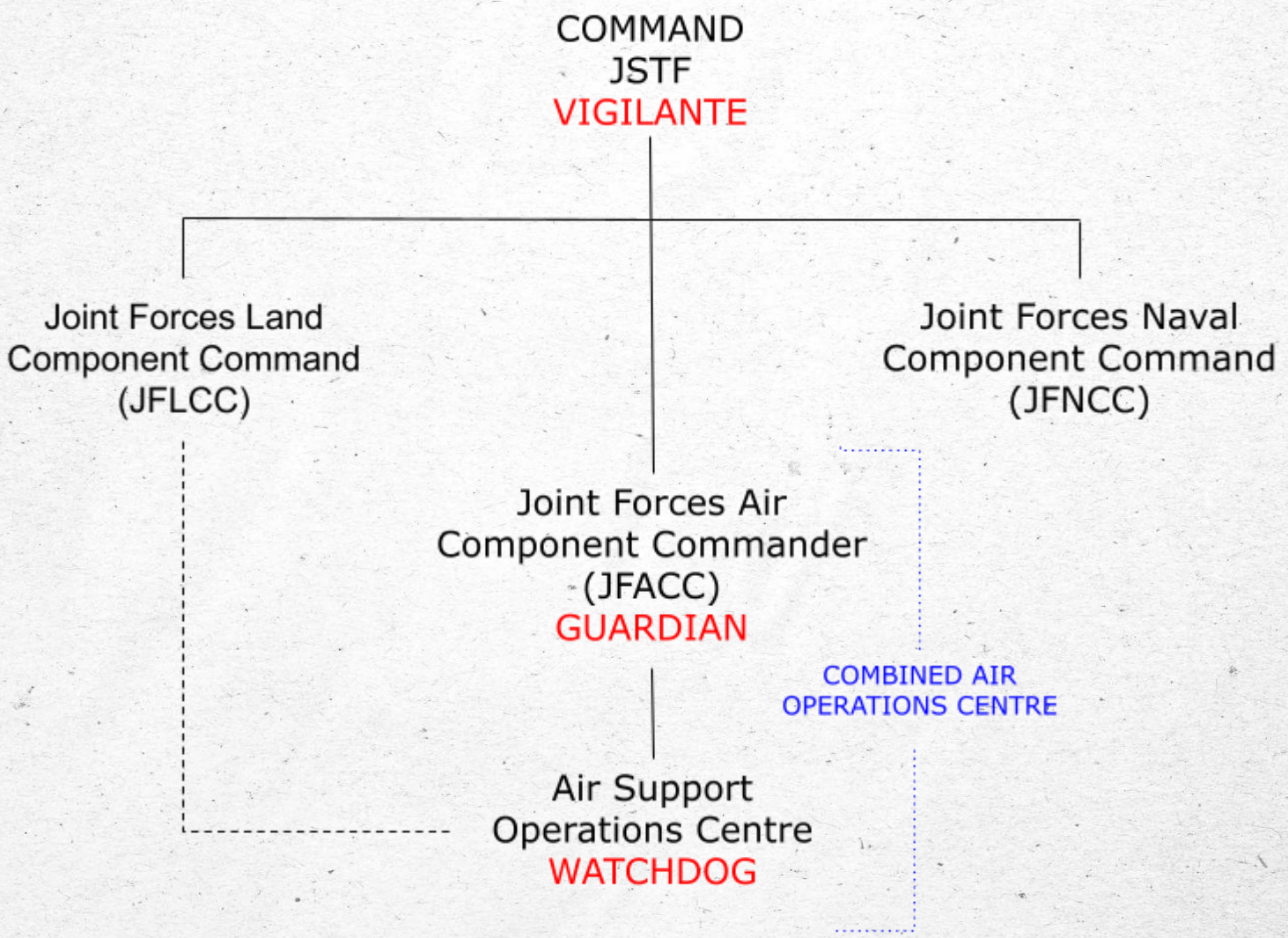
In the event of an in-flight emergency, aircraft should contact Akrotiri Emergency for an immediate straight in landing.

The Syrian Theatre of Operations

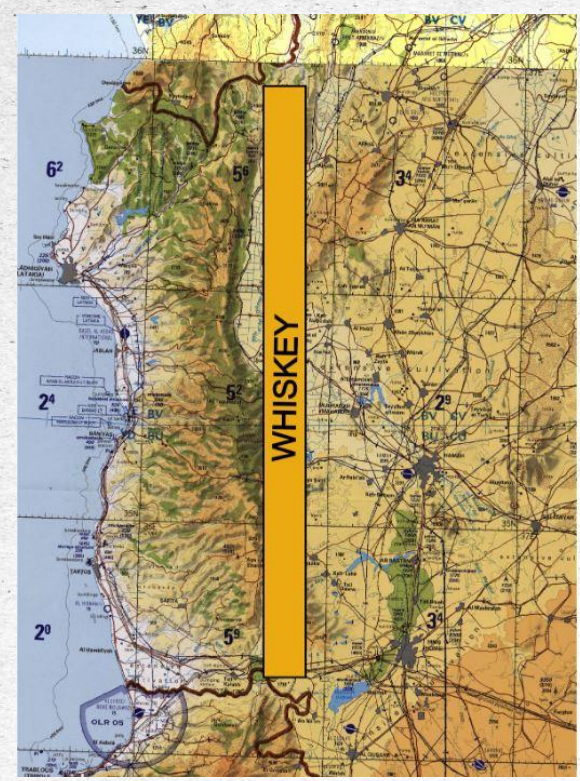
Command of the JSTF (Vigilante) is headquartered at Incirlik. The JSTF has three lines of reporting into Vigilante, namely the Air (JFACC), Land (JFLCC) and Naval (JFNCC) component commanders, with all forces in the STO reporting into one of these.

All aircraft (fixed and rotary) in the STO fall under the command of the JFACC (Guardian). The Combined Air Operations Center (CAOC), also headquartered at Incirlik consists of the JFACC HQ and the Air Support Operations Center (ASOC - designated Watchdog). The Airborne Command and Control Center (ABCCC - designated Sentinel) will provide the link between airborne aircraft and the CAOC. An ABCCC will be on station around the clock.

Requests for close air support from the components of JFLCC will be made into the ASOC and designated to aircraft through the ABCCC.

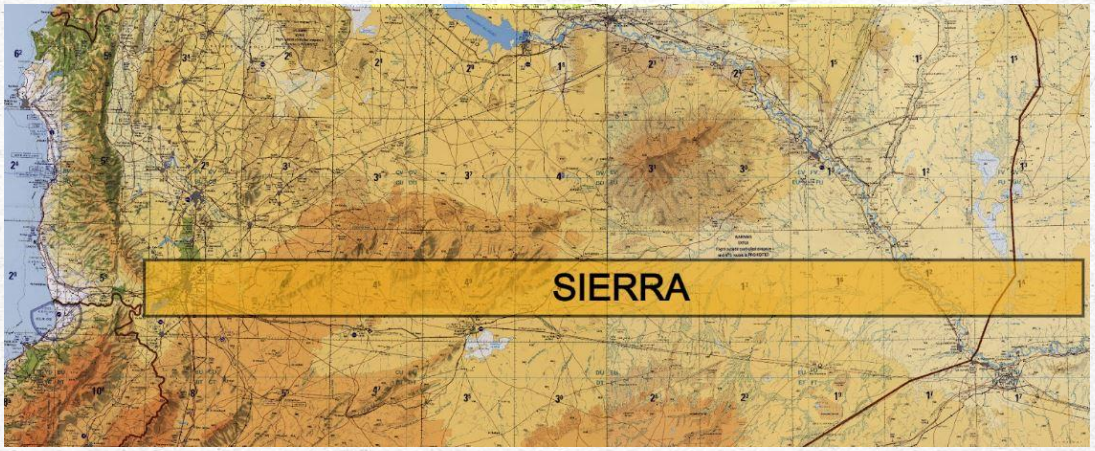


No Fly Zones



Operation Cerberus North has seen the establishment of two no fly zones within the STO, in order to prevent the Syrian Air Force from attacking SDF, YPG and civilian locations in northern Syria. The first zone - Whiskey (Longitude E36°20'), is located west of Hama and runs north to south from the Turkish to Lebanese borders. Syrian aircraft are not permitted to cross the Nusayriyah Mountains.

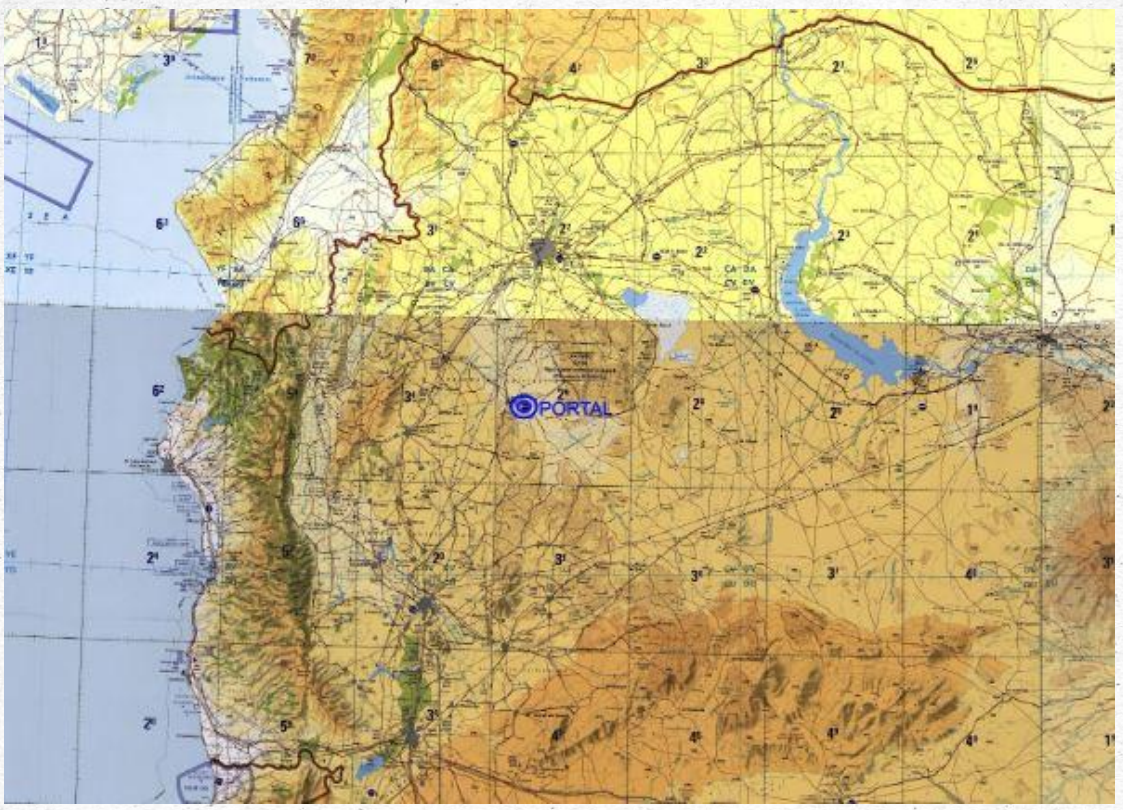
The second no fly - Sierra, is located 5 miles south of Homs (Latitude N34°37') and runs west to east from the Lebanese to Iraqi borders.



The no fly order applies to all Syrian rotary and fixed wing aircraft. The no fly order only applies to Syrian aircraft and NOT Russian aircraft operating over Syria. Due to Syria operating Russian built aircraft any incursions into the no fly zone must be identified visually to avoid the unintended engagement of Russian aircraft.

Bullseye

The Bullseye within the STO is Abu al-Duhur airfield, located at N35°43’59” E37°06’17”, designation - Portal.



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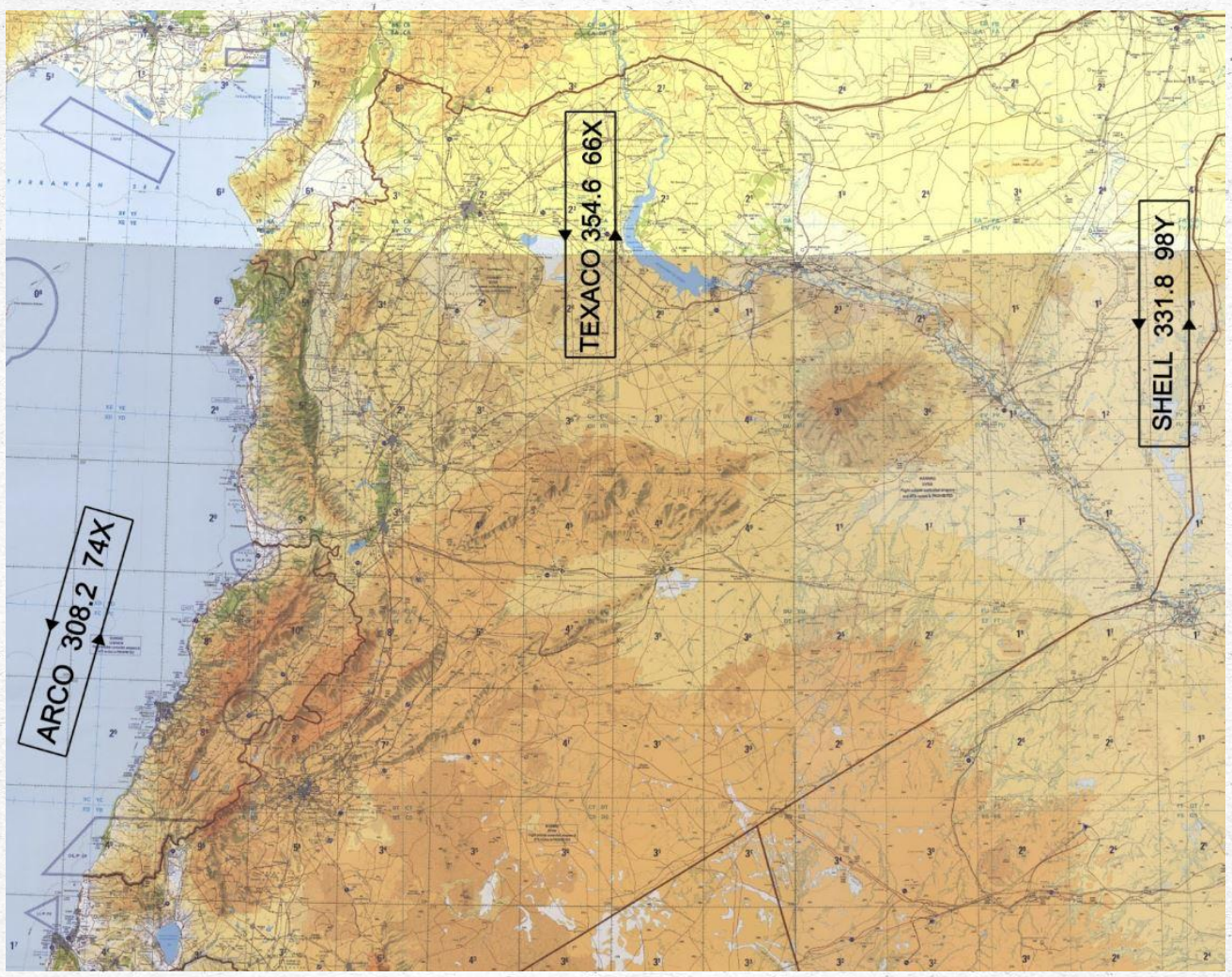
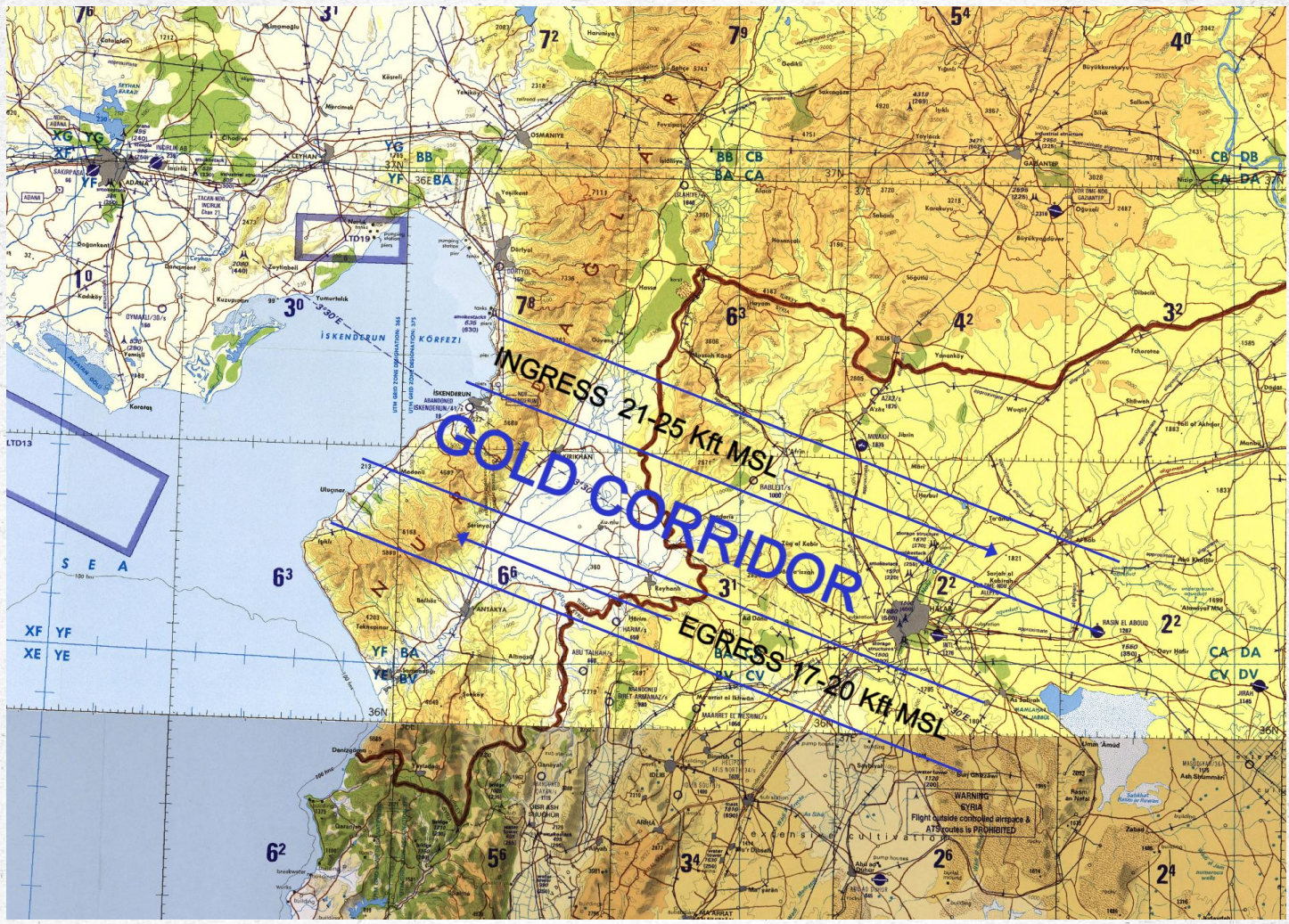
AAR Tracks

The following Air-Air Refueling tracks are in operation to support operations in Syria. Texaco will operate east of Aleppo on a north to south track. Shell will operate in the east along the Iraq/Syria border, north of Sierra. Arco will be on station over the Mediterranean, parallel to the Lebanese coast.



Entry to the STO

Primary access to Syria for aircraft from the north is through the Gold corridor. This is a corridor of airspace between Iskenderun, Turkey and Aleppo, Syria. Ingress into the STO is made north of Aleppo between 21,000 and 25,000 FT MSL. Egress from Syria is made south of Aleppo between 17,000 and 20,000 FT MSL.



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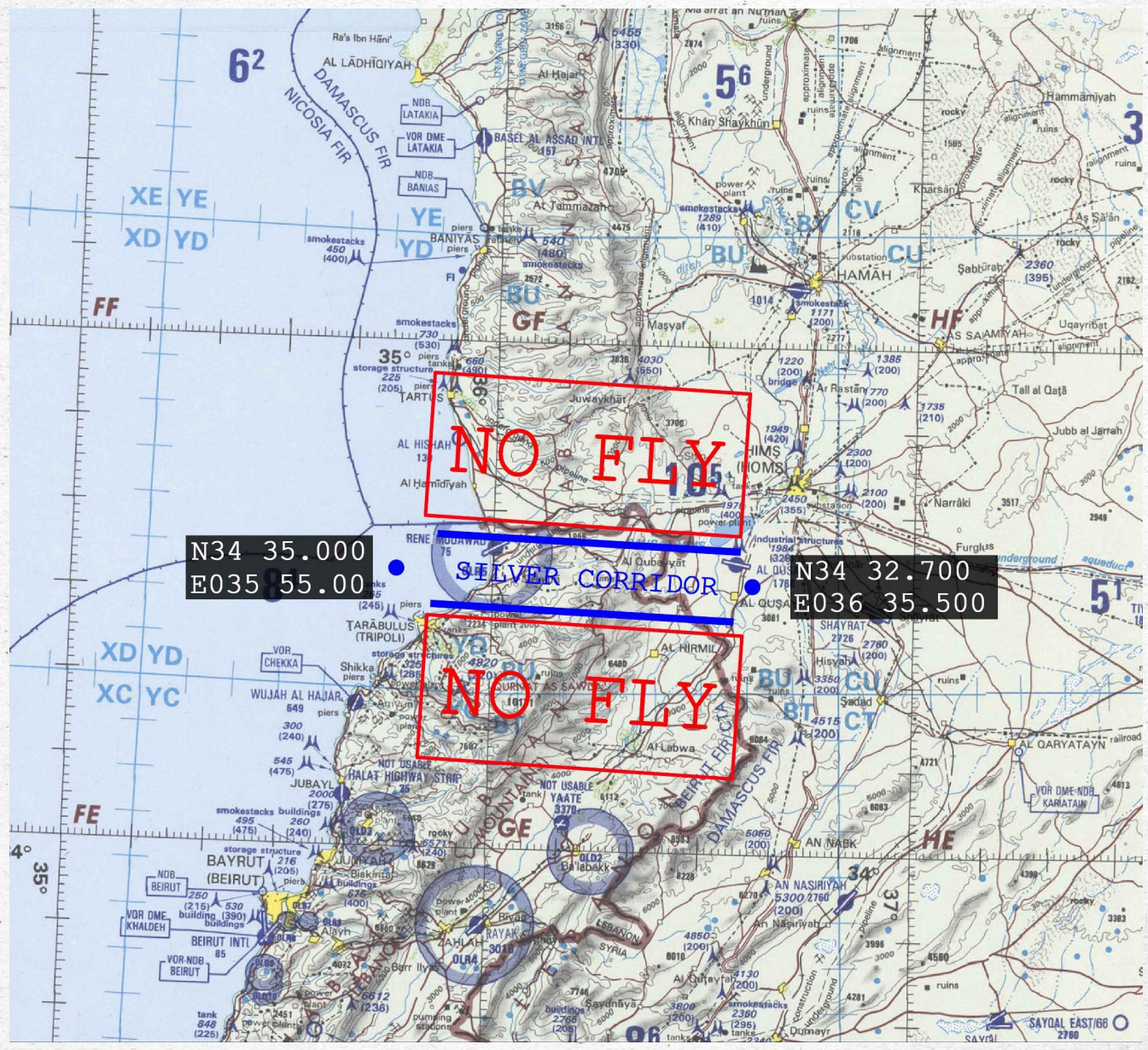
Negotiations with the Lebanese Government have also opened up an alternative route into Syria through northern Lebanon. This has been designated the Silver corridor and runs between N34 35.000, E035 55.000 and N34 32.700, E036 35.500. Transit altitude will be controlled by AWACS/ABCCC.

While in the Silver corridor aircraft must be careful to avoid straying north towards the Russian naval facility at Tartus. Aircraft are not permitted into Lebanon further south than Tripoli, nor are they permitted to overfly Tripoli itself.



Areas of northern Lebanon may have Hezbollah forces present, especially in the eastern border region. Aircraft transiting the Silver Corridor should be alert to air defense threats.

Theater Rules of Engagement

The standing ROE within the STO are divided into two categories; air to air and air to surface. This is in recognition of the complexities of the two different missions being served by Operation Cerberus North.

Air to Air:

The air to air component of Cerberus North will primarily be focused on the enforcement of the no fly zones. Given the prevalence of the Russian Air Force in theater enhanced ROEs have been established to prevent an unintended engagement of Russian aircraft.

The standing ROE for A-A weapons is *return fire* or *fire upon authorisation*.

Return fire can only be utilized following the deployment of a weapon by an aircraft that also meets the condition for a hostile act as laid out on the following pages. Return fire action can be taken without clearance from a higher agency providing the ROEs have been met.

Fire upon authorisation requires specific clearance from the senior mission commander to engage.

In addition the following condition applies within the STO.

All aircraft violating the no fly zone must receive visual identification due to the potential for Russian aircraft to enter the no fly zones.

Air to Surface:

The air to surface component of Cerberus North will likely cover a variety of target types and environments. It is likely that aircraft will be operating in a very complex and dynamic environment with hostile and friendly forces both operating in close proximity to civilians.

The following standing ROEs apply to all air to surface operations within the STO.

Predefined targets. Targets specifically defined within a briefing are pre-cleared for engagement providing the risk of fratricide and collateral damage is eliminated and the briefed details are followed precisely. Predefined targets will not require visual identification by the attacking aircraft to engage. For targets to meet the predefined condition precise coordinates must be available and the target must not be within an area requiring fire control or within a no fire area.

Dynamic Targets. Targets that do not meet the conditions for a predefined target will be considered a dynamic target. Dynamic targets may be assigned in the field via the CAOC or through a JTAC/FAC. Dynamic targets that are assigned and are not under the control of a JTAC/FAC require visual identification from the attacking aircraft or JTAC/FAC prior to engagement and clearance to engage from the mission commander. When an aircraft is under the control of a JTAC or FAC then weapons release authority will be under the control of the JTAC/FAC at all times.

Air to Surface - Restrictions:

The following restrictions and conditions apply at all times within the STO to reduce the likelihood of fratricide and collateral damage. The JFLCC and CAOC will collaborate on a daily basis to produce the air support chart (ASC).

The ASC will identify the following:

1. **BCL** - Battlefield Coordination Line.
2. **FSCL** - Fire Support Coordination Line.
3. **RFA** - Restricted Fire Area.
4. **NFA** - No Fire Area.
5. **FFA** - Free Fire Area.

BCL:

The BCL displays the current forward line of troops (FLOT). It is marked on the air support chart by a solid blue line and letters BCL, noting the coordinating agency and date/time it was updated.

FSCL:

The FSCL marks the expected furthest forward operating area of friendly ground forces.

Ground forces should not advance beyond the FSCL without coordinating with agencies controlling aircraft attacks. Any targets that lie between the BCL and FSCL can only be attacked by aircraft when under the control of a JTAC/FAC.

Targets beyond the FSCL fall under the control of the CAOC or senior mission commander.

The FSCL should follow well defined terrain features easily identifiable from the air. The FSCL is marked on the air support chart by a solid black line and letters FSCL, noting the coordinating agency and date/time it was updated.

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RFA:

The RFA is a blanket condition that applies to all areas not covered by another restriction.

It can also be designated to a particular location and is marked on the air support chart as an enclosed area in a black outline with the letters RFA, noting the coordinating agency and date/time it was updated.

FFA:

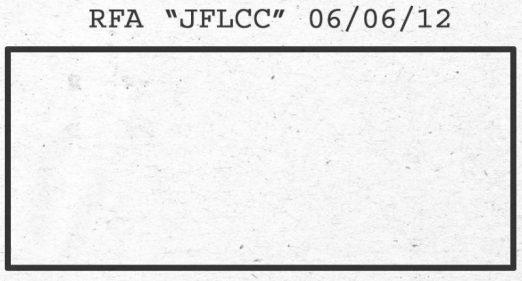
Targets within a FFA require no authorisation or control to engage targets providing the theater ROEs are met.

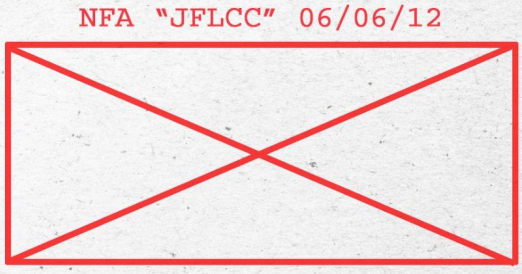
It is marked on the air support chart as an enclosed area in a green outline and letters FFA, noting the coordinating agency and date/time it was updated.

NFA:

The employment of weapons in a NFA is strictly forbidden in order to protect civilian or culturally significant locations.

It is marked on the air support chart as a closed area outlined in red with a cross through it and letters NFA, noting the coordinating agency and date it was updated.





Control of Air Support:

Air support requests (ASR) will commonly be made through the ground commander CAS to the air support operations center (ASOC).

The ASOC will process the ASR and match to available CAS platforms. ASOC will direct the CAS platform to the AO and connect them to the JTAC/FAC.

The JTAC or FAC will provide the targets details, locations of friendly forces or civilians and specify the attack details such as IP, attack direction, weapons to be employed and egress routes. The JTAC will also specify the type of control authority they will have over the attack, these are detailed as below.

Type 1:

JTAC requires control of individual attacks and must visually acquire the attacking aircraft and the target for each attack. Targets and friendly positions should be marked whenever possible.

Visual acquisition must be obtained through eyes-on or via optics such as binoculars, without the use of third party devices such as laptops or other digital imagery.

Control will be made over the attack direction of the aircraft to reduce the risk of collateral damage or the attack affecting friendly forces.

Type 2:

JTAC requires control of individual attacks but JTAC is unable to visually acquire the attacking aircraft at weapons, unable to visually acquire the target, or the attacking aircraft is unable to acquire the mark/target prior to weapons release.

JTAC can acquire the target visually or use targeting data from a scout, fire support team, joint fires observer, unmanned aircraft (UA), special operations forces, CAS aircrew, or other asset with accurate real-time targeting information.

Type 3:

JTAC provides clearance for multiple attacks within a single engagement subject to specific attack restrictions.

JTAC does not need to visually acquire the aircraft or the target.

JTAC will provide attacking aircraft with targeting restrictions and then grant blanket weapons release clearance to meet the stated restrictions.

JTAC maintains abort authority.

9 Lines:

The JTAC will commonly provide the CAS platform with a 9 line specifying the instructions for the attack. The 9 line format is as follows.

1. Initial point (IP)
2. Heading from the IP to the target.
3. Distance from the IP to the target in nautical miles.
4. Target elevation in feet above mean sea level.
5. Target description.
6. Target location coordinates.
7. Type of mark.
8. Location of friendlies from the target, direction, and distance in meters.
9. Egress direction.

The pilot will respond by reading back lines 4,6 and 8. If readback is successful the JTAC/FAC will pass remarks and restrictions, these will cover the process for the attacking aircraft to 'call in' on their attack run, weapons release heading/final attack heading and any relevant threats.

Terminology:

The JTAC/FAC and air support platform will communicate using set terminology. This terminology is detailed here.

Bomb on Target (BOT) - target location will be described, usually through a 'talk-on'.

Bomb on Coordinates (BOC) - target location will be passed as precise coordinates.

Cleared hot - air support is cleared to engage the target under type 1 or 2 control.

Cleared to engage - air support is cleared to engage the target under type 3 control.

Abort - If the JTAC/FAC calls abort then the attacking aircraft must safety weapons systems and maneuver off target immediately.

Contact - refers to spotting visual references used to talk onto a target.

Tally - Visual confirmation by the pilot of the target.

Visual - Visual confirmation of friendly forces.

Air to Surface - Exceptions:

If control of an attack has been placed under that of a JTAC/FAC and contact with the JTAC/FAC is subsequently lost, then the attack may proceed in the defense of friendly forces if the conditions for hostile intent can be met and friendly forces are in clear and imminent danger.

Hostile Intent

Hostile Act considered if unit:

- Engages friendly forces with a weapons system, resulting in weapons release.

  OR

- Supports the weapons systems of other units, resulting in weapons release. Including but not limited to lasing, marking, radar illumination of targets.

Alternatively a Hostile Act considered if unit meets **all** the conditions below:

- Spikes/spots/marks a friendly target within their weapons range or the range of a supporting unit.
- Persistently maneuvers to maintain a weapons firing solution or to maintain solution for fire support.
- PosID as a bandit or belonging to a defined hostile force.

Hostile Act considered if unit meets **all** the conditions below:

- Moves in a persistently aggressive manner towards friendly forces.
- Actively deploys countermeasures and/or seeks to avoid detection.
- PosID as a bandit or belonging to a hostile force.

Hostile Act considered if unit meets **any** of the conditions below:
(note these conditions may apply to individuals that are civilian in appearance)

- Observed preparation of an ambush position, including but not limited to the positioning of weapons systems, explosives or significant obstructions in tactically advantageous positions.
- PosID as engaging in the command and control of hostile forces.
- Observed in the use, transportation or maintenance of weapons systems that pose a threat to JSTF forces within the STO.