

PRINCIPLES GOVERNING THE CONDUCT OF
OPERATIONS BY FLIEGERFUEHRER ATLANTIK

and

AN APPRECIATION OF THE TYPES OF
AIRCRAFT AVAILABLE

issued by
Headquarters Staff
Fliegerfuehrer Atlantik
on
3 December 1943

TRANSLATED BY
AIR MINISTRY, A.H.B.6
20 NOVEMBER, 1952

PRINCIPLES GOVERNING THE CONDUCT OF OPERATIONS BY
FLIEGERFUEHRER ATLANTIK

I. Operational instructions from C. in C. Luftwaffe

Strategy against enemy shipping in the Atlantic in cooperation with C. in C. U-Boats and Naval Group West.

Safeguarding arrival and departure of German naval forces (both surface and submarine) against enemy attacks. Operations against enemy supply shipping in the event of enemy landings.

II. General Principles

1) Concentration of all appropriate forces in the right place at the right time in accordance with the operational demands of C. in C. U-Boats and the requirements of Fliegerführer Atlantik's own operations.

2) Most economical operational use of reconnaissance forces until the commencement of operations by C. in C. U-Boats or Fliegerführer Atlantik. For this purpose full advantage to be taken of technical and weather conditions.

3) Flights into areas where controlled enemy day or night fighters are operating are to be avoided. Wherever possible, operations of Fliegerführer Atlantik are to be confined to areas where there is no enemy T.E. fighter defence.

III. Reconnaissance

1) Reconnaissance to be carried out mainly with ship locating radar. Reconnaissance by sectors at 1000 metres altitude. Operations not to be dependent on visibility.

2) The situation over the Atlantic will dictate the areas in which aircraft with strong defensive armament are to be used. Area of operations to be widened by exploitation of weather conditions.

3) Navigational accuracy of aircraft position up to distances of 2000 km with a margin of error of ± 10 to 20 km.

4) Convoy reconnaissance. In areas requested by C. in C. U-Boats or laid down by Fliegerführer Atlantik. Generally reconnaissance of area to be covered should start in the morning. On the days when operations are planned by C. in C. U-Boats or Fliegerführer Atlantik, reconnaissance should be repeated in late afternoon with a view to shadowing.

a) In the case of submarines reconnaissance to continue into the night.

b) In the case of bomber formations reconnaissance to continue until time of attack and observation of results.

5) Reconnaissance for Naval Group West - Reconnaissance of sea area used by our own blockade runners, auxiliary cruisers and prize vessels arriving and leaving.

Intention

a) To safeguard against enemy surface vessels.

b) Prompt recognition of ships arriving and lead them to cover.

Operations to be carried out over a wide area and to the limit of range.

6) Reconnaissance to safeguard against enemy landing attempts on the

Atlantic coast of France. Operations to be carried out in late afternoon. They are to cover the sea area through which the enemy can pass during the hours of darkness.

7) Armed Reconnaissance. Armed reconnaissance against single enemy ships off the Spanish-Portuguese coast by flights of 2 or 3 long range bombers. Action only to be taken if movement is confirmed by intelligence from secret sources. Attack at dusk or on a clear night.

IV. Shadowing with ship locating radar possible by day and night

1) For C. in C. U-Boats

Commence at dusk. DF signals. Use of flares for marking location of convoy. Shadowing aircraft to keep as near as possible to convoy. Shadowing to be carried on as far on into the night as possible.

2) For bomber formations

a) Loose shadowing by daylight with shadowing aircraft being relieved. Schwan buoys to be dropped. (Note: A Schwan is a water-borne V.H.F. beacon).

b) As combat shadowing aircraft about one hour before bombers attack. Shadowing aircraft to be between bomber formation and target. DF signals, flares to be dropped should necessity arise.

V. Operations

1) At present in use: He.177 with "Kehl" glider-bomb control and FW.200 with "Kehl" or Lotfe bomb sight. Both types of equipment can only be used in slight, high or medium high cloud. Since convoys frequently make use of bad weather conditions as cover, it is recommended that the He.177 be fitted also with torpedoes.

2) Attacks can only hold out a promise of success when strong forces are used. Minimum strength one bomber Gruppe.

3) Attacks to be carried out during the evening, up to dusk, so that return flights can be carried out under cover of darkness.

4) When flying in cloudless weather, the bombers are to be escorted by T.E. fighters to the extent of their range.

VI. Use of T.E. fighters

- 1) Intentions: a) to attack enemy anti-submarine aircraft,
b) to protect own aircraft.

2) Operations: T.E. fighters to operate only when visibility is good and there is little cloud. Possible to operate as free lance fighter patrols, escort or covering force.

VII. Anti-submarine operations

To be carried out along own coast in areas not covered by submarine chasers:

- 1) as a systematic search,
- 2) as aircraft standing by for action.

VIII. Action to be taken in the event of an enemy landing

- 1) So long as the base of Fliegerführer Atlantik is not directly threatened, increased reconnaissance in the Bay of Biscay and Atlantic and attacks against landing forces still at sea.
- 2) In the event of a landing in the area of Fliegerführer Atlantik then, according to the developments of the situation:
 - a) reconnoitre and attack the enemy landing fleet or,
 - b) support the ground operations by attacking forces which have already landed.
- 3) In the event of the enemy capturing the bases of subordinate units, units will be withdrawn to prepared positions and will continue to operate as laid down in sub-para.2.

IX. Signals

- 1) Complete wireless silence, to be broken only by:
 - a) reports of enemy,
 - b) emergency reports.
- 2) Restriction to a minimum of ship locating and aircraft locating radar.
- 3) Exchange of messages with own naval forces by means of signal lamps only. V.H.F. will be used only to warn ships of immediate danger.

TYPES OF AIRCRAFT AVAILABLE TO FLIEGERFUEHRER ATLANTIK

I. Reconnaissance Aircraft

- 1) FW 200 is at present available in three different models:
 - a) Normal FW 200 with a radius of 1500 km.
 - b) FW 200 fitted with auxiliary fuselage tanks (known as long range Condor) with a radius of action of 1750 km.
 - c) FW 200 fitted with auxiliary fuselage tanks and two exterior tanks (known as maximum range Condor) with a radius of action of 2200 km.

Only the long range and the maximum range Condor are suitable for the present operational commitments of Fliegerführer Atlantik. Use of the maximum range Condor is limited due to the difficulties involved in taking off at night because of overloading and its use can only be recommended for major operations. In view of its inadequate armament and its lack of speed the FW 200 cannot be used in areas covered by enemy TE fighters. Recent encounters between FW 200s and enemy TE fighters when cloud cover has been insufficient have nearly always led to the destruction of the FW 200.

Further development of the FW 200 is not recommended since:

- a) it has been exploited to the limit of its potentialities,
 - b) it is being replaced by the He 177.
- 2) Ju.290. The Ju 290 meets the present requirements as far as radius

of action is concerned. Thanks to its good armament and even better armament proposed, it is also suitable for operations in areas covered by enemy TE fighters. At the moment the Ju 290 is the most suitable aircraft for Atlantic reconnaissance. Its use is at present restricted to certain areas and to certain seasons of the year due to the absence of de-icing equipment.

Recommendations for further improvements

- a) Greater radius of action (Experiments are being carried out to increase it to 4000 km.)
 - b) Fitting of de-icing equipment.
 - c) Fitting of a special bomb rack for flares (proposed).
 - d) Fitting of "Kehl" equipment for long range operations (proposed for Ju 390).
- 3) Ju 88 D-1 or A-4

This aircraft does not come up to operational requirements either in range or speed. The Ju 88 D-1 has to be used by Fliegerführer Atlantik for sea reconnaissance in areas covered by British day and night fighters. Duties can only be carried out when weather conditions are particularly favourable.

Requests for suitable aircraft have been made to General der Aufklärungsflieger (C. in C. Reconnaissance Units).

4) BV 222

On account of its performance the BV 222 has been called upon to carry out roughly the same duties as the Ju 290. Its operational potentialities are only restricted because of:

- a) its insufficient armament and unprotected tanks
- b) its lack of speed.

Its tactical radius of action will be increased by 300 km to 2700 km when, in January 1944, delivery is taken of the new V-10 and V-11 sub-types fitted with diesel engines.

5) BV138 - In view of its lack of speed and small radius of action, this aircraft is only suitable for defensive reconnaissance along the French coast and on anti-submarine patrols. For these purposes, however, it is very suitable.

II. BOMBERS

He 177. With a tactical radius of action of 1500 km, this aircraft cannot, by any means, be used in all the sea areas covered by Fliegerführer Atlantik's reconnaissance. Its use is thus limited to the Western Atlantic and north west Biscay. The performance of the He 177 make it suitable for use with glider bombs (Kehl) and as a torpedo bomber. The He 177 is well armed and has no cause, particularly in formation flights, to fear any type of enemy aircraft operating over the Atlantic.

Recommendations for further development

- a) Radius of action to be increased to that of reconnaissance aircraft while retaining the same bomb capacity.
- b) To be adapted for quick change over from "Kehl" to torpedo bomber (according to weather conditions).

- c) Increase in speed to cope with the expected appearance of faster enemy TE fighters and as a counter measure to A/A defence.

III. FIGHTERS & TE FIGHTERS

1) Ju 88. The TE fighter formations are made up of Ju 88 C6 aircraft, sub-types R2, H2 to G1.

The armament of the H2 and the G1 meets present day requirements. The expected radius of both models of 1600 to 1800 km is adequate for present needs, but the ultimate objective must be to increase the range up to that of the long range bomber.

With regard to speed, the Ju 88 R2, H2 and G1 which are fitted with BMW 801 engines are superior in speed to most enemy aircraft used over the Atlantic with the exception of the Mosquito which is now appearing in ever increasing numbers.

2) FW 190. In areas other than the normal operational zones of RAF fighters, the FW 190 is the most useful of the limited number of operational aircraft in use by Fliegerführer Atlantik. The most unsatisfactory aspect of all is that, in spite of the new developments expected in the air situation over the Atlantic, the radius of action of the FW 190 (even with auxiliary tanks) is still too small. What is required is a fighter with at least the same armament as the FW 190, but a greater radius of action without auxiliary fuel tanks.

3) Ar 196. In armament, radius of action and performance this aircraft is obsolete. The Ar 196 can only be used for reconnaissance in coastal areas and for anti-submarine patrols and escort duties.

A.H.B.6 Distribution:

Same as Translation VII/119