



Corbett Paper

No 17

The Rise and Fall of the
Sierra Leone Navy
and the UK's role in its downfall

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Key Points

The aim of this paper is to highlight the important role of the navy in the security and prosperity of a small coastal state such as Sierra Leone, with the objectives of:

- recording the first history of the Sierra Leone Navy;
- promoting a revaluation of UK involvement, since without the aid of a focused intervention Sierra Leone has no credible strategy to counter insecurity in their maritime environment;
- ensuring that future Security Sector Reform initiatives pay due reverence to the important role of a coastal states navy in upholding and protecting national (maritime) interests within the 200 nautical mile limits of their ocean territory;
- reminding the Royal Navy, as the UK Government's expert advisor on maritime affairs, that it is their responsibility to ensure that future UK led Security Sector Reform includes the maritime environment.

The history of the Sierra Leone Navy is a cautionary tale for all navies and those who seek to conduct Security Sector Reform. This paper highlights how Western powers have found it difficult to release their hold on their domination of the seas and how – with the exception of the Illegal Unreported and Unregulated fishing spike – academics and policy makers do not often consider the role of the maritime environment in the security of the state.

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'Historically the ocean seems to have been a confining force rather than a frontier of opportunity for West African people'.¹

The history of the Sierra Leone Navy is a sorry tale that illustrates how the fortunes of a navy are closely linked to the aspirations of a state's elite. The Sierra Leone Navy has flourished only when there has been a clear understanding of the important role that a secure maritime environment has in facilitating and providing security and prosperity for the state. Sierra Leone did not inherit this wisdom on independence; it had to find out for itself. It was during the formulation of the 1982 United Nations Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), when Sierra Leone gained just over twice as much territory, that the country woke up to the economic benefits the oceans could bring to a small coastal state. To realise this potential, Sierra Leone needed to govern and protect this newly acquired sovereign territory. They needed a navy. This inspired the elite to invest in the maritime environment; with the Sierra Leone Navy reaching an operational peak in 1991/92, (the table at the Annex provides a breakdown of the Sierra Leone Navy's order of battle from 1961 to 2014). Unfortunately, this coincided with the start of the brutal civil war, the overthrow of President Joseph Saidu Momoh and the decision by the new National Provisional Ruling Council for naval personnel to join the fight on land.²

Since the end of hostilities in 2002, the navy has not fared well. Renamed as the Maritime Wing and placed under the British-trained Sierra Leone Army, it has been a poor cousin, ignored by the UK led Security Sector Reform, with Sierra Leone's elite following suit. This observation should not be seen as an attack on the British Army, who did an excellent job on land. Instead it is the

Royal Navy, as the UK Government's expert advisor on maritime security, who must take the blame for allowing the UK led Security Sector Reform in Sierra Leone to be land- centric. At the beginning of 2014, the Maritime Wing consists of *Sir Milton*, a SHANGHAI II class offshore patrol boat, three US 32- foot Cutters and a number of small inshore boats at the five Forward Operating Bases. Of these, only the small inshore boats are operational, with the *Sir Milton* and two of the Cutters beyond economic repair.³

After cataloguing the short history of the Sierra Leone Navy, using Colin Gray's strategic perspectives of ethics and culture,⁴ the paper will explore why the navy has not prospered since 2002. Then utilising the Clausewitzian trinity of ends, ways and means, illustrate that a return to the 1991/92 operational high now demands a focused intervention by a third party skilled in the art of maritime operations. The UK will be unable to claim success in Sierra Leone while the maritime environment remains insecure. The aim of this paper is, therefore, to highlight the important role of the navy in the security and prosperity of a small coastal state such as Sierra Leone, with the objective of promoting a reevaluation of UK involvement. This is crucial, for without the aid of a focused intervention, Sierra Leone has no credible strategy to counter insecurity in their maritime environment. It is also hoped that this case study will ensure that future Security Sector Reform initiatives pay due reverence to the important role of a coastal states navy in upholding and protecting national (maritime) interests within the 200 nautical mile limits of their ocean territory. Finally, it is a gentle reminder to the Royal Navy - as the UK Government's expert advisor on maritime affairs - that it is their responsibility to ensure that future UK led Security Sector Reforms are not land- centric.

History of The Sierra Leone Navy

Why a Navy?

In understanding the history of the Sierra Leone Navy, there is also the requirement to answer why a small coastal state with limited global ambition needs a navy? Before the 1982 UNCLOS⁵ there was little need for small

coastal states or maritime theorists to consider the needs of small navies. With the 'cannon shot' rule of three nautical miles determining how much of the adjacent oceans were under the jurisdiction of a state, unless a coastal state wished to deploy globally to protect their national interests, or faced a direct maritime threat from another state, there was little need for a navy. Instead, often the highest their maritime ambitions reached was as guardians of strategic ports - as was the case for Sierra Leone - or choke points. With Hugo Grotius' concept of *mare liberum*⁶ (freedom of the seas) fuelling the work of such renowned naval theorists as Alfred T. Mahan, Julian Corbett and Ken Booth, there appeared little they could offer small coastal navies.

This changed in 1982 with the ratification of UNCLOS and the adoption of the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).⁷ Coastal states suddenly acquired jurisdiction over great swathes of ocean, 'with the right to exploit, develop, manage and conserve all resources - fish or oil, gas or gravel, nodules or sulphur - to be found in their waters extending 200 nautical miles from its shore'.⁸ These newly acquired maritime interests mean that the doctrinal roles of: warfighting, maritime security and international engagement were now just as applicable to a small navy with no global ambition as they are to global maritime powers. In addition, the cornerstone of Corbett inspired British Maritime Doctrine that the real focus of maritime power is the ability to influence events on land is also just as central to small navy doctrine.⁹

Sierra Leone's maritime domain lies between Guinea to the North and Liberia to the South, with the Mano River, which begins in the Guinea highlands forming the border between Liberia and Sierra Leone. With a coastline of approximate 210 nautical miles, it has a maritime territory of approximately 41,000 square nautical miles. The coast includes the offshore islands of Banana, Turtle and Sherbro, and a number of estuaries and rivers that are navigable for short distances. In the south, the narrow continental shelf of 20 nautical miles, influenced by the eastward flowing Guinea current has limited fish resources compared to the north where the continental shelf extends up to 70 nautical

miles. Although these geographical boundaries, combined with limited aspiration and resources defines Sierra Leone as a small coast state, it still requires a navy that has the 'ability to project power at sea and from the sea to influence the behaviour of people, or the course of events'.¹⁰ As the form, function and level of the maritime power required need only equal the unique requirement of the state; limited resources should not be a barrier to the development of the required level of maritime power. Therefore, for a country such as Sierra Leone without the necessity to operate on the high seas,¹¹ the minimum requirement is enough maritime power to fulfil its obligations to protect and enforce the national rights¹² - as conferred by the 1982 UNCLOS - within its 200 nautical mile EEZ. This means that while its navy may be small in physical terms, as an instrument of state power the Sierra Leone Navy can be powerful, delivering great effect within the confines of its maritime domain.¹³

In order to quantify the maritime power required to fulfil its obligations within its maritime domain, there is a fundamental need to understand the threat. While the likelihood of regional insecurity escalating into the maritime and inter-state conflict is low, it should not be ignored. However, individual states exporting illicit activities, such as fishing, will continue to be a threat to the maritime security of Sierra Leone. Therefore, there is a requirement for the navy to be able to act as a deterrent to state actors, which requires a basic warfighting capability. Although piracy does occur, the principal threat at sea is Illegal Unregulated and Unreported (IUU) fishing and its links to organised crime, with cases of child slavery being perhaps the most disturbing. In 2009, it was estimated that IUU fishing in West Africa was worth between US\$828 million and US\$1.6 billion per year. This is far less than the economic, social and environmental costs of IUU fishing and its impact on food security. With 64% of total animal protein consumed in Sierra Leone coming from the sea and over a quarter of a million people directly employed in fisheries, their future sustainability is crucial to both the security and prosperity of the country.¹⁴ The profit fishing vessels make from the smuggling of migrants, drugs (principally cocaine) and weapons is more difficult to quantify. While cocaine flowing

through West Africa may have reduced from a 2008 high of 47 tons, to today's 18 tons, when the wholesale price of a ton of cocaine in Europe is more than the defence budget of most West African States, it does not take much to undermine the security of a low-income state.¹⁵ With the threat from terrorism assessed as low, the central role for the Sierra Leone Navy will be maritime security.¹⁶

Areas of maritime insecurity off East Africa and in the Gulf of Guinea have shown that when a state is unable to protect and enforce its national rights, its sea turns into an uncontrolled space in which all forms of illicit activity prosper with little regard to the security and prosperity of its host. A leading International security think tank has stated that West Africa's maritime environment, along with terrorism in the Sahel, represents the greatest threat to the security and prosperity of the region.¹⁷ With no holistic overview of the maritime activity that exists off Sierra Leone, fleeting glimpses are currently the only way to quantify this stark warning. Therefore, the principle requirement of a small coastal states navy is to understand its maritime domain in order to ensure the state has the correct form, function and level of maritime power to fulfil its obligations. For a country such as Sierra Leone, with limited resources, it is essential that maritime power does not exceed the requirement. However, this calculation demands data that can only be achieved by a continual presence at sea, in all weathers.

The debate over coast guard or navy is interesting in only so much as it highlights the background of the protagonists. An American maritime expert, such as Augustus Vogel with the model of his own experience, will see navies as purely military instruments of foreign policy unsuitable for a constabulary role and therefore advocate that sub-Saharan African states should have coast guards rather than navies.¹⁸ There is undoubtedly a strong desire to impose an imitation of your own, often successful, experience on a force of another country that you are assisting. The Sierra Leone Army in 2014, as an imitation of the British Army, is a good example as it made it an apolitical instrument of

political will. At sea, Namibia is an interesting example of a successful maritime intervention. As Norway had led in 1990 with the focus on how to tackle IUU fishing, Namibia imposed their own successful model of a coast guard and confined its roles to those of the Norwegian Coast Guard. However, the full imitation of Norway's maritime architecture would have placed it under a Namibian Navy to 'ensure synergies with respect to education, manning and maintenance'.¹⁹ As they did not, Namibia now has both a navy and a coast guard, which operate under different Ministries and doctrine, as the mentor for the navy is Brazil, who provided the Namibian Navy with their first vessels in 1994. As the Namibian Defence minister stated in 2013 'They (Brazilians) are in the country to promote and increase the capabilities of the Namibian Defence Force officers in the navy... they are also helping Namibia build its defence industry, so it is self-reliant in protecting the zone of peace'.²⁰ In Brazil, the Brazilian Navy fulfil both military and constabulary roles, therefore, over time they may help Namibia realise economies of scale and place the fishery protection vessels under naval control.

As Sierra Leone requires its maritime force to be able to 'detect, deter, interdict and defeat any potential adversary', it would suggest it requires a military force, in short, a navy.²¹ A navy that will also be able to support the Joint Maritime Committee following tasks:

- promote the integrity of Sierra Leone waters;
- protect Sierra Leone's fishery and marine resources from illegal fishing and to allow their sustainable exploitation;
- enhance safety at sea;
- protect Sierra Leone's coastline from threats emanating from illicit drug trafficking, smuggling, piracy and other maritime based activities and ensure national security, and
- increase Government of Sierra Leone's revenue generation through increased royalties and taxes.²²

These requirements dictate a maritime force that is able to conduct military and constabulary operations within its maritime domain at the same time. Neither

the American model, that requires two separate forces and different assets, nor the Norwegian model of one force but different assets, offer Sierra Leone economies of scale. It is only countries such as Brazil and the UK that offer the most appropriate and affordable model of one force (navy) with assets that are comfortable conducting military or constabulary tasks. Therefore, the UK's Royal Navy with its historical links to the country would be an ideal mentor.

Pre-Independence and Sources

There are late 17th century reports of Senegalese fishers imitating European ships by placing masts in their large dugouts 'thus will launch three, four and five leagues to sea, if the weather be not very boisterous'.²³ The technology of the 'dugout' prevailed in West Africa limiting the sea to a source of nutrition with the demand for fish satisfied by river estuaries and coastal waters. Rather than a gateway for trade and exploration, the sea was an impenetrable frontier. The sea isolated West Africa, with its off shore islands such as São Tomé and Príncipe having to wait for the Portuguese before they were inhabited.

Gaining any greater understanding of West African naval history, and Sierra Leonean naval history in particular, is challenging. The early European view is constrained by its need to keep exploration secret from European competitors and restricts itself to early Portuguese exploration and the slave trade. There is also a total lack of scholarly attention to African interaction with the sea. Ray and Rich attempt it;²⁴ however, after quoting Chauveau's work, they fail to answer his question: 'is an African maritime history possible?'.²⁵ For Sierra Leone, the Naval Historical Branch offer only snippets, as does records from the Colonial Office, with only Janes' Fighting Ships providing numerical details of Sierra Leone's naval forces. The civil war has ensured that any Sierra Leone records that did exist have been destroyed. Therefore, this history is the joining of the dots provided by British records, aided by the verbal memoirs of senior serving and retired members of the Sierra Leone Navy and Maritime Wing.²⁶ While not a definitive piece of work, perhaps it will tempt future scholars to

compile a more detailed history.

Despite the existence of earlier Ordinances, the Sierra Leone Royal Naval Volunteer Force appears to have been formed in 1935 with African based Europeans providing the officer corps. In July 1939, two minesweeping trawlers (HMS *Maple* and HMS *Redwood*) arrived as training platforms. By 1940, the Force had an authorised establishment of eight officers and 40 ratings.²⁷ Up until independence, naval issues remained under the Sierra Leone Naval Volunteer Force and in 1960 the Force, under the command of Lieutenant Commander Davis RN, consisted of three officers and 45 Petty Officers.²⁸ While they conducted limited maritime security operations in coastal waters their primary responsibility was to ensure maritime access to Freetown and be ready to support Royal Navy operations. This remained the case even when they transferred from the Admiralty to the Colonial Office in 1950.²⁹

From 1961 to 2002: Rise and Fall of the Sierra Leone Navy

For Sierra Leoneans the sea has been a highway for European influence, that good or bad, has affected every aspect of their lives. The sea was not their domain. While many became mariners, it was always under the control of a European navy or mercantile company. Apart from rudimentary fishing that occurred just off the shore, on gaining independence there was no Sierra Leonean maritime heritage or culture.³⁰ As part of the British Empire, under the command of Commander-in-Chief South Atlantic, the Royal Navy underwrote the maritime security of Sierra Leone, with the country providing one of the five coaling stations within Britain's West African Station.³¹ In 1961, while attending Sierra Leone's independence celebrations, Commander-in-Chief South Atlantic and South America provided verbal agreement that the Royal Navy would continue to act as her maritime guarantor. There was no formal document, instead 'the naval defence agreement was based on good will, since, in the view of the Minister of External Affairs and Defence, the Honourable Dr J Karefa-Smart MP, no agreement is worth the paper it is written on'.³²

This trust seems to have been well placed. A review of Royal Navy ship visits to Freetown from 1947 to 1975 show no drop off in presence following independence. The greatest number of visits in one year occurred in 1969, when there were 35 visits; 11 of these from HMS *Hydra*, a survey vessel conducting maritime survey operations for Sierra Leone. The remaining 24 included the HMS *Fearless* Amphibious Group. After 1975, while there was a drop off in numbers due to a decline in the number of Royal Navy ships, Sierra Leone remained strategically important for the UK's Sea Lines of Communications to the South Atlantic. In 1982, during the Falklands War, Sierra Leone was a crucial enabler to Britain's success providing a fuelling station for over 50 vessels, including the QE2.³³ In return the 'British donated their unused reserves of fuel oil, in the port, as a gift to Sierra Leone when hostilities ceased and for a few months light and power was restored to Freetown'.³⁴ While UK military influence was diluted by the influx of Warsaw Pact and Chinese military advisors (in 1982, there were 25 Soviet, 5 East European and 150 Chinese)³⁵ the Royal Navy remained a presence in the region. HMS NORFOLK returned the British High Commissioner to Freetown in January 2000 and the Royal Navy was back in force in May with the HMS *Illustrious* Maritime Battle Group. For serving members of the Sierra Leonean Navy, this demonstrated a commitment that they believed had always been there, they just wished it had arrived earlier.³⁶

With no evidence to contradict them, it is difficult to disagree with a Sierra Leone view that the dominance of white Europeans in the maritime affairs of the country left little opening for Sierra Leoneans to become masters of their maritime domain.³⁷ It is unclear how aware the political elite were of their maritime rights on independence and how interested they were in protecting them. They inherited the UK's view that territorial water claims only extend out to three nautical miles.³⁸ Therefore, in 1961 with a verbal and visible guarantor of their maritime security in the form of the Royal Navy, the Sierra Leone Government's maritime aspirations need only be limited to inshore coast guard functions. By the time the country took up its seat in the United Nations, there

had been two United Nations Conferences on the Law of the Sea. The first had produced the 1958 Geneva Conventions which codified current practice, but did not establish a maximum breadth of the territorial sea.³⁹ The second, in 1960, did not result in any agreements.

The third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea ran from 1973 to 1982, with Sierra Leone one of over 160 nations participating in the nine-year convention. The convention was finally ratified on 30 April 1982 by a vote of 130 to 4 (Israel, Turkey, the USA and Venezuela). Due, however, to concern over the deep sea-bed regime it took a further 12 years for it to come into force in 1994, with Sierra Leone ratifying the document on 12 December 1994.⁴⁰ It is no surprise that, of the first 60 ratifications that were required for the convention to be adopted, almost all were from developing states with little maritime heritage. They had gone from a three-mile strip of sea to a 12 nautical mile Territorial Sea and a 200 nautical mile EEZ. Now the sea was not just the domain of the global maritime powers and there was a requirement to replace the longstanding concept of the freedom-of-the-sea. In the intervening years from adoption of UNCLOS in 1982 to it entering into force in 1994, at the national level, states began to adjust their maritime policies and legislation for various uses of the sea and its resources. This was the case in Sierra Leone, with the state unilaterally claiming the rights laid down in the convention. However, in order to harness and protect their newly acquired rights and resources, they needed a navy.

The maritime awakening experienced by Sierra Leone during the nine-year convention resulted in a reevaluation of their maritime space, with one of the conclusions being the need to transform the Sierra Leonean Armed Forces. In order to manage their newly acquired maritime rights they needed a Navy. They needed to go from a small force of around 45 personnel operating small craft that were only capable of operating for a couple of hours in daylight, to one that was able to operate at sea for lengthy periods at the extremities of their EEZ. To do this, they needed to acquire the equipment, manpower, training and support

infrastructure to facilitate this leap in capability. They required external support. On 19 April 1971, Sierra Leone became a republic and the Royal Sierra Leone Military Force and the Sierra Leone Naval Volunteer Force were combined into the Republic of Sierra Leone Military Force (RSLMF). With only the naval force being required to change their badges to RSLMF, it remained a single Service organisation until 1979, when the Sierra Leone Navy was established.

China was the first to provide support to the RSLMF in the form of equipment and training in 1973 (President Siaka Stevens may well have been the architect of establishing diplomatic relations with the People Republic of China in July 1971).⁴¹ The three boats were part of a number of gifts given to countries that supported their admittance - at the expense of the Republic of China - into the United Nations in October 1971.⁴² According to the then head of the Sierra Leone Navy, President Stevens was always pro-China and he would often 'shout at me and get extremely cross if I stated that I wanted to accept British or American offers of assistance'.⁴³ However, a policy of accepting everyone else's help before the West's did not prevent them from grabbing it when offered. The Air Force was formed in 1973 with Swedish help and the UK supplied a coastal patrol boat in 1980.⁴⁴

The three SHANGHAI II Class patrol craft, and associated training package, supplied by the Peoples Republic of China in June 1973 was unfortunately not the right vessel for a fledgling naval force. They were primarily an over-gunned anti-submarine patrol craft with a limited range. Its main engines were complicated to maintain and it required a crew of 25 personnel, all of whom had to be fully conversant with their roles. It had no small boats for boarding operations at sea and its seaworthiness was poor, making it unsuitable for maritime security operations off the Sierra Leone coast. The vessels were too complicated, too fragile and too costly to run. With no support infrastructure, this inexperienced cadre had the daunting task of operating a vessel that was unfit for the task.⁴⁵ It is unknown if these vessels ever conducted any meaningful operations, since they appeared to have spent all their time

alongside Government Jetty in Freetown. An officer in the Sierra Leone Navy, who joined in 1973, remembers this time as one of training. He spent six years, from 1973 to 1979, in various countries (Ethiopia, Kenya, India, China and the UK) learning to become a mariner.⁴⁶ In 1979, six years after delivery, the first of the SHANGHAI IIs was deleted from the order of battle. In 1982, the second was sunk, while the third was disarmed and held in reserve.⁴⁷

By 1982, the paper strength of the Sierra Leone Navy was encouraging. It had one SHANGHAI II held in reserve, three newly built Japanese landing craft, a coastal patrol craft and the two-year old British built *President Siaka Stevens*. However, there was no one to operate or maintain them. Naval personnel had either preferred to remain abroad on completion of their training courses or on return seek more lucrative employment in the private sector, a problem common to all navies. Therefore, when President Siaka Stevens ordered Lt Sessay to take command of the Sierra Leone Navy in 1982, he became the head of a very small force of 35 personnel.⁴⁸ What maritime knowledge existed was desk taught and only invested in himself and his two foreign-trained officers. The remaining 32 Ordinary Rates came from various technical units within the land forces and had no maritime experience. With no sea-going experience, no ethos, no maritime culture, they were starting from scratch.

Sessay then oversaw the development of the Sierra Leone Navy into a force able to deliver the required level of maritime capability. By 1992, with help from China, the UK and the US, the Navy had reached its peak. It had 158 trained officers and men, three offshore vessels capable of patrolling its EEZ and three inshore patrol craft, as well as three aging landing craft. Also in support of fishery protection, the UK firm Maritime Protection Services was operating the *Maritime Protector*. In 1992, the military coup by Captain Valentine Strasser signalled not only the end of Maritime Protection Services, but also the start of the demise of the force with crews leaving their boats to head into the rainforest to fight the rebels.⁴⁹

With the majority of the Navy deployed on foot in the hinterland, the fleet began to decay. By 1993, there was only one offshore vessel serviceable and by 1999, the fleet was a single vessel, the *Alimamy Rassin*, donated by China in 1997. In 2001, the inadequacy of offshore patrol boats and the lack of consistent logistic support led to the establishment of Forward Operating Bases along the coastline; a pragmatic decision which is still working today.⁵⁰ The end of the Sierra Leone Navy came in 2002, when it was consumed into the new RSLAF, under the mentoring of a British Army Brigadier.

Post-2002 UK led Stabilisation: 'What no Sea?'

Biased by a definition of security that confined itself to the land forces on both sides in the civil war, the focus of the International Military Advisory Training Team (IMATT) and the UK in its formative years was on the formation of a RSLAF and Sierra Leone Police. Their aim was to make both the land forces and the police accountable to a rule of law, based on the protection of its people. In essence, the aim was to enable the people of Sierra Leone to feel safe on the streets and return the monopoly of armed force to the Government in order to allow it to govern. With armies the main cause of instability in West Africa, it had either to be reformed or disbanded. For Sierra Leone, the decision was to absorb the large number of both Government and Rebel forces into a reformed RSLAF. This was achieved through a 'Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration' process, which then oversaw the gradual scaling down of the force levels concurrent with an increase in political oversight which has worked. It has enabled the Government to regain control of the monopoly of force in the country and it now has an Army that is subordinate to the rule of law and is able to undertake a meaningful role in African Union security operations. This less insular approach will be important for the future stability of the region. For neighbouring Liberia, disarmament was not such a success and the country is now left with a large number of ex-combatants, who may have had their physical component of fighting power removed, but their conceptual and moral components are still strong and 'worryingly, for the right money, they are ready to be led'.⁵¹

For a mariner, reviewing the last 12 years is a depressing catalogue of missed opportunities and a lack of understanding of the importance the maritime sector has in the security and prosperity of the Sierra Leonean state. Consumed into a single service again, the Maritime Wing has not flourished. A visit to their base in Murray Town is demoralising. For want of a little more long-term commitment, the Maritime Wing could be an effective force able to provide the required level of maritime security the country requires. The commitment could be cost neutral and a source of revenue to the state. Instead, they remain a poor cousin to the Land Forces, with no champion in the Sierra Leone Ministry of Defence. They are reliant on the International Security Advisory Team (ISAT) Royal Navy Commander for influence in Sierra Leone, and with other state and non-state actors.

Since 2002, the small Maritime Wing has remained hostage to its overlord; the British mentored RSLAF Land Forces. This may be due to the initial approach taken by the UK in-country team that 'avoided obsessions about planning at the expense of actually doing things'.⁵² Although, they never seemed to ask themselves how would they know if they had the 'right' people doing the right things? This lack of planning led amongst other things - in the opinion of an IMATT Commander - to designing a Ministry of Defence that while the smaller brother of the UK's, was not what was required in Sierra Leone.⁵³ A review of this early period demonstrates the problem of not identifying that Sierra Leone needed all of its Ministries to be inclusive institutions. By focusing on only one government Ministry, the Ministry of Defence and then developing it in accordance with a blueprint written in London it 'became isolated as it was not operating within the regulations, rules and constraints of the broader civil service of Sierra Leone'.⁵⁴ There was no common goal. Instead, UK personnel appeared to have deployed to the country for six-month tours and embarked on their own agenda, rebuilding in their own image, unaware of Sierra Leone's cultural issues. It is no surprise that the RSLAF Land Forces are a British Army 'imitation'. The question of whether this was what the country required does not appear to have been asked and therefore by adopting a UK solution rather than

seeking a genuine interrelated adaption, Sierra Leone is left with a weaker product.

Undeniably, the complexity of the task for those arriving in country must have been daunting. The pressure of operational expediency, with an ongoing civil war, provides some justification for the 'fire-fighting' approach in 2000, by people not trained for the task. However, once the security situation had stabilised and peacebuilding efforts had begun by the end of 2001, there appears little justification for the continued lack of a holistic approach. At this point, there should have been a simultaneous approach by state and non-state actors to build governmental capacity to provide security for the state and its people, with inclusive institutions. Instead, it appears that the Land Forces and the Ministry of Defence were formed without taking into account their inter-relatedness with all the other elements of security. In the maritime environment, there was a need to ensure that the government could fulfil its basic obligation to uphold and protect the national (maritime) interests within the EEZ. Of course, it is conjecture; however, if the Security Sector Reform process had noted this requirement it might have led to a broader understanding of security and the need to include economic, environmental and judicial security in their plans.

In 2002, as a failed state, Sierra Leone's physical security was important; however, the absence of a strategy in those early years prevented the formulation of a roadmap to a secure and prosperous future and an exit plan. It is a concern that one of the conclusions of a UK Government commissioned work was that: 'getting the right people on the ground and taking action is more valuable than detailed, extensive and time-consuming planning'.⁵⁵ Of course, the complexity of the task for those arriving in country must have been daunting, but that cannot excuse the lack of detailed planning. The United Nation's agree:

There is a need for planning right from the outset (before peacekeepers are deployed), and this planning should address political, economic, and

social aspects, as well as rule of law, good governance, etc. In this respect, Security Sector Reform should be considered as encompassing the stabilisation, recovery and sustainable development of a country. Sustainability is thus linked to the concept of affordability – as Security Sector Reform is an expensive process that requires the attribution of sufficient resources.⁵⁶

The Re-established Elite

The irony is that the re-establishment of the state as the dominant security force has enabled the old elite to flourish and once again threaten its security. The re-established elite enjoyed a 'disproportionate influence in the peacebuilding process'⁵⁷ and have used it to enrich themselves, their dependents and perpetuate their power at the expense of the vast majority of people.⁵⁸ While the symptoms of the conflict may be gone, the root cause of elite controlled extractive institutions that exploit resources from the many for the few, do not protect property rights, or provide incentives for growth is still present. Central to Acemoglu and Robinson's theory on why nations fail is that it is only inclusive economic and political institutions, which can promote prosperity.⁵⁹ Therefore, although Sierra Leone is currently enjoying a period of economic growth, since it has extractive economic and political institutions it will be unsustainable. Since 2007, Siaka Stevens party the All Peoples Congress party has been in power under the leadership of Ernst Bai Koroma. While the current president was in insurance during Stevens' reign,⁶⁰ many of his cabinet members were members of Stevens' and Momoh's corrupt government. When Stevens retired in 1985, his pension pot was allegedly US\$500 million at a time when the Bank of Sierra Leone only held US\$196,000 in its foreign reserve accounts.⁶¹ By not formulating a strategy and focusing on the Ministry of Defence, Security Sector Reform enabled the old elite and their apprentices to function with the same impunity.

By providing a secure physical environment, the UK has been implicit in providing power to both the shadow state and the State and allowing extractive

practices to become the primary means of accumulating wealth for the elite. In the maritime, elements of this elite allowed organised crime to operate unhindered in Sierra Leone's ungoverned maritime space.⁶² Currently the core state institutions appear strong enough to prevent the vicious circle of complete disorder followed by some sort of order returning to Sierra Leone; however 'the long-run effect is the same: the state all but remains absent and institutions are extractive'.⁶³ The elite need to understand that unless they move away from extractive to inclusive institutions then their own future security and prosperity cannot be guaranteed.

This detailed study of the Sierra Leone Navy supports the view that a policy maker's perception of security is often the product of their personal experience. It would be lazy to conclude that stabilisation operations were commandeered in the Ministry of Defence by the British Army and blame a lack of mariners in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Department for International Development for the focus for security being land-centric and, while important, restricted to domestic order. In those formative years, it was the responsibility of the Royal Navy as the UK expert on maritime security to ensure that the maritime environment was included in the UK led Security Sector Reform. Since maritime security encompasses political, economic, environmental, judicial and social aspects, this may have helped to prevent security being limited to a domestic physical sense. In post-civil war Sierra Leone, with security left under the proprietorship of the British Army, it is understandable that the form and function of their security forces became an imitation of the British Army, with security seen in a limited physical sense, as understood by the British Army led IMATT mentors. With no help from the Royal Navy and little understanding of the important role security forces have in the development of a stable economy, inclusive institutions and a fair judiciary, they were blind to the vital role maritime security plays in the security and prosperity of the state.

A detailed review of the IMATT records highlighted a complete lack of maritime advice from the UK during these formative years. While naval neglect is not

unique to Sierra Leone 'many developing nations see navies as a less pressing national priority while viewing the labour intensive nature of armies as an attraction'.⁶⁴ There are exceptions. Drawing on their expertise as mariners, Norway made the decision over 50 years ago to focus on assisting poor countries to develop and modernise their maritime sector with Namibia being an excellent example how to achieve success. However, hampered by strong material and psychological barriers to maritime development most states elites remain blind to the benefits of a secure maritime environment and unaware of their national obligations. Instead, confined by their own experience of life on the land they see naval expansion as a costly luxury that they cannot afford. The 'sea-blindness' that was allowed to exist in the UK led Security Sector Reform had now ingrained itself into the re-established elite.

It was not until early 2004 that the economy was noted as a key component of security. Before then the focus was land centric with no mention of the maritime component.⁶⁵ With disarmament completed by January 2002 and the Government of Sierra Leone established and in control of country after the May 2002 elections, it was a missed opportunity. In these first two years, all International and Sierra Leone government and non-government agencies tasked with restoring security to the state ignored the role of the maritime environment. There was no consideration of the role the maritime component could play in easing tension on the Guinean border, or improving relations with Liberia. The UK reissued directive to Commander IMATT in January 2003 gave an end of 2006 end-state: 'self-sustaining, democratically accountable and affordable armed forces, capable of meeting Sierra Leone's defence missions and tasks, assisted as necessary by an appropriate regional peace support organisation, but without UK military assistance'.⁶⁶ This should have prompted the question within both the UK and Sierra Leone Ministry of Defence of how would this be achieved in the maritime domain. The fact that there is no evidence of any maritime guidance in the drafting of the directive is a clear example of the Royal Navy not playing its role as the UK's maritime expert.

In June 2003, the major security concern for IMATT was what would happen to the fighters once the fighting stopped in Liberia, since many were Sierra Leonean and ex-RUF. While this was the in-country concern, the UK Ministry of Defence was concerned with Sierra Leone's position, for a third year running, at the bottom of the United Nation's Human Development Index. There was much less concern for the threat from unemployed fighters. This lack of interest by IMATT in the role of the military in the prosperity of the state was reflected in Sierra Leone's Operations Order for 2004: 'Sierra Leone is at peace, though external threats remain, they are considered low; the internal threat remains undefined, but can be considered as low. Before December 2004 the Government of Sierra Leone will resume full responsibility for the security of the nation'.⁶⁷ The Maritime Wing is restricted to two words, 'no change'.⁶⁸ The first report on the Maritime Wing appears later that year in March 2004 and signalled an awakening in IMATT to its poor state.⁶⁹ The report details a force that is unable to go to sea and the pauper in the defence budget.⁷⁰ In an effort to promote increased focus on the Maritime Wing, the Commander of IMATT wrote to the Deputy Minister of Defence in May 2004 stating the 'Maritime Wing was presently incapable of fulfilling its task'.⁷¹ The letter goes on to highlight the economic opportunities lost due to fishing vessels knowing that they could operate as they wished with no regard to the Sierra Leone laws since there was little prospect of being caught. Unable to protect their national (maritime) interests, Sierra Leone EEZ was a free zone for all forms of IUU fishing.

By 2005, a realisation of the importance of the economy to the security of Sierra Leone was beginning to gain traction:

The long term guarantee for the country's stability lies in developing economy; however, progress is woeful the Government of Sierra Leone remains donor dependent and civil society including the government remains unwilling to break the status quo that undermines so much that the International community is trying to achieve.⁷²

Unfortunately, IMATT failed to see that they had a role beyond providing comment. They did not understand the link between security and prosperity and

ignored the maritime. Indeed, there is no mention of the maritime in the 2010 plan. That the intelligence officer in IMATT in a detailed report in December 2005 on border control did not consider the sea as a border is just one example of IMATT 'sea blindness'.

Fortunately for the Maritime Wing, 2006 proved to be a better year, with a gift of three patrol boats by the US in May. It also marked recognition by the UK that the Maritime Wing needed help.⁷³ In August 2006, the UK agreed to provide a Royal Navy officer as an advisor to the Maritime Wing. In IMATT's end of year report the maritime at last got a mention, albeit short:

...the Maritime Wing is learning how to make best use of recently acquired Patrol Boats and Cutters, but hampered severely by the totally inadequate financial budget. Proposal for the Joint Maritime Authority has gained cabinet approval, but being slowed up by the committee charged with implementation.⁷⁴

By the middle of 2007, the influence of the newly appointed Royal Navy Commander was clear with the Commander of IMATT writing to the Sierra Leone Chief of Defence Staff urging him to 'support the development of the Joint Maritime Authority and integration of the Maritime Wing to be given greater priority'.⁷⁵ In July 2007, the British High Commissioner, Sarah Macintosh, joined IMATT in highlighting the plight of the maritime:

The Maritime Wing is desperately under- resourced: without binoculars, oilskins or Command Navigational Aids; one (of only four) off- shore boat has been out of action since 2007 for want of a £550 part; reach into the EEZ is limited by fuel shortages. If we get the Joint Maritime Authority working, Illegal Unregulated and Unreported fishing fines will fund MW capability⁷⁶ creating a virtuous circle for protecting fisheries stocks.⁷⁷

July 2007 also saw the Department for International Development acknowledge the importance of the maritime sector. They agreed to fund the UK Fishery Protection Strategy,⁷⁸ which starting in January 2008 would see a projected injection of £15M, over ten years, into Sierra Leone fisheries, with the Joint Maritime Authority overseeing the strategy. In November 2007, an IMATT

sponsored sea day on board the *Sir Milton* was able to raise awareness of the maritime to relevant ministers and officials and by January 2008, the US had agreed to install the Automatic Identification System (AIS) in Sierra Leone, which would then become a requirement for a fishing licence.⁷⁹ The addition of an experienced maritime practitioner into IMATT, with the dedicated tasks of mentoring the Sierra Leone Maritime Wing, clearly had an immediate impact on the forces operational capability. Hampered by an inadequate financial budget and poor resources in mid- 2007, by the end of the year - with help from the Maritime Special Fund and the Africa Development Bank - it was an effective operational force.

The increased naval presence in IMATT came through in the Commanders end of year report, which for the first time recognised the huge potential of the fisheries sector for wealth generation and the need to focus support on the Maritime Wing and Joint Maritime Authority. Indeed, while the report describes a bleak future for Sierra Leone with the need for continued direct international budgetary support and an Army, with salaries unpaid, that is too big for the country to afford. It singles out the Maritime Wing as the only success:

In stark contrast to the remainder of RSLAF the MW has been inspirational. It has successfully seized trawlers fishing illegally, captured armed pirates and rescued countless fishermen in distress and is professional, motivated and effective despite significant resource constraints. Their ability to contribute to the successful exploitation of SL's huge fishery resources could be significant if properly resourced and supported. While tactical engagement with the brigades will reduce, under IMATT reorientation, it is recommended that additional effort and resources are focused on the MW as one of the few elements able to make a significant contribution to national security and income generation. Additional expenditure on equipment and training for MW has the potential to deliver the greatest returns for SL to protect its resources and borders and improve capability to prevent trafficking and smuggling. We will start sending an officer to Dartmouth next year, with

an aspiration to send one officer every 2 years thereafter, which should reap dividends in the long term.⁸⁰

At the beginning of 2008, after six years in country, there was finally recognition that the maritime sector was a vital component of both the physical and economic security of the country. In addition, there was an understanding that the cost was in the initial set up since the long term funding of the maritime infrastructure would be self-funding and an income generator. Unfortunately, at this point the UK Department for International Development withdrew their financial support for the Fishery Protection Strategy, removing UK commitment to the starting costs. Although no reason is given, it is perhaps due to the Department's and other UK Government Departments moralist view of corruption that prevented them from placing economic development before good governance. It means that the UK has still not developed an effective strategy in the 12 years that it has been actively engaged in the country.

A visit to Freetown by the UK Minister for the Armed Forces, in late January 2008, highlighted this Whitehall wisdom. During his calls on the Sierra Leone President and Defence Minister, both asked for UK maritime assistance outlining their requirement for boats and patrol aircraft with greater range to cover the EEZ. The UK Minister agreed that a functioning EEZ could channel funds in the Sierra Leone Government; however, 'until there is a legislative process to support it, there is little point investing in more capability'.⁸¹ It only took two weeks for the Maritime Wing to demonstrate why this reasoning was wrong for Sierra Leone. Due her poor physical state, *Sir Milton* conducted one of her few 2008 patrols in February. The patrol was a success and included the arrest of a number of vessels, including a Chinese owned vessel, which was refuelling a fleet of Chinese fishing vessels in order to avoid paying duty to the Government, a practice that potentially amounts to millions of dollars of lost revenue.⁸² A lack of good governance undoubtedly dilutes the impact of fishery protection measures, but it does not mean that they do not exist. The UK anti-corruption policy was doing that. For the time that *Sir Milton* was at sea, she

demanded an action by those profiting from illegal acts in Sierra Leone's waters, ashore, or afloat. What that action would be, depends upon the actor, although, a country such as Sierra Leone does offer more choices than most. In a rather insidious follow up note to the Sierra Leone Minister of Defence, the UK Minister for the Armed Forces stated that 'given the fiscal constraints under which you are operating, any opportunity to generate income must be seized. The Maritime Wing is clearly an area where a relatively small investment (in terms of resources, legislation and inter- departmental procedures) could reap significant rewards'.⁸³ Unsurprisingly in a terse response, the Minister restated the requirement for UK help in establishing maritime security in their waters since their 'Maritime Wing cannot go beyond 35 nautical miles'.⁸⁴

In the aftermath of this disappointing decision, 2008 was a difficult year for the Maritime Wing. In October 2008, over six years after arriving in country, IMATT at last included the Maritime Wing in their estimate of the RSLAF beyond 2010. It concluded that the Maritime Wing should remain within the RSLAF and 'against the threat to maritime flank' it required two offshore Patrol Boats able to operate out to 200 nautical miles in all weathers, six Patrol Craft for medium range tasks and 14 inshore patrol craft. This required personnel strength of 43 officers and 232 men. They also required the support of four fixed wing aircraft that would be able to provide long-range surveillance over both the land and sea. Disappointingly for serving and retired Sierra Leone Naval officers this decision also meant keeping the name and structure of the Maritime Wing. They had been hoping for the rebirth of their Navy. While there may have been good reasons, at the time, to keep the structure, names are an important part of developing an ethos in a military unit. Since the ethos belongs with the force, to ignore their wishes shows poor military judgement. Having established the required force level, there appears to have been little further action apart from lament about the lack of resource. In the Commander of IMATT's end of year report he highlights that while the Maritime Wing has made some progress 'it remains unequal to the task and unable to set the conditions for any form of economic recovery because it is inadequately equipped and under

resourced'.⁸⁵

On paper there continued to be general acceptance that the maritime had an important part to play in the future security and prosperity of the country. Although there was little evidence of anything actually happening, this general awakening did spread to the RSLAF, with, for the first time, the Joint Force Commander including the maritime in his Directive for 2010- 2011. In the Directive, he states that:

...maritime ops under the auspices of the invigorated Joint Maritime Committee have been a success story during 2009/10. The involvement of the World Bank, US (incl Coastguard), Transnational Organised Crime Unit and other members of the International community have enabled SL to aspire to greater control of her TTWs. JFC's task is to ensure that the MW is fully supported and can meet its role within the GOAL maritime community. I am particularly keen that MW increases its effective days at sea and maintains sufficient resources in reserve and that it can promptly respond to a maritime SAR request. I am also keen to see greater cooperation between the Air and Maritime wing in exploring shared responsibility for surveillance of the EEZ both in the JMC and the study of UAV utility.⁸⁶

After eight years, at last the maritime was gaining the attention of a land-centric RSLAF and IMATT. There was an understanding in both organisations that the maritime was crucial to security, but badly under resourced. By 2010, they were delivering 60% of their planned patrol days.⁸⁷ According to the current Defence Attaché - who was also the maritime advisor to Sierra Leone 2010 to 2011 (an extraordinary example of continuity) - the Maritime Wing reached its post 2002 peak in 2011/12. Since then its operational capability has gone downhill. It is the view of the current Royal Navy incumbent, that after conducting a full review of the force he needs to focus on the tactical level to ensure that the Maritime Wing is capable of operating again. At the beginning of 2014, the Maritime Wing consists of one SHANGHAI II, *Sir Milton*, three US 32-foot Cutters and a number of small inshore boats on the Forward Operating Bases. Of these, only

the small inshore boats are operational, with the *Sir Milton* and two of the Cutters beyond economic repair.

How to Rise Again

The short history of the Sierra Leone Navy illustrates that operating an effective maritime force that is able to operate to the full extremities of a country's boundary is no easy task. It requires long-term investment in its people, equipment, training and sustainability and this requires the support of the elite. Stevens recognised this and the Sierra Leone Navy reached its operational peak in 1991/92. Since then the two false dawns of 2007 and 2011/12 have shown that while the Maritime Wing has the people and the vision, it lacks the support of the elite.

Maritime Security Strategy

Sierra Leone's 2013 National Strategy for Maritime Security not only shares the same title, format and style as the US 2005 version, but also apart from the introduction - which is uniquely Sierra Leone - the rest of the document has only been given very minor tweaks.⁸⁸ While plagiarism of successful doctrine is actively encouraged in military circles, a national strategy, by its nature is always exclusive to that state.⁸⁹ Therefore, it is not a strategy, instead by demonstrating their level of inexperience it is a cry for help. Gray's 'Perspectives on Strategy' provides a useful tool to explore why it is so difficult for Sierra Leone to formulate a strategy that will deliver an effective maritime force. While he identifies five interlocking perspectives that form an effective strategy, in researching the history of the Sierra Leone Navy it became clear that their maritime culture and ethics are the two most vital ingredients in the formulation of a successful maritime security strategy.⁹⁰ Without due respect to these two unique perspectives there can be no strategy.

Maritime Culture

Culture is beliefs, customs and strategic behaviour, with a core meaning of 'a common stock of cultural reference'.⁹¹ It needs to *culturare* and develop over

time. In 2014, while the culture of democratic rule and public accountability in Sierra Leone is growing, in the maritime there is no culture other than the custom of subsistence level fishing. There was no mercantile handover, or inheritance of a maritime legacy in 1961, just six boats and the promise of Royal Navy protection. The growth of a maritime culture began with Stevens. It saw the formation of a Navy in 1982 and by 1992 Sierra Leone had gone from 4,438 tons of Flag Registered mercantile trade in 1968, to 25,569 tons and transformed the navy from seven small boats to a force able to provide security throughout its EEZ. It also had fishery protection laws, passed by parliament in 1994. However, any sign of the heavily donor led growth of a maritime culture before the civil war has now gone, along with the navy. In 2014, there is no common reference and only one Leonean Master Mariner nearing retirement. All of those interviewed in Sierra Leone agreed that the country has no maritime culture and no 'common stock of cultural reference'.⁹² In order to grow a maritime culture that is able to harness the country's maritime domain Sierra Leone will require the long-term commitment of a third party. The solitary Royal Naval officer mentoring the Maritime Wing and the Joint Maritime Committee is extremely important and since the creation of the post in 2007 its incumbents have had a disproportionately positive impact. However, maritime culture needs to grow across the entire domain, public and private and that requires greater investment. While all mariners are superstitious, it is hoped that observations made in 1945 that 'Sierra Leone fishermen has the 'terrors of terrestrial ju-ju superimposed upon the normal superstitions of the sea' are not true today.⁹³ There is requirement for educational enlightenment to open up the ocean to Sierra Leoneans. An version of the Norwegian assisted Namibian policy of 'Namibianisation' of the sea into 'Leoneanisation' to enable Sierra Leoneans to learn how to embrace the sea, be able to respond to its threats, while grasping its opportunities could be a good start.

Importance of a Name

Sierra Leone Naval Officers would not be alone in disagreeing with Shakespeare that 'What's in a name? That which we call a rose by any other

name would smell as sweet'.⁹⁴ For an organisation, a name does not simply distinguish something from another; it creates worth by developing both an internal and external ethos. For several Sierra Leone interviewees, the re-branding of the Sierra Leone Navy has had a negative impact on their feeling of worth and by using the name Maritime Wing masked their role and placed them as subservient to the Army. 'As soon as you label a concept, you change how people perceive it. It is difficult to imagine a truly neutral label, because words evoke images, are associated with other concepts and vary in complexity.'⁹⁵ In Africa, names are extremely important. People believe that names influence human behavior and circumstance.⁹⁶ Although New Zealand has a Maritime Wing, it refers to the Navy and has a Chief of the Navy who is on equal terms with the other two Services, who also have Wings. As the current name - in its shortened version - does not indicate their function (such as a Bank) or contain a naming element (such as Barclays) it needs to be changed. In interviewing senior serving members of the Maritime Wing and retired members of the pre-2000 Navy, even though they had been trained in China, Russia and India, they all viewed their time with the Royal Navy as their cultural reference point for maritime operations. This may have been pure flattery. However, for them, what set the Royal Navy apart from other Navies are the centuries of tradition as both a constabulary and military force. The Royal Navy has been conducting fishery protection duties around the UK for over 400 years, a task which most other maritime nations leave to their Coast Guards. Therefore, using the function name of Navy offered them the allure that even though their primary function was constabulary, they could still be a military force. The name of the Maritime Wing should be reviewed.

Ethics

Ethics is simply what is believed to be right and wrong behaviour with 'reference to the moral standard extant in his or her society'.⁹⁷ It is a vital agent for a functioning society with each having a nuanced moral code. The problem arises when the ethics of a society, such as the UK, leads their engagement with another since it promotes a binary assessment of good and bad behaviour and

intolerance to ambiguity. For a country shaped by decades of violence, where secrecy is the norm and a required defence, understanding Sierra Leonean ethics and what society means is not easy. It is further complicated by ambiguity being seen as a strength and 'a person who communicates what she or he desires or thinks...considered an idiot or no better than a child'.⁹⁸ In this regime of ambiguity an elites' dependents define their ethics as they hold the foundation of their power. This interdependent relationship provides the moral standard with the right behaviour for the elite being to provide for a society made up of their dependents. The wrong behaviour is to further personal gain since it removes the legitimacy they enjoy inside their society. This narrowing of society to dependents explains the disregard for state owned property, an indifference that has had a crippling impact on state functions. It also explains why Ministers with no Sierra Leonean based dependents are not trusted and their time in office is short.⁹⁹

In order to succeed the elite need to incorporate people into their society as dependents with the foundation of an elite status also being what undermines their effectiveness. This fragility demands large-scale corruption by Sierra Leone's elite to maintain their power base.¹⁰⁰ While the notion of corruption is abhorrent to UK society, the British High Commissioner's is right to counsel 'don't get bogged down in corruption, see beyond it'.¹⁰¹ Corruption has not prevented Angola, with the help of Norway, from formulating an effective maritime strategy, even though Angola ranks below Sierra Leone for corruption.¹⁰² However, the Department for International Development's current moralist view of corruption 'as the abuse of entrusted power for private gain' dams all forms.¹⁰³ It places the masses alongside the elite, makes no distinction between public and private, or high and low earners. This is understandable for a strategy whose primary audience is the UK taxpayer, but the use of this simple definition has prevented an effective strategy.¹⁰⁴ It has failed to understand the various societies and communities that exist in Sierra Leone and their different moral standards. Indeed, why should those in poverty whose horizon is tomorrow's problem be expected to apply arm's length

principles? After 12 years of UK engagement, the Department for International Development's latest operational plan acknowledges this failure:

Sierra Leone remains one of the poorest countries in the world and is unlikely to meet any of the Millennium Development Goals before 2015, has a GNI per capita of only \$340 (compared to the Sub-Saharan average of \$1257, World Bank 2011) and continues to languish near the bottom of the United Nation's Human Development Index. It is a fragile state in a fragile region, still under UN Security Council supervision and has a UN peace building mission as a successor to the peacekeeping operation, which ended in 2007.¹⁰⁵

Imposing a binary assessment on behaviour has left no room for compromise and prevented the application of an effective strategy. As the goal is to transform the country into a stable low-income state with enough controls in place to enable it to operate, the 'uncritical adoption of mainstream anti-corruption and good governance policies' should be avoided.¹⁰⁶

Namibia – A Case Study in Intervention

Drawing on their expertise as mariners, Norway made the decision over 50 years ago to focus on assisting poor countries to develop and modernise their fishing industry. The first 30 years were not a success and in several cases, a complete failure as their Development Minister noted in 1988 when commenting on Tanzania. However, they stayed in fish, reviewed their approach and today it remains an important area in Norwegian development cooperation under the leadership of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The primary focus of their aid has been in key thematic areas: policy development, research, training and education - areas that are not particularly capital intensive - in addition to some investments in private sector development.¹⁰⁷ One country that was particularly receptive to Norwegian assistance was Namibia.

On gaining independence in 1990 the country inherited one the richest fishing grounds in the world that due to over fishing several fish stocks were nearing collapse. Before 1990 there was no fisheries management in Namibia's waters,

but if you had a boat - only the Namibian elite did - it was open season with 'neither South Africa, as the de facto authority over Namibia, nor the United Nations, as the de jure authority, able to exercise jurisdiction'.¹⁰⁸ In 1990 as an embryonic State, it had no strategy, no maritime heritage, its small Department of Fisheries had no responsibility for offshore fisheries and the country had not yet claimed an EEZ. However, they had a vision and understood that to harness the wealth and protect their aquaculture they required external assistance that would provide expert advice with no stake. The importance of Norway's support was that it was able to provide this purity of purpose, while being able to influence regional and international organisations. With Norwegian assistance, they translated their vision into a well-resourced strategy that supported by clear strategic objectives, has transformed the sector into the country's second biggest export earner of foreign currency after mining. In 1990 on the day that Namibia declared an EEZ there were more than 100 IUU foreign fishing vessels in their waters, by 2005, it was assessed that there was no IUU fishing in Namibian waters,¹⁰⁹ and since 2007 it has contributed around 5% of GDP.¹¹⁰

In their 2009 review, the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation suggested there were 13 major components that delivered success. These included the manning and training of patrol vessels, which instilled a Namibian maritime culture, and embedding mentors across government that in their view 'was absolutely essential to the development of a fisheries and maritime management system for Namibia'.¹¹¹ An interesting part of their policy that worked across all the components was *Namibianisation* of the maritime. By enabling Namibians to acquire the skills to take ownership of the maritime sector, Namibian society has embraced the maritime environment and taken to the sea.¹¹² However, the Nansen Programme that has aimed to understand the Namibian maritime environment appears to have been the bedrock to the successful intervention. The *Dr. Fridtjof Nansen* research vessel started survey operations off Namibia in January 1990 - two months before independence - in order to provide the Government with detailed knowledge of its fish stocks and other mineral resources. This was vital during the new Governments

negotiations with foreign fishing interests and ensured that Namibia was able to establish a sustainable fishery. Under the programme, Namibia now has its own research vessel, the *RV Mirabilis*. Although, not included in the 13, one of the major successes also appears to have been the recruitment, training and retention of a well- motivated civil service.

Sierra Leone – The Case for Intervention

As the UK will be unable to claim success in Sierra Leone while the maritime environment remains insecure, there needs to be a renewed focus on the country's ability to deliver the security it requires. One of the essential elements will be its maritime force/navy. A review of the current force highlights some major concerns. A Navy needs platforms that go to sea, availability is, therefore, one of the key drivers in its operational effectiveness.¹¹³ While acquisition of the right platforms, in the required numbers is obviously important, once in the order of battle their availability largely depends upon well trained and motivated personnel, and an effective support infrastructure. Both need to be able to function ashore and afloat. The Maritime Wing's current inability to operate and maintain maritime vessels is not new. It is a recurring theme since 1961 and is in stark contrast to such countries as Sri Lanka.¹¹⁴ A rudimentary review of their order of battle from 1961 to 2010 shows that the average life expectancy of a naval vessel was nine years, reducing to eight if you delete the three landing craft who spent their life alongside. There is also no difference in the life expectancy of a second hand, or new vessel. The nine years is also generous as it hides the amount of time the vessels are able to conduct operations; this average is measured in days not years.

Why? The reason is people. Operating and maintaining naval vessels is not easy. The task can be simplified by procuring robust and user friendly craft. Nevertheless, the sea is no friend. It demands a well-trained and motivated work force with experience of operating at sea, in all weathers, for lengthy periods. In order to achieve this and become self-sufficient, a navy has to be able to recruit from an educated population and then retain its trained

manpower. In a country with a 'total adult literacy rate of 42%' this is difficult.¹¹⁵ Attracting suitable candidates from this small pool and then retaining them, especially if they have benefited from training overseas, is challenging. It demands a level of professional and monetary motivation that the Maritime Wing cannot deliver. Around 80 to 100 of the current Sierra Leone Maritime Wing are ex-rebels with no educational background and little chance of finding alternative employment. Only 55% of the current Force can read a simple passage. In the view of the Commanding Officer in order to operate its current fleet, the Maritime Wing needs between 80 to 85% of the force to be able to read and understand basic arithmetic, with the remaining 15 to 20% being skilled mechanics.¹¹⁶ The Commanding Officer of the Maritime Wing is an experienced, well-educated and highly professional naval officer. As a veteran of the civil war, he finds motivation as a patriot and has a well-grounded vision for the future. However, as the experience of war fades, will patriotism be enough to recruit and retain junior officers of his quality who will be able to fulfil his vision?

In order to assess the ability of Sierra Leone to deliver an effective maritime strategy in 2014 a review of the strategic triumvirate was conducted. In conducting the review, assistance was provided by the British High Commission in Sierra Leone and ISAT. As most of the interviewees were members of Sierra Leone's Joint Maritime Committee, in order to enable a free exchange of views all interviews were conducted under the strict understanding that all comments would be un-attributable.

Ends

As the re-established elite prosper in the current system, there is currently no requirement for them to adopt a strategy that delivers the state 'ends' of a secure and prosperous maritime environment. This means that the delivery of an effective national strategy for maritime security is impossible as the institutionalised ways and means meet private, not state ends. In order to ensure that the maritime also serves

the broader public, the elite need to believe their interests necessitate a secure and prosperous maritime environment; a difficult task when the financial gain from illicit activity is high. Therefore, there is a requirement for focused intervention in the form of incorruptible experts in key departments to monitor revenue flows, a greater physical presence in the maritime and a programme highlighting the benefits of a secure maritime environment. As on the land, the recalculation of risk verses gain by the elite needs to promote a move away from illegal activity. The concern for Sierra Leone is if Clare Short is right that the 'possibility of absolutely merging commitments to development with all your other instruments of foreign policy, including the military' which was conceivable in those days, is now sort of lost'.¹¹⁷ Fortunately, the current head of the UK led ISAT, believes that the continued need for donor support means that the elite will have to submit to greater intervention in the maritime sector.¹¹⁸ To deliver an effective navy Sierra Leone's elite have to worry about the consequences of not having one.

Ways

In order to develop appropriate ways for Sierra Leone there is a need to understand Sierra Leone's maritime environment. This work needs to include all maritime activity (human, animal, vegetable and mineral) in order to understand what is there and how it interacts. Only then, can an assessment of what needs to be protected, exploited, deterred or defeated be made, alongside the way it should be done. This was the belief of Lieutenant G Stevens Royal Navy Volunteer Reserve, in 1945 when tasked to conduct a review of Sierra Leone's fisheries. 'To achieve the end for which they are applied all such measures must be based on adequate knowledge and understanding of the factors involved - hence the need for prior investigation', a requirement that is just as important today.¹¹⁹ This is why a Norwegian research vessel started survey operations off Namibia in January 1990 - two months before independence - and then remained in support until Namibia was able to

fund its own research. In 2004, the success of the programme prompted the conclusion that maritime research explains why 'Namibia now has one of the best fisheries management systems in Africa'.¹²⁰ At a national level with the Joint Maritime Committee in place, the Sierra Leonean bureaucratic structure is ready to support the declared Concept of Operations. However, because it is under resourced there is little prospect of Sierra Leone delivering the required ways in a maritime environment that they do not understand.

Means

The Maritime Wing of the RSLAF is a functioning force, albeit with a very limited near shore capability. It is deeply aware that its operational capability is slipping from its 2011 peak, but feels powerless to reverse the slide while the elite remain blind to their plight. It is the expert view of the current Royal Navy advisor that after conducting a review of the force he needs to focus on the tactical level to ensure that the Maritime Wing is capable of operating again. It should be extraordinary that in two years they could reduce to a level that they need to relearn the basics of being a seafarer. Run aground by disinterest, it would be wrong to criticise the force. Having reviewed the Maritime Wing, the author would agree with the current Commanding Officer that: 'over the years, many vessel donations were made to the M[aritime] W[ing] but their operational effectiveness and natural lifespan have not been fully realised because of poor infrastructure and maintenance culture'.¹²¹ British Maritime Doctrine defines the means as the physical, moral and conceptual components. A review of the current state of Sierra Leone's naval forces raises concerns across all three. Physically, they have one unserviceable offshore vessel whose average life expectancy expires in 2014. Morally, as a force their desire to succeed is obvious and has constantly been remarked upon in IMATT reports since 2006; however, the moral component demands more than keen individuals. It requires an ingrained ability and culture that is able to operate at sea, in all

weathers, for lengthy periods. At no time since 1961 have they managed to achieve this. Conceptually, the Commanding Officer knows the requirement, but an unresponsive land-centric Ministry of Defence ignores his views. Doctrinally, they struggle. As doctrine is 'what is taught and believed' they do not have any cultural reference to provide the level of instruction that is required throughout a sailor's career. As it takes, on average, 16 years to grow a Commanding Officer of an offshore patrol boat, then it will take at least this time to instil the level of doctrine that is required for a small naval force. The continued donation of vessels, may allow the country to once again touch the required level of operational capability, but with no maritime culture, it will be fleeting.

The review of the strategic triumvirate exposes the inability of Sierra Leone to sustain an effective maritime force. To do that, it will require the support of another maritime nation, such as the UK.

Conclusion

*'Sierra Leoneans look to the UK as a past colonial master whose military intervention at the turn of the century helped save the country from an Armageddon scenario.'*¹²²

Gaining an understanding of West African naval history and in particular Sierra Leonean naval history has proved to be a challenge. As this is the first attempt at recording the history of the Sierra Leone Navy it has had to join the dots provided by British records, aided by the verbal memoirs of senior serving and retired members of the Sierra Leone Navy and Maritime Wing. The brutal civil war has left holes in the story that may never be filled, but maybe this first attempt will tempt future scholars to compile a more detailed history.

The history of the Sierra Leone Navy is a cautionary tale for all navies and those who seek to conduct Security Sector Reform. It highlights how Western powers

have found it difficult to release their hold on their domination of the seas and how - with the exception of the IUU fishing spike - academics and policy makers have often not considered the role of the maritime environment in the security of the state. It also questions the wisdom of suggesting that 'IMATT's decade long programme of armed- forces reform was undoubtedly successful'.¹²³ However, it would be wrong to conclude that the poor state of Sierra Leone's maritime environment was due to the British Army, or a lack of mariners in either the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, or the Department for International Development. As this study supports the view that a policy maker's perception of security is often the product of their personal experience, in those formative years, it was vital that the Royal Navy as the UK expert on maritime security ensured that the maritime environment was included in the UK led Security Sector Reform. Since maritime security encompasses political, economic, environmental, judicial and social aspects, this may have helped to prevent security being limited to a domestic physical sense.

Without the required maritime advice and no initial strategic plan, the UK led Security Sector Reform had little understanding of the important role security forces have in the development of a stable economy, inclusive institutions and a fair judiciary and were not aware of the role maritime security plays in the security and prosperity of the state. Naval neglect is not unique to Sierra Leone; many developing nations see navies as a less pressing national priority while viewing the labour intensive nature of armies as an attraction.¹²⁴ There are exceptions such as Namibia; however, hampered by strong material and psychological barriers to maritime development most states elites remain blind to the benefits of a secure maritime environment and instead see naval expansion as a costly luxury that they cannot afford. This 'sea- blindness' has left Sierra Leone, after 12 years of foreign intervention, unable to deliver security in their maritime environment.

The navy can rise again, but it will require the support and leadership of the Sierra Leone elite. With no strategy to guide them, the UK led Security Sector Reform pursued a physical land centric view of what constituted security and

because it was shown to be in the elite's best interests, the land is now secure. The same now needs to happen at sea. For a relatively small investment by the UK, a limited cross- government intervention into Sierra Leone's maritime domain, led by the Royal Navy, would reap significant rewards for the country. The initial focus should be on developing an understanding of the environment in order to establish the appropriate ways and required means, and demonstrate to the elite, through threats and opportunities (including donor aid) that their own ends require a secure and prosperous maritime environment, and that means an effective navy. A marinised version of IMATT's land model would work as long as it is an adaption rather than an adoption of the Royal Navy, with the level of intervention reducing over time as the delta in Sierra Leone's naval capability diminishes. This will be a long-term commitment measured in decades not years and will depend upon instilling a maritime culture that delivers 'Leoneanisation' of their maritime domain.

Appendix A

Sierra Leone Navy, Order of Battle 1961 – 2014

| Year | Force Level | Remarks |
|---------|---|--|
| 1961-67 | 7 small craft, condition unknown | Independence |
| 1967 | 7 small craft, condition unknown | Rule of Margai family ends, Siaka Stevens (Major of Freetown) becomes PM |
| 1968 | 7 small craft, condition unknown | Stevens assumes full Presidential powers |
| 1969 | 7 small craft, condition unknown | 1 st mention of mercantile marine as Lloyds Register of Shipping |
| 1970 | 7 small craft, condition unknown | |
| 1971 | 7 small craft, condition unknown | SL Naval Volunteer Force disbands |
| 1972 | 7 small craft, condition unknown | |
| 1973 | 3 x Chinese Shanghai II class Patrol Craft | Shanghai IIs transferred from China June 1973 |
| 1974 | 3 x Chinese Shanghai II class Patrol Craft | |
| 1975 | 3 x Chinese Shanghai II class Patrol Craft | |
| 1976 | 3 x Chinese Shanghai II class Patrol Craft | |
| 1977 | 3 x Chinese Shanghai II class Patrol Craft | |
| 1978 | 3 x Chinese Shanghai II class Patrol Craft | |
| 1979 | 2 x Chinese Shanghai II class Patrol Craft | 1st Shanghai II deleted in 1979 |
| 1980 | 2 x Chinese Shanghai II 3 x Landing Craft: <i>Pompoli; Gulama; Kallondo</i> | Landing craft built for Sierra Leone in Japan – 1 st 2 in Shikoku, 3 rd in Kegoya - delivered May 1980 |

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| | | |
|------|--|---|
| 1981 | 2 x Chinese Shanghai II 3 x Landing Craft: <i>Pompoli; Gulama; Kallondo</i> | Fairley Marine Tracker MkII Coastal Patrol Craft completed Dec 1981 and named as <i>President Siaka Stevens</i> |
| 1982 | 1 x Shanghai II in reserve 1 x Coastal Patrol Craft (31tons): <i>President Siaka Stevens</i> 3 x Landing Craft: <i>Pompoli; Gulama; Kallondo</i> | UNCLOS extends territorial waters from 3 to 12 nm - 2 nd Shanghai II sunk as a target in 1982 - 3 rd Shanghai II disarmed and held in reserve - <i>President Siaka Stevens</i> in service Nov 1982- |
| 1983 | 1 x Shanghai II in reserve 1 x Coastal Patrol Craft (31tons): <i>President Siaka Stevens</i> 3 x Landing Craft: <i>Pompoli; Gulama; Kallondo</i> | |
| 1984 | 1 x Shanghai II in reserve 1 x Coastal Patrol Craft (31tons): <i>President Siaka Stevens</i> 3 x Landing Craft: <i>Pompoli; Gulama; Kallondo</i> | |
| 1985 | 1 x Coastal Patrol Craft (31tons): <i>President Siaka Stevens</i> 3 x Landing Craft: <i>Pompoli; Gulama; Kallondo</i> | Major General Joseph Momoh takes Presidency after one- party referendum 3 rd Shanghai II deleted 1985 There was a promise of an ex-Soviet PO2 class warship; however it is unclear what happened to the offer. |
| 1986 | 1 x Coastal Patrol Craft (31tons): <i>President Siaka Stevens</i> 3 x Landing Craft: <i>Pompoli; Gulama; Kallondo</i> | |
| 1987 | 2 x Shanghai II Fast Attack Craft: <i>Moa; Naimbana</i> 3 x Landing Craft: <i>Pompoli; Gulama; Kallondo</i> | - 1 x Swift 105 ft Patrol Craft ordered from the US in 1987 to be armed with 2 x heavy and 2 x light MGs - <i>President Siaka Stevens</i> deleted - 2 x Shanghai II delivered in March 1987 with 17 Chinese technicians loaned for maintenance, work and training |

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| | | |
|------|---|---|
| 1988 | 2 x Shanghai II Fast Attack Craft: <i>Moa; Naimbana</i> 3 x Landing Craft: <i>Pompoli; Gulama; Kallondo</i> 2 x CAT 900S Inshore Patrol Craft (7.4tons) 1 x Halmatic Inshore Patrol Craft (13.5tons) | 900s built by Cougar Holdings in the UK delivered May 1988 |
| 1989 | 2 x Shanghai II Fast Attack Craft: <i>Moa; Naimbana</i> 3 x Landing Craft: <i>Pompoli; Gulama; Kallondo</i> 2 x CAT 900S Inshore Patrol Craft (7.4tons) 1 x Halmatic Inshore Patrol Craft (13.5tons) | 1 x Swift 105 ft Patrol Craft from the US under FMS funding delivered late 1989 |
| 1990 | 2 x Shanghai II Fast Attack Craft: <i>Moa; Naimbana</i> 3 x Landing Craft: <i>Pompoli; Gulama; Kallondo</i> 2 x CAT 900S Inshore Patrol Craft (7.4tons) 1 x Halmatic Inshore Patrol Craft (13.5tons) 1 x Swift 105ft Large Patrol Craft (103tons) | - Plans for naval air wing being set up by China |

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| | | |
|------|--|--|
| 1991 | <p>2 x Shanghai II Fast Attack Craft: <i>Moa; Naimbana</i></p> <p>3 x Landing Craft: <i>Pompoli; Gulama; Kallondo</i></p> <p>2 x CAT 900S Inshore Patrol Craft (7.4tons)</p> <p>1 x Halmatic Inshore Patrol Craft (13.5tons)</p> <p>1 x Swift 105ft Large Patrol Craft (103tons)</p> | <p>Formation of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) by Foday Sankoh</p> |
| 1992 | <p>2 x Shanghai II Fast Attack Craft: <i>Moa; Naimbana</i></p> <p>3 x Landing Craft: <i>Pompoli; Gulama; Kallondo</i></p> <p>2 x CAT 900S Inshore Patrol Craft (7.4tons)</p> <p>1 x Halmatic Inshore Patrol Craft (13.5tons)</p> <p>1 x Swift 105ft Large Patrol Craft (103tons)</p> | <p>Military coup by Captain Valentine Strasser, formed National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Only 1 Shanghai serviceable - In addition to naval vessels there was the <i>Maritime Protector</i> (ex-<i>Arctic Prowler</i>) chartered by the government from Maritime Protection Services to enforce fishery protection laws. This was a 46m ship built in Canada in 1956 and formerly used by the Canadian department of Fisheries and Oceans. |
| 1993 | <p>2 x Shanghai II Fast Attack Craft: <i>Moa; Naimbana</i></p> <p>2 x CAT 900S Inshore Patrol Craft (7.4tons)</p> <p>1 x Halmatic Inshore Patrol Craft (13.5tons)</p> <p>1 x Swift 105ft Large Patrol Craft (103tons)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 3 x Landing Craft deleted - <i>Maritime Protector</i> contract expired - 1 serviceable Shanghai II, but unreliable – both re-engined - both CAT 900s unserviceable and being refitted |

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| | | |
|------|---|---|
| 1994 | <p>2 x Shanghai II Fast Attack Craft: <i>Moa; Naimbana</i></p> <p>2 x CAT 900S Inshore Patrol Craft (7.4tons)</p> <p>1 x Halmatic Inshore Patrol Craft (13.5tons)</p> <p>1 x Swift 105ft Large Patrol Craft (103tons)</p> | - both CAT 900s serviceable early 1994 |
| 1995 | <p>2 x Shanghai II Fast Attack Craft: <i>Moa; Naimbana</i></p> <p>2 x CAT 900S Inshore Patrol Craft (7.4tons)</p> <p>1 x Swift 105ft Large Patrol Craft (103tons): <i>Farandugu</i></p> | <p>Executive Outcomes (SA mercenary firm) hired by the government to drive out RUF</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1 or 2 ex-UK Bird class may be acquired - 1 x Halmatic Inshore Patrol Craft deleted - both Shanghai IIs and CAT 900s serviceable |
| 1996 | <p>2 x Shanghai II Fast Attack Craft: <i>Moa; Naimbana</i></p> <p>2 x CAT 900S Inshore Patrol Craft (7.4tons)</p> <p>1 x Swift 105ft Large Patrol Craft (103tons): <i>Farandugu</i></p> | Elections held Ahmad Tejan Kabbah of Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) elected President – RUF/SLPP agree peace accord |
| 1997 | <p>2 x Shanghai II Fast Attack Craft: <i>Moa; Naimbana</i></p> <p>2 x CAT 900S Inshore Patrol Craft (7.4tons)</p> <p>1 x Swift 105ft Large Patrol Craft (103tons): <i>Farandugu</i></p> | <p>Break down of peace accord</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shanghai II Fast Attack Craft <i>Naimbana</i> sunk and one delivered from China named <i>Alimamy Rassin</i> PB 103 |
| 1998 | <p>2 x Shanghai II Fast Attack Craft: <i>Moa; Alimamy Rassin</i> PB 103</p> <p>2 x CAT 900S Inshore Patrol Craft (7.4tons)</p> <p>1 x Swift 105ft Large Patrol Craft (103tons): <i>Farandugu</i></p> | <p>UN establish an Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL) to oversee disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration</p> <p>MOA, 2 x CAT 900S and <i>Farandugu</i> all non-operational, with only the <i>Farandugu</i> repairable.</p> |

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| | | |
|------|--|---|
| 1999 | 1 x Shanghai II Fast Attack Craft: <i>Alimamy Rassin</i> PB 103 | Freetown comes under rebel attack, country in virtual anarchy CDS – Nigerian 1* UK involvement initiated 1999, when government of SL (GOSL) requested assistance with development of SL's MOD. 2 person team and small Short Term Training Teams STTT sent Jun 99. Work ceased Apr 00 due to breakdown in GOSL and RUF peace agreement. |
| 2000 | 1 x Shanghai II Fast Attack Craft: <i>Alimamy Rassin</i> PB 103 | UK response Op PALLISER, when situation stable Op BASILICA which was a series of STTT and advisors to the SL Armed Forces. |
| 2001 | 1 x Shanghai II Fast Attack Craft: <i>Alimamy Rassin</i> PB 103 | Possible sighting of the ALIMAMY RASSIN at sea In 2001, the inadequacy of offshore patrol boats and the lack of consistent logistic support led to the establishment of Forward Operating Bases along the coastline |
| 2002 | 1 x Shanghai II Fast Attack Craft: <i>Alimamy Rassin</i> PB 103 | Disarmament completed Jan 02 and GOSL established control of country – elections May 02 |
| 2003 | 1 x Shanghai II Fast Attack Craft: <i>Alimamy Rassin</i> PB 103 | - No operational units |
| 2004 | 1 x Shanghai II Fast Attack Craft: <i>Alimamy Rassin</i> PB 103 | - No operational units |
| 2005 | 1 x Shanghai II Fast Attack Craft: <i>Alimamy Rassin</i> PB 103 | - No operational units |
| 2006 | 1 x Shanghai II Fast Attack Craft: <i>Alimamy Rassin</i> PB 103 1 x Shanghai III Patrol Boat: <i>Sir Milton</i> PB 105 3 x Sea Ark 32ft Cutters Patrol Boat 01-03 2 x RIBs + 5 x small craft | - 1 x Shanghai III Patrol Boat: <i>Sir Milton</i> PB 105 delivered by China Mar 2006 - 3 x Sea Ark 32ft Cutters Patrol Boat 01- 03 delivered by US May 2006 Arrival of RN Commander as IMATT maritime officer in Aug. |
| 2007 | 1 x Shanghai II Fast Attack Craft: <i>Alimamy Rassin</i> PB 103 1 x Shanghai III Patrol Boat: <i>Sir Milton</i> PB 105 3 x Sea Ark 32ft Cutters Patrol Boat 01-03 2 x RIBs + 5 x small craft | The Maritime Wing was an operational force by the end of 2007. |

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| | | |
|------|--|---|
| 2008 | 1 x Shanghai II Fast Attack Craft: <i>Alimamy Rassin</i> PB 103 1 x Shanghai III Patrol Boat: <i>Sir Milton</i> PB 105 3 x Sea Ark 32ft Cutters Patrol Boat 01-03 2 x RIBs + 5 x small craft | DFID withdraw their support for the Fishery Protection Strategy. Due to a lack of capability, the Maritime Wing offshore capability limited to within 35 nautical miles of Freetown |
| 2009 | 1 x Shanghai II Fast Attack Craft: <i>Alimamy Rassin</i> PB 103 1 x Shanghai III Patrol Boat: <i>Sir Milton</i> PB 105 3 x Sea Ark 32ft Cutters Patrol Boat 01-03 2 x RIBs + 5 x small craft | |
| 2010 | 1 x Shanghai II Fast Attack Craft: <i>Alimamy Rassin</i> PB 103 1 x Shanghai III Patrol Boat: <i>Sir Milton</i> PB 105 3 x Sea Ark 32ft Cutters Patrol Boat 01-03 2 x RIBs + 5 x small craft | No lack of desire in MW but lack capability sustainability; have achieved: Patrol days – planned 885, (max 3,240) achieved 532 (60%); boarding and inspections – industrial 125, artisanal 103; Arrests – industrial 15, artisanal 27 – 6 for smuggling and Search and Rescue – 36 operations, 589 lives saved. |
| 2011 | 1 x Shanghai III Patrol Boat: <i>Sir Milton</i> PB 105 3 x Sea Ark 32ft Cutters Patrol Boat 01-03 2 x RIBs + 5 x small craft | |
| 2012 | 1 x Shanghai III Patrol Boat: <i>Sir Milton</i> PB 105 3 x Sea Ark 32ft Cutters Patrol Boat 01-03 2 x RIBs + 5 x small craft | |
| 2013 | 1 x Shanghai III Patrol Boat: <i>Sir Milton</i> PB 105 3 x Sea Ark 32ft Cutters Patrol Boat 01-03 5 x small craft | Only the small inshore boats are operational. |

| | | |
|------|---|---|
| 2014 | 1 x Shanghai III Patrol Boat: <i>Sir Milton</i> PB 105 3 x Sea Ark 32ft Cutters Patrol Boat 01-03 5 x small craft | Only the small inshore boats are operational. |
|------|---|---|

Endnotes

- ¹ Jeffrey C. Stone, *Africa and the Sea: proceedings of a colloquium at the University of Aberdeen*, Aberdeen University African Studies Group, March 1984 p.5.
- ² Joseph Momoh (President from 1985-1992) was the nominated successor to Sierra Leone's First President, Saika Stevens (in office 1971-1985).
- ³ Personal interview of Captain (Navy) S. Kanu, Commanding Officer RSLAF Maritime Wing, Sierra Leone, January 2014.
- ⁴ Colin Gray, *Perspectives on Strategy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).
- ⁵ All subsequent references to UNCLOS (unless otherwise specified) are drawn from: http://www.un.org/depts/los/convention_agreements/texts/unclos/unclos_e.pdf
- ⁶ Hugo Grotius, *Mare Liberum, sive de jure quod Batavis competit ad Indicana commercia dissertation*, Lodewijk Elzevir, dated 1609.
- ⁷ 'The exclusive economic zone is an area beyond and adjacent to the territorial sea (where) the coastal State has...sovereign rights for the purpose of exploring and exploiting, conserving and managing the natural resources, whether living or non- living.' UNCLOS 1982 Part V Article 56.
- ⁸ http://www.un.org/Depts/los/convention_agreements/convention_historical_perspective.htm
- ⁹ *British Maritime Doctrine*, Joint Doctrine Publication 0-10, dated August 2011, pp.2-13.
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p.v.
- ¹¹ 'The term *high seas* means all parts of the sea that are not included in the territorial sea or in the internal waters of a State.' UN Convention on the Seas (UNCLOS) 1958 Article 1.
- ¹² Under Article 192 of UNCLOS, coastal states have a general obligation to protect and preserve the marine environment.
- ¹³ Nien-Tsu Alfred Hu and James K Oliver, 'A Framework for Small Navy Theory: The 1982 UN Law of the Sea Convention', *International Law Studies*, Vol.68, p.186.
- ¹⁴ *Pirate Fishing Exposed, The Fight against Illegal Fishing in West Africa and the EU*, Environmental Justice Foundation, October 2012.
- ¹⁵ *Transnational Organised Crime in West Africa: A Threat Assessment*, UN Office on Drugs and Crime, Vienna, February 2013, p.4.
- ¹⁶ *The National Strategy for Maritime Security*, Sierra Leone Maritime Administration, December 2013, p.4.
- ¹⁷ *The Gulf of Guinea: The New Danger Zone*, Africa Report No.195, December 2012.
- ¹⁸ A Vogel, *Navies versus Coast Guards: Defining the Roles of African Maritime Security Forces*, African Security Brief, No.2, December 2009.
- ¹⁹ <http://mil.no/organisation/about/navy/pages/default.aspx>
- ²⁰ 'Brazil, Namibia Strengthen Navy Cooperation', *Namibian Sun*, 21 February 2013.
- ²¹ *The National Strategy for Maritime Security*, Sierra Leone Maritime Administration, December 2013, p.21.
- ²² *Joint Maritime Committee, Memorandum of Understanding*, Government of Sierra Leone, 8 September 2009.

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- ²³ J. Barbot, *A Description of the Coasts of North and South Guinea*, Vol V, dated 1746, p.41-42.
- ²⁴ C. Ray and J. Rich, J, 'Navigating African Maritime History', *Research in Maritime History*, No.41, January 2010.
- ²⁵ J.-P. Chauveau, 'Une histoire maritime africaine est- elle possible? Historiographie et histoire de la navigation et de la pêche africaine à la Côte Occidentale depuis le 15e siècle', *Cahiers d'Études Africaines*, 101/102, 1986, pp.173-236.
- ²⁶ In compiling a history of the Sierra Leone Navy a number of key serving and retired members of the Sierra Leone Government and Armed Forces requested that their views remained un-attributable.
- ²⁷ The National Archives (hereafter TNA), CO 968/80/4, Colonial Naval Forces.
- ²⁸ 'Sierra Leone: Report for the Year', H.M. Stationery Office, 1960.
- ²⁹ TNA: The Commonwealth Relations Office, DO 201/1-53, 'The history of the Royal Navy base at Simonstown, South Africa, 1898-1951', dated 1952.
- ³⁰ F. R. Irvine, *Fishes and Fisheries of the Gold Coast*, (London, 1947), p.25.
- ³¹ The West African Station was from 20N to 20S to 026W.
- ³² Commander-in-Chief South Atlantic and South America, Report of Proceedings West Africa 20 Apr to 22 May 1961, dated 23 May 1961.
- ³³ <http://www.cruise critic.co.uk/news/news.cfm?ID=571>
- ³⁴ T. Ring, *International Dictionary of Historic Places: Middle East and Africa*, Volume 4, (London, 1996), p.283.
- ³⁵ Senior member of Sierra Leone military in 1982, interviewed January 2014.
- ³⁶ Retired members of the Sierra Leone Navy, interviewed January 2014.
- ³⁷ Retired and serving members of the Sierra Leone Government, interviewed January 2014.
- ³⁸ The UK did not extend its territorial waters from three to 12 nautical miles until 1987.
- ³⁹ Convention on the Territorial Sea and the Contiguous Zone 1958, Geneva 29 April 1958, entered into force on 10 Sep 1964. United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 516, p.205.
- ⁴⁰ https://www.un.org/depts/los/reference_files/chronological_lists_of_ratifications.htm
- ⁴¹ <http://www.sierraexpressmedia.com/archives/59399>
- ⁴² <http://awoko.org/2013/04/26/victor-foh-ibrahim-sorie-scale-through-parliament/>
- ⁴³ Retired Head of Sierra Leone Navy, interviewed January 2014.
- ⁴⁴ Sweden provided two small fixed-wing trainers and three light helicopters, one of which became the presidential transport, while the UK supplied boat was named the *President Siaka Stevens*.
- ⁴⁵ 'All the replacement parts had to come from China and would take months to arrive'; senior member of the Sierra Leone Military, interviewed November 2013 and January 2014.
- ⁴⁶ Retired Head of Sierra Leone Navy, interviewed January 2014.
- ⁴⁷ *Janes's Fighting Ships*, September 1983, p.408.
- ⁴⁸ Before being instructed to retire in 2000, Lt Sessay rose to the rank of Commodore and Chief of the Naval Staff.
- ⁴⁹ Various members of the Sierra Leone Navy, interviewed November 2013 and January 2014.
- ⁵⁰ There are Forward Operating Bases at Tombo on the Freetown peninsular, Yelibuya close to the Guinean border, Sulima on the Liberian border, Bonthe on Bonthe Island and Gbangbatoke.
- ⁵¹ Danny Hoffman, '*Live Dangerously, Brothers: Liberia's Ex-combatants and Their Place in the Post-war City*', seminar at St Antony's College, Oxford, 23 January 2014.
- ⁵² Peter Albrecht and Paul Jackson, *Security System Transformation in Sierra Leone*, 1997-2007, February 2009.
- ⁵³ *Ibid.*, p.57.
- ⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p.58.
- ⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p.6.
- ⁵⁶ '*The Role of the United Nations in Post-Conflict Security Sector Reform (SSR) Report*', New

York, 3 November 2006.

⁵⁷ *CDD and elite capture: reframing the conversation*, World Bank Social Development Department, Washington DC, 2008.

⁵⁸ M T. Labonte, 'From Patronage to Peacebuilding? Elite Capture and Governance From Below in Sierra Leone', *African Affairs*, 111/442, pp.90-115, 16 December 2011.

⁵⁹ D. Acemoglu and A.J. Robinson, *Why Nations Fail: The Origins of Power Prosperity and Poverty*. (London: Profile Books Ltd, 2012), p.429.

⁶⁰ <http://www.statehouse.gov.sl/index.php/the-president>

⁶¹ Jonathan Bhalla and Sareta Ashraph, *The More Things Change: Sierra Leone 2012 Elections*, Africa Research Institute, 17 September 2012.

⁶² Evidence gained from a number of Sierra Leone Government officials interviewed November 2013 and January 2014.

⁶³ Acemoglu and Robinson, *Why Nations Fail*, p.402.

⁶⁴ M. Morris, *Expansion of Third-World Navies* (Southern Carolina, 1987), p.273.

⁶⁵ The maritime is not mentioned in the UK Ministry of Defence Directive to the Commander of the IMATT in Sierra Leone, dated 29 July 2002 and there is no mention of the maritime in any of IMATT's monthly reports.

⁶⁶ UK Ministry of Defence Directive to the Commander of the IMATT in Sierra Leone, dated January 2003.

⁶⁷ Sierra Leone Joint Force Commander, *Operations Order 2004*, dated 3 December 2003.

⁶⁸ The author has been unable to establish what was not changing!

⁶⁹ IMATT, *Background brief on the Maritime Wing*, dated 22 March 2004.

⁷⁰ In 2004, the Maritime Wing received 8%, falling to 6% in 2006. In stark contrast, the Air Wing with no planes was forecast to see its budget increase from 42% to 59%.

⁷¹ Comd IMATT to the Sierra Leone Deputy Minister of Defence, *Advice on the development of the RSLAF MW*, 9 May 2004.

⁷² IMATT (SL) Plan 2010 – report 05, 30 September 2005.

⁷³ Perhaps it is no coincidence that in 2006 the UK Ministry of Defence desk officer responsible for Sierra Leone was a Royal Marine.

⁷⁴ IMATT, *End of Year Report*, 14 December 2006.

⁷⁵ Comd IMATT's *Observation to Chief of the Defence Staff Sierra Leone*, June 2007.

⁷⁶ The Maritime Wing is supposed to get 5% of fines, but up until January 2014 had only seen a couple of thousand dollars.

⁷⁷ Egram from the British High Commissioner Sarah Macintosh, 26 July 2007.

⁷⁸ Fishery Protection Strategy Paper, Department for International Development, 22 July 2007.

⁷⁹ AIS is an automatic tracking system used on ships and by vessel traffic services (VTS) for identifying and locating vessels. The following link is to a live map of AIS shipping:

<https://www.marinetraffic.com/en/>

⁸⁰ Comd IMATT (SL), *End of Year Report*, 16 January 2008.

⁸¹ 'Report of UK Minister for the Armed Forces meeting with Sierra Leone President and Defence Minister of Sierra Leone 29 January 2008', 1 February 2008.

⁸² IMATT, *Weekly Report*, 10 February 2008.

⁸³ UK Minister of the Armed Forces letter to Sierra Leone Minister of Defence, 25 April 2008.

⁸⁴ Minister of Defence Sierra Leone responded 14 May 2008.

⁸⁵ Comd IMATT, *End of Year Report*, 13 January 2009.

⁸⁶ Joint Force Commanders', *Directive 2010- 2011*, 11 August 2010.

⁸⁷ IMATT, *End of Year Report*, 31 March 2010. No lack of desire in MW but lack capability sustainability; have achieved: Patrol days – planned 885, (max 3,240) achieved 532 (60%); boarding and inspections – industrial 125, artisanal 103; Arrests – industrial 15, artisanal 27 – 6 for smuggling and Search and Rescue – 36 operations, 589 lives saved.

⁸⁸ *The National Strategy for Maritime Security*, Sierra Leone Maritime Administration,

December 2013.

⁸⁹ Gray, *Perspectives on Strategy* p.197.

⁹⁰ Gray's five 'perspectives' in the formulation of strategy are technology, concepts, geography, culture and ethics. *Ibid.*, p.6-8.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p.82-83.

⁹² The 30 interviewees included members of the Joint Maritime Committee Steering Group, the former head of the Sierra Leone Navy from 1982 to 2000, Commodore Sassey (Retired) and the Minister of Fisheries, Captain Momodu Alieu Pat- Sowe, a German trained mariner.

⁹³ G. A. Steven, 'Report on the Sea Fisheries of Sierra Leone', June 1945, p.33.

⁹⁴ William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, Act 2, Scene 2.

⁹⁵ <http://www.newyorker.com/online/blogs/elements/2013/06/psychology-language-power-of-names.html>

⁹⁶ Although Nigeria's former President Goodluck Jonathan's luck seems to have run out.

⁹⁷ Gray, *Perspectives on Strategy*, p.40.

⁹⁸ M.C. Ferme, *The Underneath of Things, Violence, History and the Everyday in Sierra Leone*, (London, 2001), p.7.

⁹⁹ After 30 years in the US, Dr Soccoh Kabia sold his medical practice to become the Minister for Fish; he was sacked after two years in January 2013. Having spent most of his career aboard *Abdul Tejan-Cole*, a successful human-rights lawyer spent three years as head of the Anti-Corruption Commission before being sacked by the President in May 2010.

¹⁰⁰ In 2009, Transparency International's Global Corruption Barometer ranked Sierra Leone as amongst the top countries most affected by bribery, second only to Liberia in Sub-Sahara Africa. In 2013 82% of those interviewed said that they had 'taken or paid a bribe'.

¹⁰¹ Personal interview British High Commissioner, Sierra Leone, November 2013.

¹⁰² Angola ranked 153 in 2011 and 2013 on the Transparency International index against Sierra Leone's TI of 134 in 2009 and 119 in 2013.

¹⁰³ *Anti-Corruption Strategy for Sierra Leone and Liberia*, Department for International Development, January 2013.

¹⁰⁴ The UK has committed the sum of £220m to Sierra Leone between 2012 and 2015.

¹⁰⁵ *Operational Plan 2011- 2015 Sierra Leone*, Department for International Development, updated June 2013.

¹⁰⁶ Masha H. Khan, *Corruption, Governance and Economic Development*, (London, 2004), p.18.

¹⁰⁷ *Evaluation of Norwegian Development Co-operation in the Fisheries Sector*, MRAG in association with ECON Pöyry and Natural Resources Institute, January 2009.

¹⁰⁸ *Results and Impact Review of Namibian/Norwegian co-operation in the Fisheries and Maritime Sector*, Norad, dated September 2005.

¹⁰⁹ *Review of Impacts of Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing on Developing Countries*, MRAG, July 2005.

¹¹⁰ *Annual Report 2010/11*, Namibia, Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resource.

¹¹¹ *Results and Impact Review of Namibian/Norwegian co-operation in the Fisheries and Maritime Sector*, Norad, September 2005, p.23.

¹¹² *Policy Statement on the Granting of Rights of Exploitation to Utilise Marine Resources and on the Allocation of Fishing Quotas*, Namibia, Ministries for Fisheries and Marine Resources, 8 July 1993.

¹¹³ These can be manned or unmanned air, surface or subsurface platforms.

¹¹⁴ Sri Lanka's seven SHANGHAI IIs, also donated in 1973 by China, were still all conducting operations in 1984.

¹¹⁵ http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/sierraleone_statistics.html 2007- 2011.

¹¹⁶ Personal interview with Captain (Navy) S Kanu, Commanding Officer RSLAF Maritime

Wing, Sierra Leone, November 2013.

¹¹⁷ Albrecht and Jackson, *Security System Transformation in Sierra Leone*, p.81.

¹¹⁸ Personal interview Head of ISAT, Sierra Leone, January 2014.

¹¹⁹ Steven, *Report on the Sea Fisheries of Sierra Leone*, p.57.

¹²⁰ *Results and Impact Review of Namibian/Norwegian co-operation in the Fisheries and Maritime Sector*, Norad, September 2005, p.28.

¹²¹ *Proposal for the Development of Maritime Wing Infrastructure to meet Future Security Challenges*, Maritime Wing, October 2013.

¹²² Brigadier Le Gry, *UK Military Intervention and Progress in Sierra Leone 2001- 2006*, Oct 2008, p.7.

¹²³ A. Godwin and C. Haenlein, *Security Sector Reform in Sierra Leone, The UK Assistance Mission in Transition*, *RUSI Journal*, December 2013, p.36.

¹²⁴ Morris, *Expansion of Third-World Navies*, p.273.

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