



Weekly Libya .Xplored report

10 February, 2017

Prepared by Risk Analysis Team, Libya

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ACTIVITY MAP



MSS GLOBAL		ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management OMS/11/2016/001	ISO 14001:2015 Environmental Management EMS/11/2016/001	BS OHSAS 18001:2007 Occupational Health & Safety HSM/11/2016/001	ISO 18788:2015 Security Operations Management SOM/10/2016/001	ANSI/ASIS PSC.1-2012 Quality Assurance Management QAM/10/2016/001					
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OUTLOOK

Short term outlook

- The situation in Tripoli between the GNA and the GNC has escalated after the GNC brought in between 150-300 military vehicles and established a 'National Guard'. Further clashes are expected in the city, especially around militia fault lines.
- The LNA has resumed pre-emptive airstrikes against opposition forces based in Jufra following growing indications that a new assault is being planned against the oil crescent. Further activity is expected in the area.
- Reports indicate that LNA may be gearing up for an assault on Sabri in Benghazi. Sporadic clashes are expected in Ganfouda as the LNA conduct clearance operations and secure the area following their victory. The threat from high profile attacks in wider Benghazi against civilian and security force targets remains extant. There is a possibility that LNA activity around Derna will begin to increase.

Medium to long term outlook

- Western stakeholders are indicating a possible change in strategy in Libya as Russia increases support and the GNA continues to lose traction. Any change is expected to see a more significant role for Field Marshall Haftar.
- The removal of IS in Sirte has resulted in the loss of a buffer zone between Misratan/MoD aligned troops and the LNA. Tensions between the two are currently being played out around the oil crescent area and in the south. There remains the potential for an escalation which could pull in forces from other areas. Increasing confrontation between the two factions would also have the unintended consequence of creating greater opportunity for IS to regroup and reorganize.
- There is an increasing potential for destabilization in the south as feelings of marginalization grow and living conditions deteriorate. The situation could leave the area more vulnerable to exploitation by various factions and groups.

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

Governance

- MoU brings hope to Europe, but could be politically damaging for Serraj
- Western stakeholders indicate a change of strategy
- The GNC extends its power base and establishes its own 'national' force

Security

- Possible new offensive being planned against the oil crescent
- Clashes in Janzour, Tripoli

KEY DATES

Date	Occasion	Comment
17 February 2017	Revolution Day	Anniversary of the 2011 revolution.
19 March 2017	Commemoration	Commemoration of victory over Gadhafi.
01 May 2017	Labour Day	National holiday.

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25 – 27 June 2017	Eid al Fitr	End of Ramadan.
01 – 03 September 2017	Eid ul Adha	Feast of Sacrifice.
16 September 2017	Martyrs Day	

THREAT MATRIX

Region	Political	Terrorism	Militancy	Crime	K&R
Tripolitania	High-Extreme	High-Extreme	High	High	High
Cyrenaica	High	High-Extreme	Moderate	High	High
Fezzan	High	Moderate	High	High	High

Threat Scale	Minimal	Low	Moderate	High	Extreme
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LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

Governance

MoU brings hope to Europe, but could be politically damaging for Serraj

A memorandum of understanding designed to address illegal migration through Libya into Europe was signed this week between Rome and GNA Prime Minister Fayez Serraj. The agreement has been controversial in Libya and could potentially prove to be politically damaging for the Prime Minister. The signing of the illegal migration agreement has left the GNA Prime Minister open to renewed criticism that he is a ‘puppet’ of West, at the same time as the West becomes less confident in the Prime Ministers abilities as a leader.

As the UN-backed GNA came under increasing pressure, its international backers rallied, with reassertions of support emanating recently from the UN and NATO amongst others. While outwardly they remain supportive of the GNA and the Libyan Political Agreement (LPA), there are growing indications that many western stakeholders are looking to alter their strategy in Libya. The lack of traction by the GNA, concerns over the Prime Minister’s ability to deliver results and increasing Russian interest in the country which has helped tip the balance of power in favour of Field Marshall Haftar have all contributed to the realisation that a new approach is now needed in order to retain any meaningful influence.

Western stakeholders indicate a change of strategy

Rome appears central to this change in strategy. After reopening its embassy in Tripoli and signing a deal with Serraj over migration, it has begun reaching out to the east and together with the British Foreign Minister, is leading calls for Haftar to have a significant part to play in the future of the country. In a meeting next week with the British Prime Minister Teresa May, Italy is expected to encourage an increase in support for Field Marshall Haftar, an approach which already has some support amongst the British government.

The UN, who were instrumental in the creation of the LPA and GNA, may also be preparing for a change in direction. This week, the UN confirmed that Martin Kobler, the head of mission, is to be replaced by Salam Fayyad from Palestine. For his part, Kobler remains committed to the LPA, stating it is the only framework which can achieve stability in Libya through dialogue and not violence. However, dialogue takes time and as people’s living conditions in the country continues to decline and the political process remains stagnated, support has gravitated towards other factions who tactically, are making moves outside of the agreement which is undermining the process.



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The GNC extends its power base and establishes its own ‘national’ force

The GNC has also been making its own moves this week. Since re-establishing itself in Tripoli in October, the rump GNC has slowly but surely started to re-build its power base. Indications suggest it has set about increasing its influence across various parts of the capital, especially in the west, through the use of armed groups. Its use of armed groups to project its influence escalated dramatically on 08 February when between 150 and 300 military vehicles entered the capital in three convoys.

The vehicles, from Misrata, Amsallata and Zliten were sporting the new National Guard logo and came into immediate conflict with Ghnewia’s troops based in Tripoli following a pre-emptive attack by RDF against one of the convoys 80km to the east of the city. On 09 February, the National Guards new commander, Mahmoud Zegel, a member of Misrata’s Military Council (MMC) and one of the BAM field commanders from Sirte, announced the group’s formation at the Rockets Camp in Salahuddin. The remit given the group by the GNC, to protect state institutions, places it in direct conflict with the GNA’s Presidential Guard (PG).

While the GNA currently retains control over the key governmental and state buildings and institutions of the state in Tripoli, the GNC continues to erode its periphery support. The National Guard has altered the delicate balance within the capital and represents a threat to the stability of Tripoli and is likely to result in further fighting between militias over control of the capital. In the long term, it may also provide an unintended opportunity for Haftar to increase his own influence in the capital.

Security

Possible new offensive being planned against the oil crescent

There are growing indications of another possible counter-offensive being planned in the oil crescent. Since LNA took the crescent in September 2016, there have been three attempts to retake the area. The first came in the initial hours after Operation Sudden Lightning when Ibrahim Jodhran and the few forces which had remained loyal to him launched a counter-offensive against Ras Lanuf. The hasty attack was quickly defeated by the LNA. Jodhran then teamed up with BDB forces and launched another offensive on 17 September. The attempt failed again and saw LNA extend their area of control, taking Harawah as they pursued Jodhran’s forces eastward. The crescent was quiet for around a month allowing LNA to consolidate its positions and saw oil industry activity gain traction which translated into much needed revenues for the country.

The quiet was not to last however and on 30 October the GNA Minister of Defence, Mohammed Bagarhi, visited Jufra amidst rumours of a planned offensive and the establishment of a new operations room dedicated to ‘liberating’ the crescent. The LNA began to reinforce the crescent and on 06 December they launched an airstrike against a vehicle column near As Sidra. The offensive came the following day and saw opposition forces launch a two pronged attack against Harawah and Bin Jawad in the west of the crescent from Jufa. The attack was again repelled and saw further airstrikes conducted by LNA against forces in Harawah. More airstrikes targeted Bin Jawad and Jufra the following day.

On 25 December, members of the Misrata Military Council (MMC) which opposes Haftar, met with forces in Jufra. The meeting again prompted warnings that another attack was being planned. The LNA launched pre-emptive airstrikes on 26 and 27 December and again on 03 and 04 January. The LNA launched another airstrike on 08 February against Jufra following the arrests of a number of people in the oil crescent which the LNA states were collecting intelligence for Jufra based groups on 06 February.

The various indicators suggest that renewed fighting could occur in the short term in the oil crescent area. The BDB and associated groups remain intent on halting Haftar’s advance and reversing his gains while Haftar remains intent on extending his area of control into Jufra, removing a persistent threat to his control over the oilfields.

Clashes in Janzour, Tripoli

On 02 February, an incident at a Janzour Knights (JK) checkpoint which resulted in the death of a man from Warshefana triggered a series of clashes. The ‘Supporto Unit’ (SU) from Warshefana engaged the JK’s at

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Checkpoint 17 on the coastal road close to the West Tripoli power station. A number of casualties were reported during the fighting which escalated to the use of heavy weaponry including the shelling of civilian areas on both sides. A short lived ceasefire on 06 February allowed the Red Crescent to collect bodies from the area of fighting. Negotiations continued and eventually bore fruit on 07 February. The ceasefire continues to hold at the present time.

WEEKLY OPERATIONAL ASSESSMENT

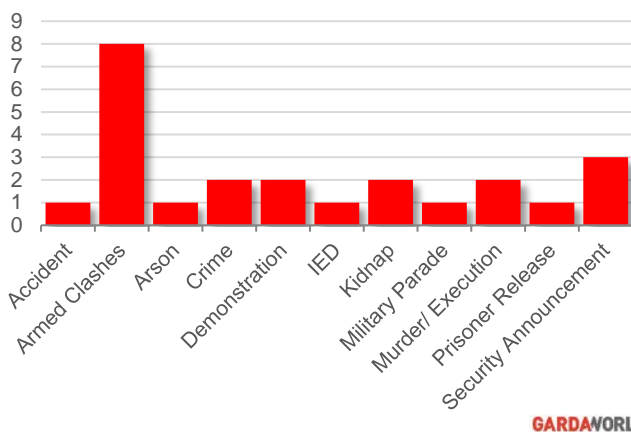
Tripolitania

Activity levels increased slightly in Tripolitania this week with 24 incidents reported compared to 18 from the previous week. The capital saw a number of high intensity clashes around the Janzour area and Salahuddin as various militias clashed in violent confrontation. Heavy weaponry and tanks were used in some of the engagements. Clashes also took place in Zawiyah close to the refinery. Although the refinery was not directly affected by the fighting, there was some disruption reported to operations.

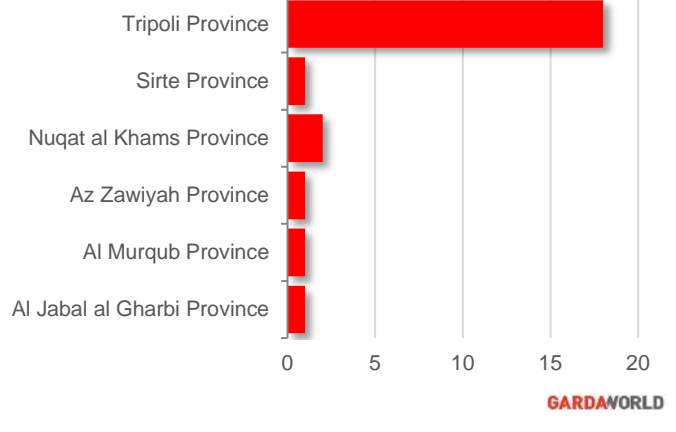
Tensions are now high in the capital following the influx of the newly established National Guard. Further clashes are expected, especially around the Salahuddin area however conflagration is likely in the short to medium term.

Incidents

Incidents by type, 02 - 08 Feb



Incidents by district, 02 - 08 Feb



Significant activity

- Armed Clashes - 02 Feb 17, Tripoli Province, CP 17: Clashes took place at Checkpoint 17 on Coastal Road between Janzour Knights (JK) and Warshefana. Warshefana claim that the clashes were triggered by the murder and mutilation of a man from the area by Janzour however JK stated that the fight was triggered by the arrest of a man from Warshefana for an attempted carjacking. Reports indicate five people killed
- Armed Clashes - 03 Feb 17, Tripoli Province, CP 17: Clashes resumed between Janzour Knights and Warshefana near Checkpoint 17. Janzour Knights claimed Warshefana was trying to take control of the Tripoli West Power Plant while Warshefana claimed the location is part of their ancestral land.
- Armed Clashes - 04 Feb 17, Tripoli Province, CP 17: Janzour Knights pushed into Warshefana from Checkpoint 17 however were forced back. Both sides were reported to have tanks and grad missiles. Unconfirmed reporting suggests Janzour may have lost a commander to the fighter. An attempt to initiate negotiations has failed after Janzour expelled a delegation from the PC and has publically stated they are receiving no support from Tripoli Security Brigades.

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- Armed Clashes - 04 Feb 17, Tripoli Province, Ben Ghashir: Abd al-Ghani Ghnewia al-Kikli's militia was involved in minor clashes with National Guard elements loyal to Khalid Sherrif. The clashes mainly consisted of intimidatory shooting into the air.
- Armed Clashes - 05 Feb 17, Az Zawiyah Province, Zawiyah: Four members of the Ascora Tribe tried to enter the area of the refinery in an armoured vehicle and were trapped between two checkpoints manned by the Naser Company. A firefient ensued which escalated when reinforcements arrived. Fighting went on till around 0300hrs on 06 February and there are local fears that further reinforcements are expected which will further inflame the situation. One women was reported to have been killed.
- Armed Clashes - 05 Feb 17, Tripoli Province, CP 17: Fighting between Warshefana and Janzour resumed during the evening. Heavy weapons were again in use and IDF impacted in civilian areas. Two members of the Janzour Knights are reported to have been killed and five civilians wounded, one seriously.
- Arson - 07 Feb 17, Nuqat al Khams Province, Al Ajaylat: A language school was set ablaze by a group of masked men for "promoting western languages and violating Sharia".
- Armed Clashes - 08 Feb 17, Al Murqub Province, Khoms: Armed clashes were reported 80km east of Tripoli. RDF was reported to have targeted a Misratan militia. Two people were reported to have been killed.
- Armed Clashes - 08 Feb 17, Tripoli Province, Salahaddin: Armed clashes erupted between TRB/Ghnewia and Burki/ GNC affiliated Misrata militia which was believed to have entered the city earlier. Fighting continued sporadically into the early hours of the morning. Ghnewia was reported to have lost a position. Small and heavy arms were in use.
- Military Parade - 08 Feb 17, Tripoli Province, Tripoli: The Diplomatic Police staged a military parade through Tripoli. The DP showed off a number of new vehicles following some new funding. The parade aimed to show that the DP is now in a position to secure foreign embassies and diplomatic missions.

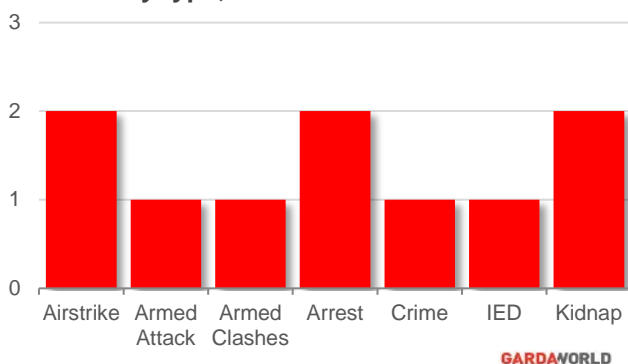
Cyrenaica

Activity in Cyrenaica remained stable this week with 10 incidents reported compared to nine from last week following a significant drop after the LNA took Ganfouda in Benghazi. Remnants of the RSCB remain in the 12 Buildings area resulting in a continuation of fighting in the area.

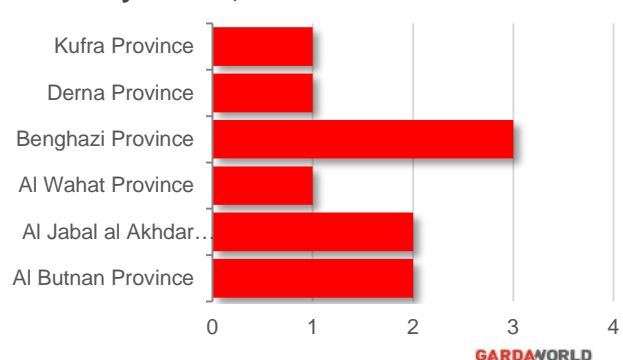
Reporting this week has suggested western Benghazi has taken further steps in its return to normalcy after the fighting. The LNA has opened Qawarshah Gate while displaced people have continue to return to Garyounis.

Incidents

Incidents by type, 02 - 08 Feb



Incidents by district, 02 - 08 Feb



Significant activity

- Armed Attack - 02 Feb 17, Kufra Province, Kufra: The Roads to Peace Battalion of the LNA mounted a rescue operation in Kufra to rescue two civilians who had been abducted. Four kidnappers were killed during the operation and five LNA soldiers were injured. Three vehicles were seized by the LNA. The LNA stated that the kidnap gang were from Sudan and Chad.

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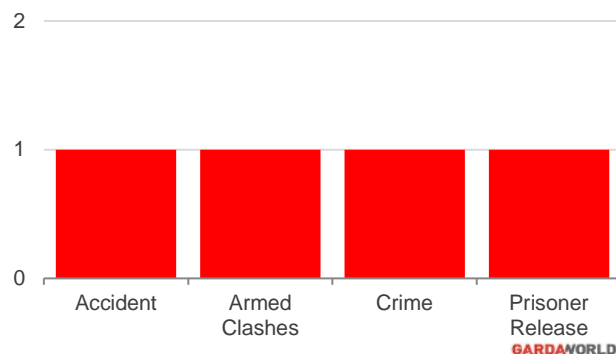
- Airstrike - 02 Feb 17, Derna Province, Derna: LNA air assets launched an airstrike against two suspected weapons and ammunitions storage areas in the Zahr al Ahmar region of Derna.
- IED - 03 Feb 17, Benghazi Province, Ganfouda: An IED detonated in 12 Buildings area killing three LNA soldiers and injuring another two.
- Armed Clashes - 03 Feb 17, Benghazi Province, Ganfouda: LNA infantry moved in against remaining RSCB positions following two days of airstrikes.
- Kidnap - 05 Feb 17, Al Jabal Al Akhdar Province, Shahat: Fawzi al-Ogab, a former member of the GNC and current member of the High Council of State, was kidnapped.
- Arrest - 06 Feb 17, Al Wahat Province, Ajdabiya: The LNA arrested five people near Ajdabiya. They are accused of collecting intelligence on installations in the area using a drone. The LNA stated that they are members of 'Jufra groups'. COMMENT: 'There are some indications that groups based in Jufra who oppose the LNA are once again looking to attack the oil crescent. LNA security is reported to be good in the area. Checkpoints are now more professional and have guards from different areas on the same positions.' COMMENT ENDS.

Fezzan

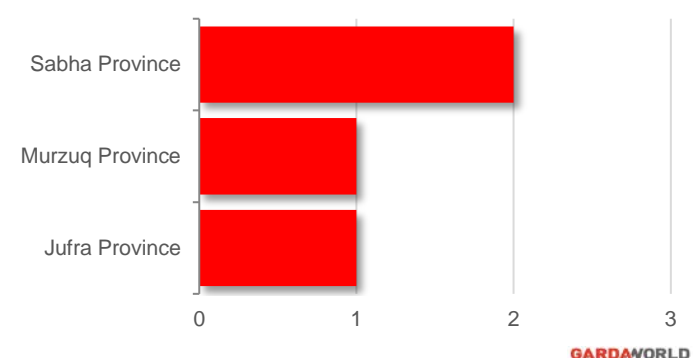
Incidents continue to be under-reported from the south. While tensions remain between Third Force and 12 Brigade, no further incidents have been reported this week. Haftar has appointed a new senior LNA commander in the south. Ali Mohammed Barakh Wali, the Vice Chairman of the High Council of the Tebu tribe, was named as the LNA coordinator in the southern region.

Incidents

Incidents by type, 02 - 08 Feb



Incidents by district, 02 - 08 Feb



Significant activity

- Prisoner Release - 04 Feb 17, Murzuq Province, Taraghin: The Major of Taraghin, Mohamed Bakuri, was freed three months after he was kidnapped from his farm 135km south of Sebha. No further details were released.
- Armed Clashes - 05 Feb 17, Sabha Province, Sabha: Armed clashes broke out in Sabha. Four people were reported to have been killed.
- Crime - 05 Feb 17, Sabha Province, Sabha: A health clinic was robbed in Gardah. Several computers were stolen and files were damaged.
- Accident - 06 Feb 17, Jufra Province, Waddan City: An Egyptian national was killed when some UXO detonated as he was trying to salvage scrap metal.
- Airstrike - 09 Feb 17, Al Jufra Province, Al Jufra Airbase: The LNA has launched two airstrikes against Jufra Air Base. Casualties have been reported.



ACRONYM LIST

- AAS – Ansar al-Sharia (AQ affiliate)
- AQ - Al-Qaeda
- BAM – Al Bunyan Al Marsous (Misrata aligned)
- BDB – Benghazi Defense Brigade / Saraya Defend Benghazi (SDB) (Al Qaeda aligned – AAS and RSCB associated/umbrella group)
- CNI – Critical National Infrastructure
- GATMJB - Operations Room for the Liberation of the City Ajdabiya and Support for Benghazi Rebels
- GECOL – General Electricity Company of Libya
- GMMR – Great Man-made River
- GNA – Government of National Accord (UN backed)
- GNC – General National Congress (Tripoli based)
- HCN - Host Country National
- HoR – House of Representatives (Tobruk based)
- IDP - Internally Displaced Persons
- IED - Improvised Explosive Device
- IOC - International Oil Company
- IS - Islamic State
- LNA – Libyan National Army
- LPA – Libyan Political Agreement
- LROR - Libyan Revolutionary Operations Room
- MoD - Ministry of Defense
- MoF - Ministry of Finance
- MoFA - Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- MoHE - Ministry of Higher Education
- Mol - Ministry of Interior
- MoJ - Ministry of Justice
- MoO - Ministry of Oil
- MoT - Ministry of Transportation
- MSCD – Mujahideen Shura Council of Derna (AQ aligned)
- NFDK - No Further Details Known
- NGO - Non-Governmental Organization (aid/charity)
- NOC – National Oil Company
- NSG – National Salvation Government (GNC)
- NSTR - Nothing Significant To Report
- PAX - Person, Persons or Passenger
- PC – Presidency Council (GNA)
- PG – Presidential Guard
- PFG- Petroleum Facilities Guard
- PSC - Private Security Company
- PSD - Private Security Detail
- RPG - Rocket Propelled Grenade
- RSCB - Revolutionary Shura Council of Benghazi
- RTA - Road Traffic Accident
- SDB – Saraya Defend Benghazi / Benghazi Defense Brigade (BDB) (Al Qaeda-aligned – AAS and RSCB associated/umbrella group)
- TCN - Third Country National
- Technical - An improvised weapon-mounted pick-up truck
- UXO - Unexploded Ordnance



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