



## Weekly Libya .Xplored Preview

21 April, 2017

Prepared by Risk Analysis Team, Libya

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**ACTIVITY MAP**



## OUTLOOK

### Short term outlook

- Tensions are growing between Tarhunah and Bani Walid following an alleged incident at a checkpoint. Further incidents in the area are possible.
- The situation in Sabha remains unresolved and further clashes and airstrikes around Tamanhint, Sabha and Brak Shati are expected. Negotiations continue as various stakeholders look to de-escalate the situation.
- The LNA has indicated it may mount an assault against the Sabri and Souq al-Hout areas of Benghazi in the coming week. The area remains besieged by the LNA with as estimated 250-300 opposition fighters remaining inside the contained areas.
- Further clashes are possible in Zawiyah with tensions elevated between various rival militias as they come under pressure from the crack down on fuel smuggling.

### Medium to long term outlook

- International stakeholders are continuing to adjust their strategies in Libya. There have been some indications that a number of stakeholders on both sides of the divide are looking to expand their influence and communications with internal factions, as there is an increasing realization that no one faction is likely to be able to take full control on its own. The overt focus remains on a political solution revolving around the GNA and the LPA, but internally it is struggling to gain traction. The changes are however likely empowering the GNA to become more overtly assertive against opposition factions.
- Opposing ideologies which have been surfacing for some time now in Misrata, are now threatening the city's unity. While attempts are underway to heal the rift internally, the ongoing power struggle between the GNA and the GNC in Tripoli will continue to exacerbate the situation as will the LNA push against Misratan-aligned units in Fezzan.
- IS fighters are regrouping in remote areas of Libya including central, south and southwest regions. Although their capabilities are severely diminished, reducing their ability to control large areas, the group retains the capability to conduct terrorist attacks. Threats towards city locations such as Tripoli cannot be ruled out, but it is considered more likely that the group will target critical national infrastructure in remote areas, such as some of the more isolated oil fields and facilities in the South West.

## SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

### Governance

- US President Donald Trump indicates that he does 'not see a role' for the US in Libya beyond targeting IS. The comments came moments after the Italian Prime Minister had stated the US had a 'critical role' in the country.
- Moscow has been playing mediator between warring factions in the south as it looks to increase its influence in Libya.
- The GNA President Fayez Serrj has urged the international community to intervene to stop the fighting in Fezzan. Despite not outlining what type of intervention he was seeking, the GNA MoD spokesman stated that he expected international airstrikes to start soon against the LNA. It is currently assessed as unlikely that the international community would mount this type of intervention as it would likely escalate the situation.

### Security

- The conflict in Fezzan has continued this week, characterized by airstrikes, with at least one direct ground confrontation reported and several indirect fire attacks by LNA forces against Tamanhint.
- The Abdulmola family has continued its attempts to exert its influence over the Brega Warehouses in Zawiyah.
- Tensions are growing between Tarhunah and Bani Walid with the local Tarhunah council closing the road between the two towns.

## KEY DATES

Date	Occasion	Comment
01 May 2017	Labour Day	National holiday
11 June 2017	Anniversary of the Zawia second uprising	
25 – 27 June 2017	Eid al Fitr	End of Ramadan
20 August 2017	Anniversary of the Liberation of Tripoli	
01 – 03 September 2017	Eid ul Adha	Feast of Sacrifice
16 September 2017	Martyrs Day	
22 September 2017	Hijri New Year	
23 October 2017	Liberation Day	National holiday
16 September 2017	Martyrs Day	

## THREAT MATRIX

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

**Threat Scale**



## LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

### Governance

#### The US does ‘not see a role’ for itself in Libya

US President Donald Trump has announced that he does not ‘see a role’ for the US in Libya. The statement came just moments after Italian Prime Minister Paolo Gentiloni had stated that the US should play a ‘very critical role’ in stabilizing the country. Gentiloni clearly hoped that the US would expand its role from military support in the fight against IS to a political one, aimed at stabilizing Libya. Trump, however, stated the US would continue to fight IS wherever they were, but otherwise, he intended to focus on the US as per his election promises.

#### Moscow plays mediator in current Fezzan conflict

Trump's comments come two days after senior BAM commanders and political activists from Misrata met with Russian officials in Moscow. Although Russia has made its support for Field Marshall Haftar well known, they have also reached out more recently to other factions in Libya as they look to increase their influence and build their role as a mediator.

#### GNA urges international community to intervene in Fezzan

This week, GNA President Fayeز Serraj, urged the international community to intervene in the Fezzan conflict, stating that it threatens the Libyan Political Agreement (LPA). While Serraj did not outline what type of intervention he was asking for, a day later, the spokesman for the GNA MoD, Muhammed Al-Ghasri, stated that ‘international intervention forces will soon carry out airstrikes targeting Haftar’s warplanes and forces in southern



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Libya.' Prior to his promotion to the GNA MoD spokesman's position, Ghasri was the spokesman for BAM. During its battle against IS in 2016, BAM had the support of the international community which included air support with the US, in particular, conducting hundreds of bombing raids against IS positions in support of BAM troops on the ground. The GNA MoD has already tried to link Haftar's forces in the south with IS elements, and Ghasri clearly sees Haftar in a similar light as the international terrorist organisation. As such it is not a surprise that he would see international military intervention against Haftar as a reasonable expectation. It would, however, risk a significant escalation in the country and risk drawing in other external stakeholders, turning Libya into a kinetic proxy warfare environment and at present is not assessed as likely.

**Security**

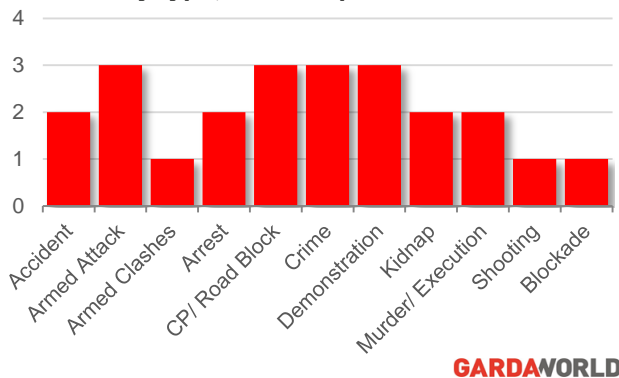
**Sabha: Stalemate persists with sporadic attacks taking place**

Despite attempts to strike a ceasefire deal, this week has seen a continuation of hostilities in the Sabha area. Fighting has been largely characterized by airstrikes, with at least one direct ground confrontation reported and several indirect fire attacks by LNA forces against Tamanhint. There are no indications at present that GNA MoD aligned forces are threatening Brak Shati and LNA forces are reported to be located around 10km from Tamanhint, which places the airbase within range of artillery.

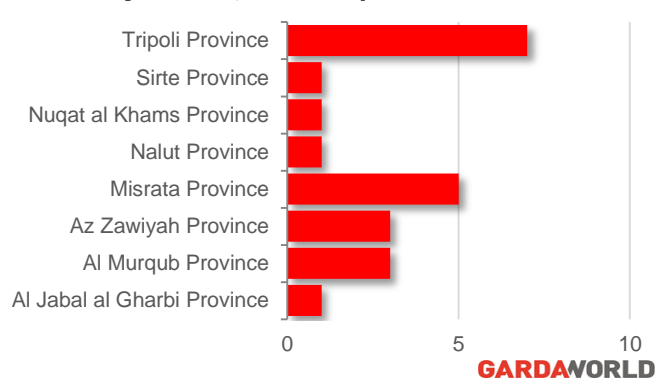
**WEEKLY OPERATIONAL ASSESSMENT**

**Tripolitania**

Incidents by type, 13 - 19 Apr



Incidents by district, 13 - 19 Apr



**Significant activity**

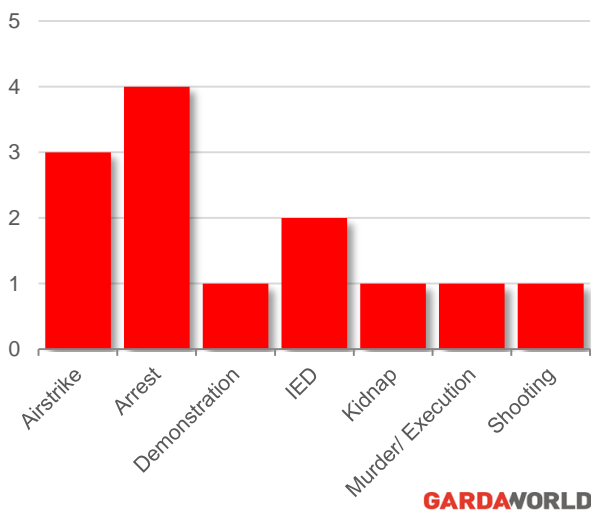
- Demonstration - 13 Apr 17, Misrata Province, Misrata: On 13 April, protestors were reported to have closed down the HQ of the Justice and Construction Party (connected to the Muslim Brotherhood) in Misrata. The group had also closed the Misrata Municipality Council HQ using concrete blocks while they demanded the overthrow of the council. They were also calling for a freezing of all political parties until the country's constitution was adopted.
- Blockade - 14 Apr 17, Badr: 53 Infantry Battalion have announced that they have shut off the gas pipeline running from Wafa to Mellitah. They stated this was in protest at what they termed 'Italy meddling in Libyan affairs.' They also pointed out that the shutdown would not lead to power cuts for the Libyan people as the pipeline did not supply Ruhais Power Plant. The statement finished by claiming that no one has the right to negotiate on behalf of 53 Battalion unless they are authorized representatives or the 'General Command of the Libyan Armed Forces.'
- Armed Clashes - 15 Apr 17, Al Jabal Al Gharbi Province, Gharyan: Armed clashes erupted between local armed men from Gizan, Gawasem and Hira areas of Gharyan against Fourth Force from Libya Shield, western section commanded by Adel Daab. The locals had called for the Fourth Force to be dismantled. According to reports Fourth Force is under the overall command of the LNG commanded by Mahmoud Al Zigel whose authority stems from the GNC. The Fourth Force is accused of being in league with LIFG and Al-Qaeda. It is reported that Fourth Force Libya Shield is supported by Martyr Ali Al Aswad battalion commanded by Ashour Malish.

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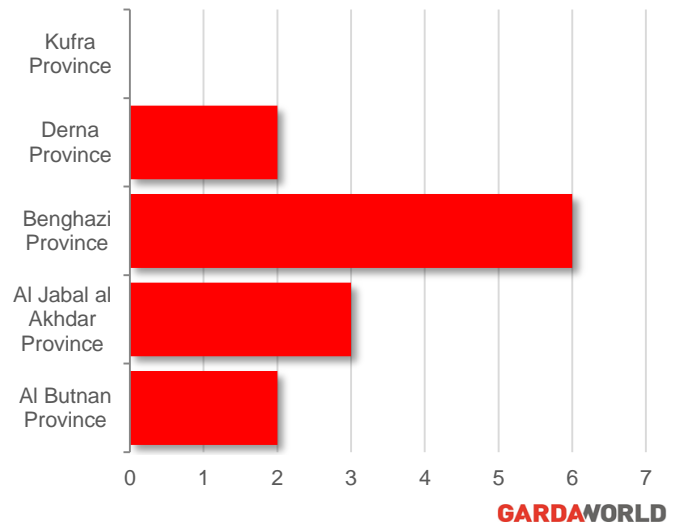
- CP/ Road Block - 16 Apr 17, Az Zawiyah Province, Zawiyah: The Abdulmola family blocked roads near the Brega oil storage warehouses in Zawiyah. Shots were fired in the air in order to reinforce the roadblock, resulting in local people having to use the coastal road instead.
- Armed Attack - 16 Apr 17, Tripoli Province, Matiga Airport: During the morning of 16 April, members of Al Buni attacked the Matiga VIP lounge after one of their members was denied entry by passport control as his passport was believed to be a forgery. A member of passport control was physically assaulted, and some material damage was reported inside the airport. Two vehicles belonging to the Diplomatic Police (DP) were stolen while vehicles belonging to MoFA were targeted with small arms fire. No other casualties were reported. The two DP vehicles were later retrieved. Operations at the airport were suspended for a number of hours.
- Demonstration - 17 Apr 17, Tripoli Province, Matiga Airport: Passport Control Officers employed at Matiga Airport have reportedly held a demonstration against the attack on their colleague by GNA-backed militias tasked with securing Matiga Airport. The Demonstrators demanded better security and protection at the airport.
- Murder/ Execution - 17 Apr 17, Al Murqub Province, Tarhunah: The Kanni Bde from Tarhunah shot and killed 11 members of the Basbusa family in the town. An unconfirmed report suggests that Al Kanni Bde arrested a member of the family and executed him triggering a feud. Female members of the family had to bury the bodies.
- Shooting - 18 Apr 17, Al Murqub Province, Tarhunah: A checkpoint along the Tarhunah to Bani Walid Road was shot at by smugglers as they attempted to bring illegal products into the town.
- Armed Attack - 18 Apr 17, Tripoli Province, Matiga Airport: Another altercation was reported between Al Buni Brigade and Passport Control. Passport control reportedly suspended their operations for a time at Matiga Airport.

**Cyrenaica**

Incidents by type, 13 - 19 Apr



Incidents by district, 13 - 19 Apr



**Significant activity**

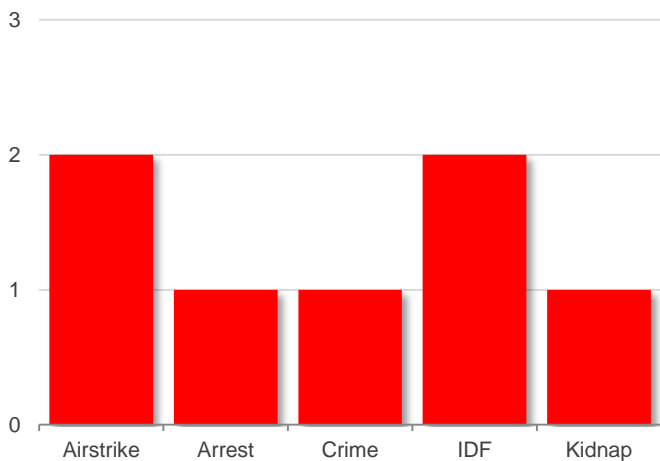
- Airstrike - 14 Apr 17, Derna Province, Derna: LNA jets conducted an airstrike in the Fatyah District area of Derna. No casualties were reported.
- Arrest - 14 Apr 17, Al Jabal Al Akhdar Province, Shahat: A Chadian national was arrested in Mansoura, Shahat. He has been charged with fraud for offering 'magical services' and was described as a 'sorcerer.'
- Airstrike - 15 Apr 17 12.30pm, Derna Province, Derna: LNA jets struck Al Hajaji area in the western area of Derna. No casualties reported.
- Demonstration - 15 Apr 17, Al Jabal Al Akhdar Province, Susah: A demonstration was held in Susah to demand that power be handed over to a Military Council headed by Hafter, this demonstration was attended by the HoR representative for Sirte.

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- Murder/ Execution - 16 Apr 17, Al Jabal Al Akhdar Province, Al Bayda: Authorities from the Internal Security Service in Bayda have killed a Chadian national, Nabil Hassan Jomma 25, for conducting black magic rites after a series of mysterious suicides plagued the eastern city.
- Arrest - 17 Apr 17, Benghazi Province, Sabri: A Chadian nation was arrested in the Sabri area of Benghazi on terrorism charges. He was reportedly in possession of a mobile phone which linked him to other known terrorists including photos and phone numbers. He attempted to escape from custody.
- Airstrike - 18 Apr 17, Benghazi Province, Sabri: LNA jets launched a number of airstrikes against militant positions in Sabri.
- Arrest - 19 Apr 17, Derna Province, Derna: LNA forces have managed to apprehend a senior commanding figure of MSCD, Hamza Al Shalwy at Kersa, at a checkpoint west of Derna. Kersa is reportedly in charge of provisioning and supplies for the group.
- Airstrike - 20 Apr 17, Derna Province, Derna: LNA fighter jets conduct airstrikes on MSCD positions near Al Fatayih area.

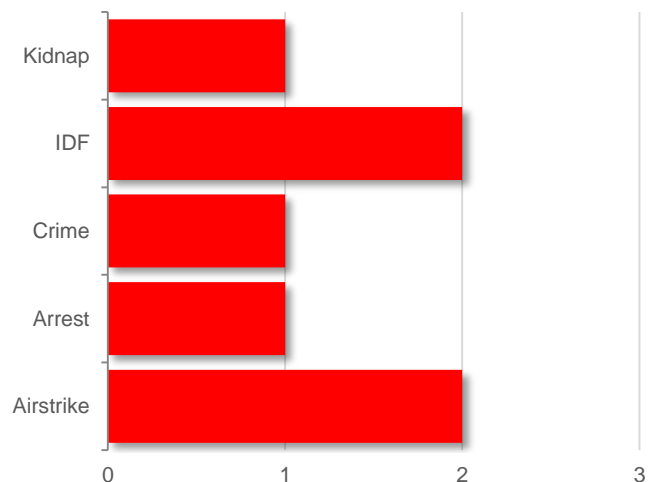
**Fezzan**

Incidents by type, 13 - 19 Apr



**GARDAWORLD**

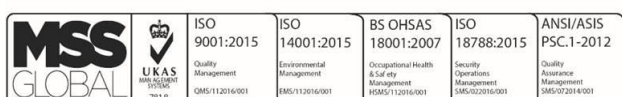
Incidents by district, 13 - 19 Apr



**GARDAWORLD**

**Significant activity**

- Airstrike - 13 Apr 17 17:30, Sabha Province, Sabha Castle: LNA jets targeted a Third Force position at Genghis Company near to the Sabha oil storage and Tamanhint airbase.
- IDF - 16 Apr 17, Sabha Province, Tamanhint Airport: resumption of clashes around Tamanhint airbase between 12 Brigade and 3rd Force. According to local sources, Tamanhint airbase was shelled by at least 60 x howitzer shells over two hours.
- Airstrike - 16 Apr 17, Al Jufra Province, Al Jufra: LNA jets conducted airstrikes on a convoy travelling towards Tamanhint airbase from the Jufra area. Reports indicate that a high ranking field commander, Safwan Gneidy was critically injured.
- IDF - 18 Apr 17, Sabha Province, Tamanhint Airport: LNA mounted an IDF attack against Tamanhint Airport.
- Airstrike - 19 Apr 17, Sabha Province, Tamanhint Airport: Local sources state that LNA has conducted a round of airstrikes on GNA forces at Tamanhint airbase, causing a fire to break out in the base's living quarters.
- IDF - 19 Apr 17, Sabha Province, Tamanhint Airport: LNA forces target Tamanhint airbase with heavy artillery. Surrounding residential areas were damaged during the attack.
- Troop Movements - 20 Apr 17, Sabha Province, Sabha: 127 Battalion (LNA) deployed to Sabha during the morning. The battalion is equipped with a tank, technicals, EE-9 Cascavel (six-wheeled armoured reconnaissance vehicle) and a number of Palmaria self-propelled 155mm howitzers.





**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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