



Weekly Libya .Xplored report preview

August 18, 2017

Prepared by Risk Analysis Team, Libya

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ACTIVITY MAP



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| | | ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management QMS/112016/001 | ISO 14001:2015 Environmental Management EMS/112016/001 | BS OHSAS 18001:2007 Occupational Health & Safety Management HMS/112016/001 | ISO 18788:2015 Security Operations Management SMS/022016/001 | ANSI/ASIS PSC.1-2012 Quality Assurance Management SMS/072014/001 | | | | | |
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OUTLOOK

Short term outlook

- The situation in the Mediterranean is growing tense as Italy looks to curb the flow of migrants heading to its shores. The issue is having a ripple effect across the area with neighbouring countries looking to avoid becoming an alternative to Italy and tensions in Libya already high over the issue which many feel is being pushed back to its shores.
- Tensions remain elevated along the Zuwara, Sabratah and Zawiyah coastal areas due to a number of issues including a complex security environment involving fuel smuggling and people trafficking. The detention of four men from Zawiyah in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia and possible extradition to eastern Libya could also result in further incidents.
- BAM has warned of increasing IS activity south of Sirte with one report suggesting the terrorist organization is regrouping in the area as fighters are pushed out of Iraq and Syria. The warnings come as the LNA threatens BAM's control over the city. All three forces are present in the area making it a dynamic and complex environment at the current time. Both BAM and LNA have stepped up their activity, increasing the potential for another confrontation.
- Tensions have increased around Derna following the downing of an LNA jet and the execution of its pilot by MSCD. The LNA has announced it has begun to advance against the city while a new joint operations room has been established to coordinate with civilian militias.

Medium to long term outlook

- The political and security environment in Libya continues to absorb the impact of the GCC move to isolate Qatar. The east of the country remains supportive, looking to exploit the situation and reduce the influence of in country opponents, while simultaneously improving international support.
- GNA President Serraj and LNA Commander Khalifa Haftar, remain central to international stakeholders' attempts to unify east and west. However, alternative solutions are being pursued by other entities with opposing factions. As factions move closer to a possible deal, tensions are likely to increase inside Libya, and there is potential for some level of fragmentation of their support bases. As a result, new alliances may be formed as progress leaves some with reducing levels of influence.
- The remnants of the GNC, which has allegedly benefited from Qatari support, remain politically isolated after losing their footprint in the capital at the end of May. Their last attempt to take territory in the capital by force failed when their fighters were forced from Garabuli on July 11, and support appears to be waning. The threat is assessed to be evolving as the GNC, and associated forces adapt to the changing environment. While intent is assessed to remain, especially for the hardliners, tactics may alter.

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

Governance

- The western and southern regions have suffered from ongoing power cuts this week. On August 10, the entire southern and western power grid collapsed for the fourth time in two months. A fire in Tarhunah and problems with units in al-Khoms and Zawiyah power stations caused problems later in the week. Anger over the issue is manifesting in demonstrations and armed attacks against feed stations in a bid to avoid load sharing in certain areas.
- The Interim government in the east has issued a decree banning the establishment and extension of licensing for Italian companies. The decree also bans Libyans from establishing joint companies with Italian companies until further notice.
- LNA Commander Field Marshal Khalifa Haftar has flown to Moscow from Benina Airport. He is meeting with Sergey Lavrov, the Russian foreign minister. Reports GNA President Fayeze Sarraj was also heading to Moscow have been denied.
- Colonel Ahmad al-Mismary, the LNA spokesman, has accused Qatar of funding armed groups in Benghazi stating it has been directly funding al-Fad al-Aswad (Black Panther) since 2012 in the east of the city. Mismary also claimed that Qatar had control over power networks around Tripoli, but did not elaborate. The

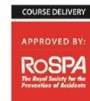
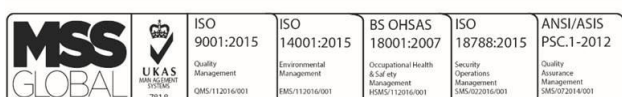
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east is continuing to support the Saudi/ UAE action against Qatar as it looks to weaken external support for domestic opponents.

- Mohamed Zubya, a footballer from Tripoli, has returned to the city after six years of exile with the support of Hatem Tajouri commander of the TRB. Zubya was a supporter of the previous regime but has cut short his contract with a Tunisian club to join al-Ittihad in the capital, where he has a large following.
- Eleven tonnes of humanitarian aid has been sent to a hospital in Sabratah by Italy. The aid was “further proof of the Italian government's solidarity towards all the Libyan people” according to the Italian foreign minister. Anti-Italian sentiment has increased in recent weeks after reports of an agreement between the GNA and Rome to deploy Italian naval assets into Libya waters. The push to reduce the flow of migrants heading to Italy will have a direct impact on the Sabratah coastal area.
- UN Envoy Ghassan Salame vowed to remain neutral as he visited Misrata this week. He expressed his respect for their role in the fight against IS while the Municipal Council urged him to press the HoR to endorse the LPA. This included a discussion on the possibility of holding a full quorate session of the HoR outside Tobruk to vote on and incorporate the political agreement into the constitutional declaration.
- Omar Jalgam has been inaugurated as the new mayor of Brak Shatti. Jalgam replaces Ibrahim Zemi who was subjected to a vote of no confidence by the municipal council.

Security

- There has been a recent influx of IS fighters from Syria and Iraq as reports indicate they are now looking to North Africa to re-establish their “caliphate.” Around 1000 IS fighters are now reported to be in Libya, the majority of which are south of Sirte. BAM has been reporting the growing threat from the terrorist group for a number of weeks now.
- The LNA has claimed it has begun advancing against Derna on five fronts. A plan is reportedly in place to take control of strategic locations around the city which remains under siege. No major clashes have yet taken place, however, an increase in the tempo of operations is expected.
- A delegation from BAM has visited Qatar. The delegation included BAM Commander Bashir al-Qai and GNA MoD and BAM spokesman Mohammed al-Ghusri. The visit has proved controversial given the current tensions over Qatar's alleged funding of Islamist groups in Libya, and the Saudi Arabia/ UAE led blockade.
- GNA President Fayeze Sarraj has prohibited members of the military from holding meetings with officials, at home or abroad, without prior authorization. The move is in response to the above BAM delegation visit to Qatar.
- Muhammed al-Qunaydi, a BAM Officer, has stated that a general conference will be held for army officers (resigned, retired or serving) to give their opinions on choosing a unified leadership for the army in the “coming days.” Another meeting will be held with the attendance of 1500-2000 officers from across Libya to “discuss the leadership of the army and the chief of staff.”
- Armed clashes have taken place in Ajaylat as armed groups try to establish a new fuel smuggling route, avoiding Sabratah. Heavy fighting has so far cost the lives of 14 people and damaged a number of homes and buildings.
- An arrest warrant has been issued by the International Criminal Court (ICC) for LNA Special Forces commander Mahmoud Warfali. Warfali has been charged with war crimes. Reports now indicate that Haftar issued an arrest warrant himself for Warfali on August 02.
- Ex-prime minister Ali Zidan was arrested on August 13 by TRB in Tripoli. Reports of his release were denied by his family who stated they had not heard from him. The Jufra Council of Dignitaries has also called for Zidan (a native of Jufra) to be released.
- The brother of the Manchester bomber has reportedly admitted to RDF during interrogation that there was a plot to assassinate Peter Millet, the UK Ambassador to Libya. Other targets may also have included the previous UN Envoy Martin Kobler and Sarraj.
- Three of the four men arrested in Saudi Arabia are now reported to be in the custody of eastern Libyan authorities and are in Garnada prison near Bayda.
- Warshefana has threatened to close the coastal road unless urgent steps are taken to secure the release of students from the area who were kidnapped at Tripoli University on August 15.



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Migrant Crisis

- Three NGOs have temporarily suspended their operations in the Mediterranean. The decisions come as tensions rise in the area. Italian and Libyan authorities are attempting to curb the flow of migrants, and changes in policy are now starting to have an impact.
- The GNA Navy has clarified its August 10 announcement stating that it has “not declared any prohibited area and it has not prevented any organization from carrying out clear and transparent rescue operations.” It stated that the decision by some NGOs to stop working is “unfortunate” but “does not concern us in any way.”
- Reporting has indicated a drop in the number of migrants reaching Italy over July. A combination of factors on the “central route” to Italy is resulting in a small rise in the numbers of people heading west to Morocco in an effort to get to Spain. Potentially fewer migrants heading to Libya and less successfully making it to Italy, will translate into less income for smuggling gangs which could increase competition along the western coastline.
- Haftar has stated that he needs \$20 billion over the next 20-25 years to secure the southern border, stopping the flow of migrants. Haftar plans to establish mobile camps, no more than 100km apart, manned by 150 guards. He is also requesting training, weapons, ammunition, armoured vehicles, drones, mine detectors, night vision binoculars and helicopters. This is reportedly in response to the French President who allegedly asked Haftar what the LNA would need to stop the migrants coming into Libya.
- Libyan authorities have released 78 Tunisians jailed in Libya for attempting to cross illegally to Italy from the Zawiyah coast. The Tunisians headed back to Tunisia via the Ras Jedir border crossing.
- Approximately 210 illegal migrants, currently residing in a "housing Center" have gone on hunger strike to protest against the Moroccan authorities to cooperate with Libya over their repatriation. Moroccan authorities sent a delegation four months ago to take fingerprints however no further traction has been seen.
- MOAS reported that the Phoenix rescued 111 migrants from a ‘rubber boat’ in the Mediterranean.

Oil & Gas

- Production at Sharara reduced again this week with local sources claiming an armed car-jacking against two Repsol vehicles resulted in some areas being placed out of bounds until appropriate mitigation measures could be taken. The head of security denied the claims, stating that the area remained secured. Production was recovering at the end of the week.
- Loading at Zueitina oil terminal stopped on August 15 as protests over worker’s rights escalated. Workers are demanding 20 months back pay and an improvement in employment packages including health insurance. Loading resumed the following day with the union head stating all demands were to be met.
- The Interim Prime Minister Abdullah al-Thinni has sacked the head of the eastern NOC, Naji Maghrabi and a number of directors. Maghrabi has been replaced with Faraj Mohamed Saied al-Hassi, the former head of the Arabian Gulf Oil Company.

Travel

- Major General Ramadan al-Bar’asi, Commander of Sabha Military Region, has stated that a committee from the Airports Authority was expected to evaluate the civil airports in Sabha, Tamanhint, and Brak Shatti. Bar’asi has pointed out that the airports are “important economic sources and will provide public and private job opportunities.”
- The first pilgrims have departed Matiga Airport in Tripoli this week, heading for Mecca to take part in the Hajj.
- A team from Royal Jordanian is expected to conduct a visit to Benina airport to carry out an assessment prior to a possible resumption of flights.

KEY DATES

| Date | Occasion | Comment |
|------------------------|--|--------------------|
| 20 August 2017 | Anniversary of the Liberation of Tripoli | 2011 revolution |
| 01 – 03 September 2017 | Eid al-Adha | Feast of Sacrifice |
| 16 September 2017 | Martyrs Day | |



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| 22 September 2017 | Hijri New Year | |
| 23 October 2017 | Liberation Day | National holiday |

THREAT MATRIX

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

| | | | | | |
|---------------------|---------|-----|----------|------|---------|
| Threat Scale | Minimal | Low | Moderate | High | Extreme |
|---------------------|---------|-----|----------|------|---------|

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

Security

BAM: Delegation make controversial visit to Qatar

This week, a 15 member delegation from BAM, the GNA MoD, and the Misratan Military Council made a high-level visit to Qatar, which remains blockade by Saudi Arabia and its allies over its alleged support for terrorist groups. The delegation reportedly secured agreements to train 500 BAM members in Qatar and for a new water treatment plant to be installed in Misrata. The delegation also thanked Qatar for their support in “defeating IS.”

In response to the visit, Eastern PC Deputy Fat’hi al-Majburi has called for BAM to be disbanded, stating it has achieved its objective and that a new force had already been agreed to take over Sirte (made up from current BAM units). He also questioned Qatar’s support to the BAM operation against IS and pressured GNA President Fayez Sarraj to take action. In response to the incident, Sarraj has issued a decree banning military members from meeting with foreign officials either at home or abroad without his consent.

Derna: LNA start to advance and establish a new joint operations room

The LNA met on August 10 to discuss their plan for the “liberation” of Derna. Three days later, they announced that they had begun an advance on five fronts against the city which aimed to take control of strategic locations including Wadi al-Naqa. The advance also had air cover with airstrikes taking out two houses in Dahr al-Hamr and two MSCD vehicles in an unknown location. No major clashes have yet been reported. On August 14, skirmishes were reported, disrupting the hand-over of Colonel Jehani’s body. The hand-over was eventually concluded, and Jehani was subsequently buried in Benghazi.

A new joint operations room was also established in the Ayn Marrah area, 25km to the west of Derna. The operations room is reported to include the Awliya al-Dam militia which opposes MSCD. The militia is made up of family and friends of those killed in a coordinated attack by IS in Qubbah, 13km to the west of Ayn Marrah, in February 2015. The attacks killed between 40 and 50 people.

WEEKLY OPERATIONAL ASSESSMENT

Tripolitania

Significant activity

- Threat Warning - 11 Aug 17, Sirte Province, Sirte: Unconfirmed local sources from Wadi al-Hamer, south of Sirte have reported that seven unknown vehicles thought to be IS affiliated have been sighted travelling towards the south.

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- CP/ Road Block - 13 Aug 17 Early morning, Tripoli Province, Tripoli: A group of youths blocked traffic on the Second Ring Road near the Hishan overpass in protest at the recent extensive power cuts in the capital.
- Arrest - 13 Aug 17, Tripoli Province, Tripoli: Members of the Deterrence and Joint Intervention Force (Abusaleem Central Security Administration) have reported the arrest of the acting General Manager of Aseel Company that owns Al-Mazraa Juice Factory. The General Manager is accused of financial discrepancies including receiving 25 million USD in bank credit and then falsely increasing the prices of their products.
- Arrest - 13 Aug 17, Tripoli Province, Dahra: Former Prime Minister Ali Zidan was arrested by TRB at the Victoria Hotel in Dahra, Tripoli. Zidan was in the capital for talks with Sarraj.
- Demonstration - 13 Aug 17, Az Zawiyah Province, Zawiyah: A demonstration was held in the main square condemning the arrest of four men from the town arrested in Saudi Arabia. A recent report suggests three of the men have been handed over to eastern authorities and are now being held in Garnada Prison near al-Bayda. Around 50 people participated including at least nine children.
- Kidnap - 15 Aug 17, Tripoli Province, Tripoli: An unknown number of female students were kidnaped from Tripoli University. The students were from Warshefana. On 18 August, dignitaries from Warshefana denounced the abductions and stated they were holding the PC, Mol, Tripoli University Police and Rada responsible for the safety of the students. They threatened to close the coastal road unless urgent measures were taken to secure the release of those kidnaped.
- Armed Clashes - 15 Aug 17, Nuqat Al-Khams Province, Ajaylat: Fighting has broken out between various armed groups in Ajaylat. The Alhak Militia along with its allies, the Nasr Company and Ahniesh Brigade from Zawiyah are trying to secure a new fuel smuggling route which avoids Sabratah. The new Anti-IS Operations Room, recently established in Sabratah, is resisting alongside other armed groups from Lafran in Ajaylat. Fighting has included tanks and heavy weaponry and has so far claimed 14 lives. Homes, a shop, and the civil registry building have been damaged due to fire, shells and shrapnel. One report also states that the Anas Dabbishi militia from Sabratah is also involved, supporting Alhak.
- Demonstration - 16 Aug 17, Tripoli Province, Tripoli: Around ten men have forced workers out of the Madar HQ in Gurji. The men are protesting against the ongoing power and water cuts. Current reporting suggests despite employees being forced to leave, security is containing the protest and the situation is not tense.
- Armed Clashes - 16 Aug 17, Nalut Province, Wazin: Tunisian security forces engaged armed men attempting to cross the border. Tunisian troops captured six vehicles, one of which was loaded with fuel. Seven men from the local towns of Remada and Dhehiba have been arrested. The rest of the convoy which included six technicals mounted with machine guns returned back to Libya.
- Demonstration - 16 Aug 17, Tripoli Province, Tripoli: Approximately 210 illegal migrants, currently residing in a "housing centre" have gone on hunger strike to protest against the Moroccan authorities to cooperate with Libya over their repatriation. Moroccan authorities sent a delegation four months ago to take fingerprints however no further traction has been seen.

Cyrenaica

Significant activity

- Airstrike - 10 Aug 17, Derna Province, Derna: The LNA launched airstrikes against MSCD positions. A weapons depot close to the Korean Buildings at the western entrance was destroyed.
- Armed Clashes - 10 Aug 17, Derna Province, Derna: The Shabab al-Burkan (Volcano Youth) carried out an operation in which three armed men were killed, including an Egyptian national.
- Armed Clashes - 11 Aug 17, Benghazi Province, Sabri: On August 11, the areas of Suq al-Nur and Suq al-Dhabab were retaken by the LNA.
- Airstrike - 12 Aug 17, Al-Butnan Province, Jaghboub: Three unknown fighter jets have conducted an airstrike around Jaghboub. The airstrike targeted what was described as an unknown military vehicle killing its driver and injuring another soldier.
- Arrest - 12 Aug 17, Kufra Province, Kufra: Members of the Anti-Immigration Force of Kufra have deported approximately 130 Sudanese nationals back to Sudan. It was reported that a number of the immigrants are suffering from "infectious diseases."
- Armed Clashes - 13 Aug 17, Benghazi Province, Benghazi: Clashes in the Old Town reportedly claimed the lives of eight LNA soldiers and wounded another 11.



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- Airstrike - 13 Aug 17, Benghazi Province, Sidi Akribesh: LNA jets have targeted an RSCB position Sidi Akribesh area of Sabri. Four RSCB fighters were killed in this airstrike while another succumbed to his wounds soon after..
- Airstrike - 13 Aug 17, Derna Province, Derna: LNA helicopters have targeted and destroyed a boat reportedly transporting weapons and ammunition to MSCD members in Derna.
- Armed Clashes - 14 Aug 17, Derna Province, Derna: Clashes were reported between the LNA and MSCD. The clashes disrupted the handover of Colonel Jehani's body.
- IED - 14 Aug 17, Benghazi Province, Sidi Akribesh: Three LNA soldiers were killed in an IED explosion.
- Shooting - 15 Aug 17, Benghazi Province, Sidi Akribesh: An LNA soldier was shot dead by a sniper.
- Armed Clashes - 15 Aug 17, Benghazi Province, Sidi Akribesh: The LNA clashed with RSCB remnants, killing at least four fighters.
- Armed Clashes - 16 Aug 17, Derna Province, Martubah: An LNA internal dispute led to clashes at a checkpoint in Martubah. Some reporting suggests the disagreement was over whether to allow civilians from Derna to enter the town to buy essentials.
- IED - 16 Aug 17, Benghazi Province, Sabri: A Special Forces patrol was targeted in al-Funduq sector (Municipal Hotel) resulting in one death and two injuries.

Fezzan

There were no reported incidents in Fezzan this week.



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
 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
 LIFG – Libyan Islamic Fighting Group
 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
 MoI - 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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