



HISTORY OF SIGNALLING IN 100 OBJECTS ELECTRONIC WARFARE FORCE PROTECTION AND DIRECTION FINDING



Cyber Warfare is a title frequently seen in the Newspapers and in media today. The more traditional name used by all 3 services is Electronic Warfare (EW), which covers Electronic Support Measures (ESM) and Electronic Counter Measures (ECM). ECM is linked now to Force Protection. Royal Signals have had operators supporting EW both at the strategic and tactical level for a considerable length of time. 14th Signal Regiment became the first Signal Regt to provide dedicated tactical EW support to troops on the ground. Previously strategic elements had been deployed forward piecemeal and for a limited duration.

The operators shown in these pictures are from 14th Signal Regiment operating in Afghanistan. However, the tactic of embedding these operators into Counter IED (improvised explosive device) teams was started during operations in Northern Ireland; the first detachment of these operators was formed up in April 1982. These ECM operators really came into prominence in Afghanistan, where the IED threat became a very major challenge to British Forces deployed fighting the Taliban.

The ECM operators were always a member of the EOD team, but later ECM operators would also be embedded with the infantry as well. Frequently the Taliban used a VHF radio called the ICOM. Their chatter could be listened to by the British patrols. It was often necessary to have a "Terp" (interpreter) to understand this chatter. An example of this sort of action is well described in the book called "Painting the Sand" by Kim Hughes GC, who was then a S/Sgt High Threat Improvised Explosive Device Disposal (IEDD) operator. See page 258 following, to see why this is called force protection. It is a harrowing description of events that took place in 2009. It remains a vital role for Royal Signals today.