

LEAD INSPECTOR GENERAL FOR OVERSEAS CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS



# OPERATION FREEDOM'S SENTINEL

REPORT TO THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS

OCTOBER 1, 2016–DECEMBER 31, 2016

## **LEAD INSPECTOR GENERAL MISSION**

The Lead Inspector General for Overseas Contingency Operations will coordinate among the Inspectors General specified under the law to:

- develop a joint strategic plan to conduct comprehensive oversight over all aspects of the contingency operation
- ensure independent and effective oversight of all programs and operations of the Federal government in support of the contingency operation through either joint or individual audits, inspections, and investigations
- promote economy, efficiency, and effectiveness and prevent, detect, and deter fraud, waste, and abuse
- perform analyses to ascertain the accuracy of information provided by Federal agencies relating to obligations and expenditures, costs of programs and projects, accountability of funds, and the award and execution of major contracts, grants, and agreements
- report quarterly and biannually to the Congress and the public on the contingency operation and activities of the Lead Inspector General

(Pursuant to sections 2, 4, and 8L of the Inspector General Act of 1978.)

## FOREWORD

We are pleased to provide the Lead Inspector General (Lead IG) quarterly report on Operation Freedom's Sentinel (OFS). This is our seventh quarterly report on this overseas contingency operation, discharging our individual and collective agency oversight responsibilities pursuant to sections 2, 4, and 8L of the Inspector General Act of 1978.

OFS involves two complementary missions: 1) the U.S. counterterrorism mission against al Qaeda, the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant—Khorasan (ISIL-K), and their affiliates in Afghanistan, and 2) the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)-led Resolute Support Mission to train, advise, and assist Afghan security forces. The objective of the Resolute Support Mission is to develop self-sustaining Afghan National Army and Police Forces that are capable of maintaining security in Afghanistan under responsible Afghan ministries.

This quarterly report updates information on significant events involving OFS and the NATO-led efforts to build and strengthen Afghan security forces during the period from October 1 to December 31, 2016. This report also features the oversight work conducted by the Lead IG Offices of Inspector General and partner oversight agencies during this period, as well as ongoing and planned oversight work, as of December 31, 2016.

We remain committed to providing oversight and timely reporting on OFS, which can help improve the efficiency and effectiveness of OFS's critical mission.



*Glenn A. Fine*

**Glenn A. Fine**  
Acting Inspector General  
U.S. Department of Defense



*Steve A. Linick*

**Steve A. Linick**  
Inspector General  
U.S. Department of State and the  
Broadcasting Board of Governors



*Ann Calvaresi Barr*

**Ann Calvaresi Barr**  
Inspector General  
U.S. Agency for International  
Development

**On the cover:** (clockwise from top left) General Nicholson visits Kandahar, Afghanistan (Resolute Support Media photo); Advise, Assist Command-Air advisors watch as members of the AAF offload Mark-81 bombs from an A-29 Super Tucano at Mazar-e Sharif (U.S. Air Force photo); Afghan children at the reopened Sayed Pacha School in Kandahar, Province, Afghanistan (DoD photo); U.S. Army Soldiers with the 3rd Cavalry Regiment conduct a fire mission while actress Scarlett Johansson observes during the annual Chairman's USO Holiday Tour (DoD photo); Expeditionary Maintenance Squadron engine technicians, conduct an operations check on an F-16 Fighting Falcon at Bagram Airfield (U.S. Air Force photo).

## MESSAGE FROM THE LEAD INSPECTOR GENERAL



**Glenn A. Fine**

I am pleased to present the seventh Lead Inspector General (Lead IG) report on Operation Freedom's Sentinel (OFS). This report summarizes the quarter's key events and describes completed, ongoing, and planned Lead IG and partner agency oversight work relating to OFS.

As our report discusses in more detail, Taliban insurgents launched country-wide attacks in Afghanistan this quarter to capture at least one provincial capital, a key Taliban goal. Despite a high casualty rate and continuing leadership challenges, Afghan security forces, with assistance from the United States and partner nations, withstood the attacks and maintained control over major population centers. We also report that U.S. and Afghan counterterrorism operations weakened al Qaeda and ISIL-K this quarter, but that those organizations continue to pose a threat to Afghan security.

Additionally, this report discusses NATO-led efforts to strengthen the combat and sustainment capabilities of Afghan security forces. Progress in building Afghan institutional capacity continues to be gradual. Significant challenges remain. However, the international community appears to be committed to supporting the Afghan government militarily and financially.

This quarter, the Lead IG agencies and oversight partners continued their oversight of OFS, releasing 4 reports and conducting 26 ongoing oversight projects. The Lead IG agencies were also conducting 22 OFS-related investigations pertaining to alleged procurement, program, or grant fraud; corruption; and trafficking in persons.

In addition, on December 8, 2016, the IGs for State and USAID testified before a subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations about their agencies' top management challenges. Also in December, my office released our top management challenges report as part of our FY 2017 Oversight Plan.

My Lead IG colleagues and I want to thank our dedicated staff who perform their important oversight of OFS. In recognition of that outstanding work, the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency awarded one of its top awards, the Glenn/Roth Award for Exemplary Service, to Lead IG employees for their outstanding oversight of overseas contingency operations.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Glenn A. Fine".

**Glenn A. Fine**

Lead Inspector General for Operation Freedom's Sentinel  
Acting Inspector General  
U.S. Department of Defense









Afghan children at the reopened Sayed Pacha School in Kandahar Province, Afghanistan. (DoD photo)

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

*This report is issued pursuant to sections 2, 4, and 8L of the Inspector General Act of 1978, which requires that the designated Lead IG provide a quarterly report, available to the public, on an overseas contingency operation. The Department of Defense (DoD) IG is the designated Lead IG for Operation Freedom's Sentinel (OFS). The Department of State (DoS) IG is the Associate Lead Inspector General for OFS. A summary of Lead IG statutory requirements is found in Appendix A.*

*The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) IG is designated by the Inspector General Act as the third IG responsible for oversight of all Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO), but USAID has no OFS-related programs or activities. However, the USAID IG does conduct audits, investigations, and other activities in Afghanistan. The USAID IG coordinates those activities, as appropriate, with other oversight entities, but this report does not discuss those activities.*

*This unclassified report contains information from two Lead IG agencies—DoD and DoS—as well as from partner oversight agencies for the period from October 1 through December 31, 2016. The methodology for obtaining information used in this report and for drafting the report can be found in Appendix B.*

## THE AFGHAN NATIONAL DEFENSE AND SECURITY FORCES PREVENTED MAJOR INSURGENT GAINS

Insurgent attacks continued across Afghanistan this quarter with the Taliban remaining the greatest threat to the Afghan government. With a strength estimated by U.S. Forces-Afghanistan (USFOR-A) to number 25,000 to 35,000 full or part-time fighters, the Taliban launched a series of attacks on 6 provincial capitals in October 2016, following its stated campaign strategy of capturing at least 1 provincial capital in 2016.<sup>1</sup> Aided by U.S. airstrikes, however, the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF or Afghan security forces) repelled the attacks and maintained control over all provincial capitals and population centers.<sup>2</sup> The extent of Afghan government territorial control or influence decreased 6 percent since August 2016. At the end of the quarter, the government maintained control or influence in 233 (57 percent) of the 407 districts in Afghanistan, while the Taliban controlled or influenced 41 districts (10 percent), with the remainder considered “contested.”<sup>3</sup>

Although meetings to restart the peace process were held between Taliban and Afghan representatives in the Persian Gulf state of Qatar during the quarter, no further developments in the process occurred.<sup>4</sup> The relationship between Afghanistan and Pakistan remained tense this quarter, with sporadic cross-border artillery attacks occurring along their shared border. However, the NATO-led Resolute Support

**Insurgent attacks continued across Afghanistan this quarter with the Taliban remaining the greatest threat to the Afghan government.**

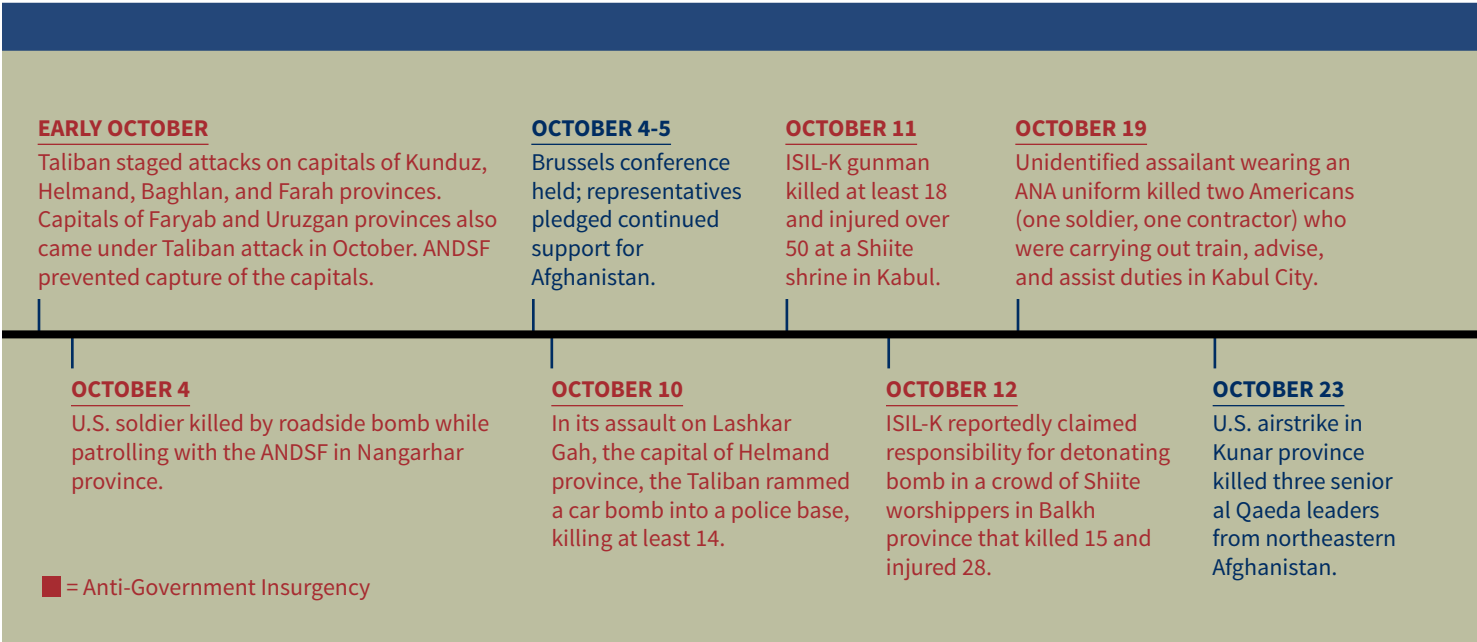
Mission (Resolute Support) facilitated more frequent dialogue between senior Afghan military officers and their Pakistani counterparts this quarter in an effort to improve border relationships.<sup>5</sup>

General John W. Nicholson, the Commander of Resolute Support and USFOR-A, assessed the security situation in Afghanistan at the end of the year as “an equilibrium, but one that’s in favor of the [Afghan] government.” In characterizing the performance of the Afghan security forces, he stated “they were tested and they prevailed” by preventing Taliban capture of provincial capitals.<sup>6</sup>

However, in its November 2016 threat assessment, the Institute for the Study of War stated that the Afghan government remains highly dependent on current levels of U.S. support to sustain the ANDSF and maintain security in territory now controlled by the Afghan government. Further, the assessment reported that the ANDSF is “incapable of recapturing significant swaths of Taliban-secured territory” at current levels of U.S. support.<sup>7</sup>

According to General Nicholson, U.S. counterterrorism operations directed at the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant-Khorasan (ISIL-K) and al Qaeda this quarter diminished the strength of both terrorist groups.<sup>8</sup> U.S. and Afghan forces launched a successful series of attacks against ISIL-K fighters operating primarily in the eastern Nangarhar province bordering Pakistan, killing 12 of the group’s leaders, reducing its number by 15 to 20 percent, and eliminating its sanctuaries in all but 3 Nangarhar districts.<sup>9</sup> Despite those combat setbacks, ISIL-K was able to stage 6 high-profile attacks that killed over 100 people—3 of which targeted Shiite Muslims during religious events.<sup>10</sup> General Nicholson emphasized that a key objective of U.S. counterterrorism efforts was to prevent Islamic

General John W. Nicholson, the Commander of Resolute Support and USFOR-A, assessed the security situation in Afghanistan at the end of the year as “an equilibrium, but one that’s in favor of the [Afghan] government.”





General Nicholson, briefs reporters on December 2, 2016, at the Pentagon. (DoD photo)

State components facing defeat in Iraq and Syria from relocating to Afghanistan. He predicted that ISIL-K would be “reduced and defeated” in 2017.<sup>11</sup>

According to DoD officials, U.S. counterterrorism operations this quarter disrupted al Qaeda’s ability to attack the U.S. and Afghan forces by reducing its number in Afghanistan to under 100 fighters and killing 3 of its top leaders.<sup>12</sup> However, al Qaeda in Afghanistan remained affiliated with the world-wide al Qaeda organization and, according to General Nicholson, “these groups together have the intent and the capability to conduct attacks outside of Afghanistan.”<sup>13</sup> The Taliban has publicly distanced itself from al Qaeda, but U.S. commanders believe al Qaeda will attempt to use relationships with low level Taliban leaders to maintain its sanctuaries in Afghanistan, rebuild its capabilities, and plan future operations.<sup>14</sup>

#### **OCTOBER 25**

ISIL-K gunmen abducted and killed up to 30 civilians in western Ghor province.

#### **NOVEMBER 3**

Two U.S. soldiers killed during firefight with Taliban in Kunduz City.

#### **NOVEMBER 12**

Taliban suicide attack inside Bagram Air Base killed 5 Americans (3 soldiers, 2 contractors), and injured 16.

#### **NOVEMBER 19**

The Anti-Corruption Justice Center held its first corruption trial.

#### **NOVEMBER 21**

ISIL-K suicide bomber targeted a Shiite mosque in Kabul, killing at least 32, injuring 48.

#### **DECEMBER 21**

Taliban assaulted home of member of Afghan parliament.

#### **OCTOBER 31**

ISIL-K suicide bomber targeted gathering of tribal elders in Nangarhar province, killing at least six.

#### **NOVEMBER 10**

Taliban car bomb exploded in front of German embassy in Balkh province, killing at least 4 and injuring over 100.

#### **NOVEMBER 16**

ISIL-K suicide bomber on motorcycle killed four Afghan security officials.

#### **NOVEMBER 20**

Resolute Support hosted International Issues Forum.

#### **END OF NOVEMBER**

USFOR-A reported that the percentage of the population under Afghan government control dropped from 69 percent to 64 percent in August, and the percentage of districts under government control decreased from 63 percent to 57 percent.



## RESOLUTE SUPPORT REPORTED GRADUAL PROGRESS IN BUILDING MINISTERIAL CAPACITY

According to U.S. officials in Afghanistan, the Afghan Ministries of Defense (MoD) and Interior (MoI), which are responsible for security in Afghanistan, continued to make slow progress in building institutional capability. USFOR-A and the Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan (CSTC-A) reported improvements in the implementation of automated systems for management of Afghan warehouse inventories and personnel, in the integration of intelligence with combat operations, and in planning joint army-police operations. However, leadership deficiencies and corruption continued to impede capacity building efforts.<sup>15</sup>

Following unrelenting combat throughout 2016, the ANDSF expected to transition during the winter months to operations focusing on training, force regeneration, developing leadership, on securing gains made over the summer in government-controlled areas.<sup>16</sup> According to media sources, Afghan military planning capacity had improved as illustrated by the high quality of ANDSF campaign plans for both last summer and this winter.<sup>17</sup>



Maj. Gen. Richard G. Kaiser, Commanding General of Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan, tours the logistics warehouses of the 215th Corps in Helmand, to assess logistical challenges and evaluate next steps to build capacity and sustainment. (DoD photo)

**Resolute Support reported that the ANA has become increasingly independent in key competencies, including intelligence operations and coordination of artillery and aviation assets.**

While most ANDSF units have implemented standard cycles for troop training, fighting, and rest,<sup>18</sup> those units facing the most enemy activity have not been able to do so because of the demands of continuous combat.<sup>19</sup> Ensuring that all units allow sufficient time for training and rest periods is a key goal of the winter campaign.<sup>20</sup>

Resolute Support reported that the Afghan National Army (ANA) has become increasingly independent in key competencies, including intelligence operations and coordination of artillery and aviation assets.<sup>21</sup> However, the MoD and MoI continued to overuse the Afghan Special Security Forces (ASSF), their special operations components, in conventional roles.<sup>22</sup>

According to DoD officials, both the ANA and to a lesser extent Afghan National Police (ANP) remained below their target strength levels.<sup>23</sup> Attrition has limited growth of the force to authorized levels, although the attrition rate has remained steady for the last three years. In October, USFOR-A initiated a Recruiter Sustainment Training program to support ANA efforts to increase recruitment and retention across the country, with the goal of increasing the ANA force level, which remained well below its fully authorized end strength of 195,000.<sup>24</sup> This quarter, select ANA corps continued to establish reserve battalions, employing former ANA soldiers in local support functions, such as base security and checkpoints.<sup>25</sup>

U.S. aviation advisors reported that the Afghan Air Force (AAF) increased both its combat and lift capacity this quarter with the addition of new aircraft and aircrews. The AAF was able to deploy its MD-530 attack helicopters around the country as needed to support ANA operations. According to U.S. Air Force officials, pilots also demonstrated increased caution in conducting air strikes, avoiding targets when there was a significant likelihood of civilian casualties.<sup>26</sup> However, plans to replace the AAF's aging fleet of 46 Russian-made Mi-17 helicopters with the first 53 of a planned 159 U.S.-made Black Hawk helicopters were put on hold pending availability of funding.<sup>27</sup>

## LEAD IG REPORTING AND OVERSIGHT

During the period October 1 through December 31, 2016, the Lead IG agencies and the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) released four reports that examined OFS-related matters. See Table 1.

Lead IG agencies and their oversight partners had 26 ongoing and 22 planned oversight projects, as of December 31, 2016. Ongoing oversight projects are related to efforts to build capacity and capability in the ANDSF and Afghan government, contracts and contract management, anti-corruption and counternarcotics, and intelligence and counterterrorism.

As of December 31, 2016, the Lead IG agencies had 22 ongoing OFS-related investigations, with 50 percent related to procurement, program, or grant fraud. The Defense Criminal Investigative Service (DCIS), the DoD OIG's investigative

component, also initiated a trafficking in persons investigations program and opened two such investigations related to OFS this quarter.

The DoD OIG, the entity that tracks hotline activities among the Lead IG agencies and other OFS-related organizations, received and coordinated 81 contacts related to OFS and opened 67 cases during the quarter. These contacts were referred within the DoD OIG, to the Lead IG agencies, or to other investigative organizations for review and, as appropriate, investigation.

On December 8, 2016, the IGs for DoS and USAID testified before a subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations about their agencies' top management challenges. The DoD OIG released its top management challenges report in December, as part of its FY 2017 Oversight Plan.

For more information on Lead IG and partner oversight, see the Completed Oversight Activities and Ongoing and Planned Oversight sections of this report, beginning on page 72 and page 90 respectively. Appendix B contains detailed information on the Lead IG statutory requirements.

Table 1.

#### Oversight Reports Released, as of 12/31/2016

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL	
<b><i>The Combined Security Transition Command–Afghanistan Needs to Strengthen the Controls Over U.S. Direct Assistance Funding</i></b> (DODIG-2017-027)	December 1, 2016
<b><i>Evaluation of U.S. Forces–Afghanistan Intelligence Training for Afghan Ministry of Defense</i></b> (DODIG-2017-025) (Classified)	November 21, 2016
DEPARTMENT OF STATE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL	
<b><i>Management Assistance Report: Contract Management–Lessons Learned From Embassy Kabul, Afghanistan, Operations and Maintenance Contract</i></b> (AUD-MERO-17-04)	October 5, 2016
SPECIAL INSPECTOR GENERAL FOR AFGHANISTAN RECONSTRUCTION	
<b><i>Special Mission Wing Facilities at Kandahar Airfield: Construction Generally Met Contract Requirements, but Problems with Noncompliance, Maintenance, and Quality Assurance Need to be Addressed</i></b> (SIGAR-17-03-IP)	October 14, 2016









General Nicholson visits Kandahar. (Resolute Support Media photo)

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# OFS: YEAR TWO IN REVIEW

## KEY EVENTS OF 2016

### JANUARY

**January 11–February 23** The Quadrilateral Coordination Group, consisting of Afghanistan, Pakistan, China, and the United States, met four times to try to develop a roadmap to peace. Further deliberations were postponed until the Taliban agreed to engage in peace talks.

**January 14** The Dept. of State designated the Islamic States' Afghanistan contingent, ISIL-K, a foreign terrorist organization.



### FEBRUARY

As heavy Taliban fighting increased the strain on Afghan forces in Helmand province, the U.S. deployed several hundred troops to reinforce the ANA's 215th Corps.

### MARCH



**March 2** Army General John W. Nicholson assumed command of USFOR-A and Resolute Support from General John F. Campbell.

**March 5** The Taliban announced it would not join the peace process unless, among other demands, foreign troops left Afghanistan immediately.

### APRIL

**April 12** The Taliban launched attacks in Kabul, Helmand, Kunduz, Ghazni, Nangarhar, and Uruzgan provinces.

**April 19** The Taliban attacked government entities in Kabul including a truck bomb and firearm attack on an Afghan government compound that left 68 dead and 347 wounded.

### MAY

**May 21** A U.S. drone strike killed Taliban leader Mullah Akhtar Mansour in Pakistan near the Afghan border.

**May 25** The Taliban chose new leadership, Mullah Haibatullah Akhundzada. Haibatullah Sirajuddin Haqqani, head of the Haqqani Network, was retained as deputy, and Mullah Mohammad Yaqoob (son of deceased Taliban founder Mullah Omar) was elevated to second deputy.

### JUNE

**June 1** Resolute Support announced the completion of an overhaul of Afghanistan's 215th Corps, which is charged with defending the unstable Helmand province.

**June 10** President Obama authorized expanded authority for U.S. commanders to assist ANDSF combat operations and to act proactively in support of Afghan forces on the battlefield.





## JULY

**July 1** The Anti-Corruption Justice Center in Kabul was formally inaugurated to prosecute corruption cases against high-level Afghan officials.

**July 6** President Obama announced a revised troop ceiling of 8,400 by the end of 2016, instead of the previously announced ceiling of 5,500.

**July 8-9** Warsaw Conference: NATO allies agreed to continue funding and troops through 2020 for Resolute Support.

**July 23** ISIL-K suicide bombing attack on a large demonstration of ethnic Hazaras in Kabul killed at least 80 and wounded over 200.

**July 26** U.S. drone strike killed ISIL-K leader, Hafiz Saeed Khan, along with several of his senior commanders. This attack was part of a joint U.S.-Afghan offensive in Nangahar province that killed an estimated 300 ISIL-K fighters.

## OCTOBER

**October 4-5** Brussels Conference: European nations pledged continued international support for the Afghan government.

**October 23** U.S. airstrike in Kunar province killed Faruq al-Qatani, al Qaeda's leader for eastern Afghanistan.

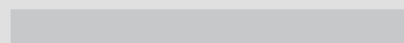
**Sources and photos:**  
See endnotes on page 117.

## AUGUST

**August 3** DoD withheld \$300 million in military assistance to Pakistan, citing the failure of its government to take sufficient action against the Haqqani Network.

**August 12** In a sign of fraying relations within the Afghan government, Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah issued a public statement critical of President Ashraf Ghani. Tensions eased and rhetoric was softened between the two leading up to October's Brussels Conference.

**August 22** After months of increased Taliban aggression in and around Lashkar Gah, the capital of Helmand province, Afghan special forces deployed along with 100 U.S. soldiers for operations supported by U.S. and Afghan airstrikes.



## SEPTEMBER

**September 22** Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, General Joseph Dunford, described the conflict between the ANDSF and the Taliban as a "stalemate," estimating that the Afghan government controlled about 70% of the population, with the Taliban controlling 10%, and the remaining 20% in flux.

**September 28** The 2-year anniversary of the current Afghan government passed without the electoral reforms or constitutional assembly that were promised to take place within that timeframe.

**September 29** The Afghan government reached a peace agreement with Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, the leader of Hezb-i-Islami. This was the first treaty concluded between the Afghan government and an armed group since 2001.



## NOVEMBER

**November 12** Taliban suicide attack inside Bagram Air Base killed 5 Americans and injured 16.

**November 19** The Anti-Corruption Justice Center held its first corruption trial.

## DECEMBER

**December 21** Taliban assaulted home of member of Afghan parliament killing eight Afghan civilians.

## TALIBAN PRESSED COUNTRY-WIDE ATTACKS BUT AFGHAN SECURITY FORCES HELD POPULATION CENTERS

Insurgent attacks continued this quarter with the Taliban remaining the greatest threat to the Afghan government. Estimated by USFOR-A to number between 25,000-35,000 full or part-time fighters, the Taliban challenged the Afghan security forces in key districts and targeted 6 provincial capitals, 4 of which were attacked during the first week of October.<sup>1</sup> General Nicholson emphasized that the ANDSF, aided by the United States and its coalition partners, prevented the insurgent capture of population centers, disrupted the Taliban's ability to stage attacks with a large number of fighters, and inflicted a high number of Taliban casualties. As a result, General Nicholson assessed the security situation in Afghanistan as "an equilibrium, but one that's in favor of the [Afghan] government."<sup>2</sup>

The extent of Afghan government control over population and territory decreased this quarter. According to USFOR-A, the Afghan government maintained control or influence over districts in which 64 percent of the population lived in November, down from 69 percent in August, with the Taliban controlling less than 10 percent and the remainder "contested." In contested areas, neither the Afghan government nor the insurgency maintains significant control over governance, security, infrastructure, economy, or communications.<sup>3</sup> During the same period, USFOR-A reported that the number of districts under Afghan government control fell from about 63 percent to about 57 percent.<sup>4</sup> The 34 provinces in Afghanistan are subdivided into a total of 407 local governments or districts.<sup>5</sup>

According to General Nicholson, the decrease in Afghan government control or influence occurred because of an increase in contested areas, rather than more control exercised by the Taliban.<sup>6</sup> In that regard, General Joseph Votel, Commander of U.S. Central Command, speaking at the *Foreign Policy Initiative Forum* in November, noted that territorial control fluctuated over time, given the "challenging security situation" in Afghanistan. He emphasized the need to continue to contest the territory that neither the Afghan government nor Taliban controlled.<sup>7</sup>

In its submission for DoS's *Country Reports on Terrorism 2016*, U.S. Embassy Kabul noted that Taliban control of substantial territory in less populated, rural areas of Afghanistan created "an environment of persistent insecurity."<sup>8</sup> In its November 2016 threat assessment, the Institute for the Study of War stated that the Afghan government remains highly dependent on current levels of U.S. support to sustain the ANDSF and maintain security in territory now controlled by the Afghan government. Further, the assessment reported that the ANDSF is "incapable of recapturing significant swaths of Taliban-secured territory" at the current levels of U.S. support.<sup>9</sup> The assessment cautioned, "[t]he continued expansion of ungoverned spaces in Afghanistan allows global extremist networks like al Qaeda and ISIS [ISIL] and their allies to carve out sanctuaries from which to target the U.S. and its national security interests."<sup>10</sup>

**Estimated by USFOR-A to number between 25,000-35,000 full or part-time fighters, the Taliban challenged the Afghan security forces in key districts and targeted six provincial capitals, four of which were attacked during the first week of October.**



**The Taliban mounted two high-profile attacks in Lashkar Gah during the second week of October while continuing its offensives from different directions.**

## **Kunduz City Remained a Key Taliban Target**

On October 3, according to media sources, Taliban fighters staged a coordinated attack from four directions on Kunduz City, the capital of Kunduz province, overrunning several neighborhoods and planting their flag in the city's main roundabout.<sup>11</sup> Fighting continued in and around Kunduz City through October 11, when media sources reported that Afghan security forces had cleared the city of Taliban fighters. The fighting caused hundreds of civilian casualties and thousands of civilians to flee the city. According to Brigadier General Cleveland, the Taliban "absolutely destroyed parts of the city," including the power grid, cell towers, and several civilian residences.<sup>12</sup>

In early November, U.S. and Afghan special operations forces attacked a Taliban position in a village outside of Kunduz City, targeting insurgent leaders who were allegedly planning additional attacks on the provincial capital.<sup>13</sup> According to media reports, the fighting killed 2 Taliban leaders and over 60 Taliban fighters,<sup>14</sup> while a Resolute Support press release reported significant Taliban fire that caused the deaths of 2 U.S. soldiers and injuries to 2 others. Media sources, as well as United Nations (UN) and Resolute Support press releases, stated that U.S. airstrikes called in to protect U.S. and Afghan personnel likely caused the deaths of possibly more than 30 Afghan civilians in the area.<sup>15</sup>

An investigation into the matter completed by USFOR-A in January 2017 determined that 33 Afghan civilians were killed in the operation and 27 wounded. The investigation found that insurgents had fired on U.S. and Afghan forces from civilian homes and buildings. U.S. airstrikes were called in to suppress Taliban fire from those structures, resulting in casualties to civilians who remained inside. The investigation concluded that U.S. forces acted in self-defense and followed applicable law and policy.<sup>16</sup>

## **Taliban Continued Effort to Capture Capital of Helmand Province**

In early October, while the Taliban was launching attacks to capture Kunduz City, it was also assaulting districts surrounding Lashkar Gah, the capital of Helmand province. Media sources reported intense fighting between Taliban and Afghan security forces in early October as Taliban forces overran two districts just southwest of Lashkar Gah.<sup>17</sup> Fighting continued for several days, leading General Nicholson and the Afghan Minister of Defense to visit Lashkar Gah on October 8 to assure residents that the city would not fall to the Taliban.<sup>18</sup> At the time, Voice of America reported that the Afghan government fully controlled only 2 of Helmand's 14 districts.<sup>19</sup>

The Taliban mounted two high-profile attacks in Lashkar Gah during the second week of October while continuing its offensives from different directions. On October 10, a Taliban suicide car bomber rammed his vehicle into a police base in Lashkar Gah, killing at least 14 people, including 10 Afghan police officers.<sup>20</sup> The following day, according to the New York Times, the Taliban carried out "one of the worst massacres of Afghan forces" to have occurred in the course of the war.<sup>21</sup> After surrounding a large contingent of Afghan soldiers and police about 8 miles outside Lashkar Gah

and offering them safe passage to the city, Taliban fighters opened fire on them from all directions, reportedly killing about 100.<sup>22</sup> When asked about this incident, USFOR-A stated, “information does not exist with which to confirm, update, or correct media reports of this event.”<sup>23</sup>

Brigadier General Cleveland stated that the Commander of the ANA 215<sup>th</sup> Corps, which is responsible for security in Helmand province, was replaced in early October to “get some additional new life into the effort there by the 215<sup>th</sup> Corps.”<sup>24</sup> Media sources reported that by mid-October, the ANDSF, aided by U.S. airstrikes, fought the Taliban to a standstill and recaptured some of the areas surrounding Lashkar Gah that had been occupied by the Taliban.<sup>25</sup> The ANDSF continued clearing operations during the following weeks as Taliban attacks gradually subsided.<sup>26</sup> Media sources reported no significant Taliban offensives in Helmand for the remainder of the quarter.<sup>27</sup>

In his press conference on December 2, 2016, General Nicholson attributed the Taliban focus on Helmand and the intensity of fighting there to the Taliban’s reliance on narcotics trafficking in the province for 60 percent of its funding. He noted that both criminal narcotics networks and the Taliban were fighting to preserve their sources of funds in Helmand and that revenue generated from the opium industry is what fuels the insurgency.<sup>28</sup>

In a January 2017 press release, the Marine Corps announced that approximately 300 Marines will deploy to Helmand province in spring 2017 as the planned replacement for U.S. Army 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division trainers and advisors. This will be the first Marine deployment to Helmand since 2014.<sup>29</sup> They will continue the mission of training, advising, and assisting Afghan Security forces in the area and will be deployed for nine months.<sup>30</sup>

## Taliban Attacks Spread to Other Provinces

Four other provincial capitals came under attack in October as the Taliban accelerated efforts to take control of a provincial capital, an effort Brigadier General Cleveland described as “their goal for this year.”<sup>31</sup> In mid-October, media sources reported that Resolute Support moved “an expeditionary advising package” to western Farah province to assist Afghan security forces that had been defending Farah City, the provincial capital, against Taliban attacks for several days.<sup>32</sup> The ANDSF ultimately prevailed, pushing Taliban forces back from the city, but media sources noted that the attacks in Farah represented a “newfound [Taliban] western presence.”<sup>33</sup> At the time, 4 of Farah’s 11 districts were reportedly controlled or contested by the Taliban.<sup>34</sup> On December 24, media sources reported that Taliban fighters attacked a police check post in Farah City, killing or wounding up to 11 Afghan police and capturing ANP weapons at the check point. The Taliban retreated after ANDSF reinforcements arrived.<sup>35</sup>

On October 12, TOLONews, a widely read Afghan news source, reported that Afghan security forces successfully ended a 9-day siege of an ANDSF military base in Pul-e-Khumri, the capital of northeast Baghlan province. Afghan security forces from other parts of the province were brought in to rescue over 100 besieged Afghan troops.<sup>36</sup>

**The Marine Corps announced that approximately 300 Marines will deploy to Helmand province in spring 2017 as the planned replacement for U.S. Army 10th Mountain Division trainers and advisors.**

# AT A GLANCE

## OPERATION FREEDOM'S SENTINEL



### MISSION

U.S. forces carry out two complementary missions under the military operation known as OFS: counterterrorism operations against al Qaeda, its affiliates, and ISIL-K in Afghanistan; and support for NATO's Resolute Support capacity-building effort, which seeks to build the capacity of the MoD and MoI and to strengthen the ANDSF. OFS began on January 1, 2015, when the United States ended 13 years of combat operations in Afghanistan under Operation Enduring Freedom and transitioned to a NATO-led train, advise, and assist role, while continuing U.S. counterterrorism operations. At that point, the Afghan government assumed full responsibility for the security of Afghanistan with limited U.S. or coalition support on the battlefield.

### HISTORY

U.S. combat operations in Afghanistan began on October 7, 2001, in an effort to remove the Taliban government, which harbored the al Qaeda terrorist organization responsible for the September 11, 2001, attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. The Taliban regime fell quickly and U.S. officials declared an end to major combat on May 1, 2003. Subsequently, the U.S. and its coalition of international partners sought to build a strong, democratic Afghan central government. However, as the new Afghan government developed, NATO-led forces, which had retained interim responsibility for national security, encountered persistent efforts by Taliban forces to recapture lost territory. The deteriorating security situation resulted in a surge in U.S. troop strength from 30,000 in early 2009 to approximately 100,000 from 2010 to 2011. The surge reversed Taliban momentum and enabled a gradual reduction of U.S. forces to 16,100 by December 31, 2014, when the NATO-led combat mission ended and OFS began. The U.S. troop ceiling dropped to 8,448 in January 2017.

## AFGHAN NATIONAL DEFENSE AND SECURITY FORCES (November 2016)

### THE AFGHAN NATIONAL ARMY

**195,000** Authorized  
**168,264** On Board  
**32,163** Officers  
**59,529** Non-Commissioned Officers  
**76,572** Soldiers

### THE AFGHAN NATIONAL POLICE

**157,000** Authorized  
**147,635** On Board  
**27,335** Officers  
**50,551** Non-Commissioned Officers  
**69,749** Soldiers

## AFGHAN AIR FORCE AIRFRAMES (INCLUDING THE SPECIAL MISSION WING)



3 Mi-35s



75 Mi-17s



27 MD-530s



24 C-208s



4 C-130s



8 A-29s



17 PC-12s

On October 16, Taliban forces attacked Maimanah, the capital of northwest Faryab province, from three directions, according to media sources, but the ANDSF withstood the attack and forced the insurgents to retreat.<sup>37</sup> The attack came after the Taliban captured Ghormach district, located west of the provincial capital, on October 11. Media sources reported that the ANDSF regained control of the district on October 20.<sup>38</sup>

Taliban forces continued their 2-month offensive against Tarin Kot, the capital of Uruzgan province, which borders Helmand, into October. According to media sources, the Taliban captured police check points near Tarin Kot as numerous police officers abandoned their posts or defected, surrendering weapons and vehicles.<sup>39</sup> In response, the ANDSF launched a large-scale military operation in Uruzgan during November, according to the MoD as reported by media sources. Afghan security forces, aided by Afghan airstrikes, successfully pushed the fight to the outskirts of Tarin Kot by December.<sup>40</sup> USFOR-A expects provincial capitals to remain secure over the winter period.<sup>41</sup>

The Taliban continued its high-profile attacks this quarter. On November 10, media sources reported that Taliban fighters attacked the German consulate in the northern city of Mazar-e Sharif, located in Balkh province, which borders Uzbekistan. After a truck bomb exploded outside the consulate, Taliban fighters stormed the consulate killing at least 4 Afghans and wounding over 100.<sup>42</sup> No German nationals were wounded, although the consulate was severely damaged and will not reopen, according to the American embassy in Kabul.<sup>43</sup> Approximately 900 German troops are stationed in Afghanistan as part of Resolute Support, with most based in Balkh province, where German forces lead the Resolute Support Train, Advise, and Assist Command-North.<sup>44</sup>

On November 12, media sources reported that a Taliban suicide bomber penetrated the Bagram Airfield north of Kabul and detonated explosives inside the base, immediately killing 2 U.S. service members and 2 U.S. contractors and wounding 17 other service members (16 U.S. and 1 Polish). One of the wounded U.S. soldiers later died from injuries sustained in the blast.<sup>45</sup> Media sources quoted General Nicholson as having identified the bomber as a local contractor working on the base and saying that an investigation into the incident was underway.<sup>46</sup> Following the attack, media sources reported that Bagram Airfield was closed to outside traffic and the U.S. embassy in Kabul was temporarily closed because of the threat of violence.<sup>47</sup>

In his December 2, 2016, press conference, General Nicholson stated that high-profile Taliban attacks over the last year had resulted in large numbers of casualties, but he noted that the overall number of high-profile attacks in 2016 was lower than in 2015. He reported that the Taliban had orchestrated 12 high-profile attacks in Kabul through November 2016, compared to 18 during the first 11 months of 2015.<sup>48</sup>

Another high-profile Taliban attack in Kabul occurred on December 21 when a two-man suicide team attacked the home of a member of the Afghan parliament. According to media sources, the Taliban fighters took hostages and held off Afghan security

**General Nicholson stated that high-profile Taliban attacks over the last year had resulted in large numbers of casualties, but he noted that the overall number of high-profile attacks in 2016 was lower than in 2015.**



forces for 10 hours before being killed. Afghan officials reported that eight civilians, including two grandchildren of the member of parliament, were killed during the Taliban siege, although the parliamentarian and his spouse escaped with injuries.<sup>49</sup>

## **Taliban Continued to Reject Peace Overtures but Faced Financial Issues**

The December 2016 DoD report, *Enhancing Security and Stability in Afghanistan* (the December 2016 DoD report) reiterated the U.S. and Afghan position that reconciliation and a political settlement with the Taliban were the best way to achieve peace and security in Afghanistan.<sup>50</sup> This DoD report, which describes efforts to enhance security and stability in Afghanistan, is submitted to the Congress semiannually (May and December) in accordance with section 1225 of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for FY 2015.

In the UN report, *The Situation in Afghanistan and Its Implications for International Peace and Security*, Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon stated that there was “no substantive movement” towards a peace process, but noted media reports indicating that Taliban and Pakistani officials had met to discuss “various issues relating to Afghanistan.”<sup>51</sup> During October, numerous media sources reported that Taliban representatives held meetings in Qatar and Pakistan with Afghan officials to discuss peace talks and subsequently met with Pakistani officials to discuss those encounters.<sup>52</sup> However, few details on the substance of those meetings or further developments were reported. In December, the Taliban released a video in which it rejected the peace process.<sup>53</sup>

In another development, the Taliban raised taxes on local populations under its control. According to Brigadier General Cleveland, as quoted by media sources, the tax increase indicated that the Taliban’s revenue from the poppy harvest may have dropped since the death of its former leader Akhtar Mansour in May 2016. Mansour’s financial acumen, coupled with his involvement in the narcotics trade, helped increase the Taliban’s revenue, according to Brigadier General Cleveland.<sup>54</sup> In December, a media source reported that the Taliban was in a “precarious financial position,” because outside donors were “unwilling to bankroll an insurgency whose victims are increasingly [Afghan] civilians rather than foreign troops.”<sup>55</sup>

## **ISIL-K Increased High-Profile Attacks Despite Diminished Strength**

According to Brigadier General Cleveland, U.S. and Afghan counterterrorism forces conducted a series of operations during October targeting ISIL-K facilities in Nangarhar province where that terrorist organization has been most active. In what Brigadier General Cleveland described as “partnered raids,” U.S. and Afghan forces reduced ISIL-K end-strength by 15 to 20 percent, leaving about 1,000 ISIL-K fighters in the province. Additionally, the partnered operations destroyed multiple ISIL-K command and control sites and logistics facilities; then also recaptured territory previously

## Private Militias Augment ANDSF

According to the December 2016 DoD report, the Afghan government is increasingly using private militias to help maintain security in their respective regions, particularly in northern provinces. Recently, the Afghan government began using government funds to establish and support local militias, particularly in remote parts of the country where ANDSF presence is limited.<sup>56</sup> According to the *Los Angeles Times*, the growth in private militias has accompanied the drawdown in U.S. forces because Afghan security forces have been unable to bridge the resulting security gaps.<sup>57</sup>

Local Afghan government officials and warlords employ militias, also known as “national uprising forces,” to assist with security problems, but also to enrich themselves, abuse civilians, and reduce their need to respond to the national government, in turn eroding support for the Afghan government. For example, media sources report that private militias in Takhar province, which lies along the border with Tajikistan in northeast Afghanistan, have engaged in narcotics smuggling, committed robberies, and levied land taxes on local farmers.<sup>58</sup>

Hundreds of Afghan villagers in Nangarhar province joined local militias after ISIL-K forces were cleared from their regions. According to an ANA spokesman quoted by the media, the local militias will gradually be phased into the ANDSF organization in Nangarhar and be used to maintain security in vulnerable areas of the province. The recruits will be paid with Afghan government funds.<sup>59</sup>

The media reported that some militia leaders, in addition to deploying their fighters to fight the Taliban and other militias, used their “new power to fight local turf wars.”<sup>60</sup> Despite potential and alleged abuses, the December 2016 DoD report acknowledged that private militias are expected to remain a component of Afghan security and stability efforts, cautioning that these groups have limited accountability and regard for human rights, and can intensify tribal tensions if not properly monitored.<sup>61</sup>

occupied by ISIL-K.<sup>62</sup> According to a Pentagon news source, one U.S. soldier died as a result of injuries sustained from an improvised explosive device encountered during these operations.<sup>63</sup>

In an October interview reported by NBC News, General Nicholson described ISIL-K’s activities as an effort “to establish their caliphate, the Khorasan caliphate, inside Afghanistan.” He emphasized that ISIL-K was a “non-Afghan movement” and was composed of a mix of foreign fighters, coming mainly from the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan and the Pakistani Taliban. In General Nicholson’s view, the group was “completely rejected by the Afghan people.”<sup>64</sup>

In late November, according to Afghanistan press reports, the ANDSF staged combined MoD/MoI operations in a southern district of Nangarhar province, successfully clearing

the district of ISIL-K fighters. The MoD reported that over 40 ISIL-K members were killed, including a senior leader of the terrorist group.<sup>65</sup> According to the *New York Times*, however, ISIL-K is a “resilient force” that has maintained a hold on several districts in eastern Nangarhar province.<sup>66</sup>

In his December press conference, General Nicholson discussed results of U.S. and Afghan operations against ISIL-K this quarter, noting that 12 terrorist leaders had been killed in 2016 (although none this quarter) and that the number of districts providing sanctuary to ISIL-K had decreased from 9 to 3 (as reported last quarter). A key benefit of reducing ISIL-K capability, according to General Nicholson, was that Islamic State components facing defeat in Iraq and Syria would not look to Afghanistan as a place to relocate.<sup>67</sup>

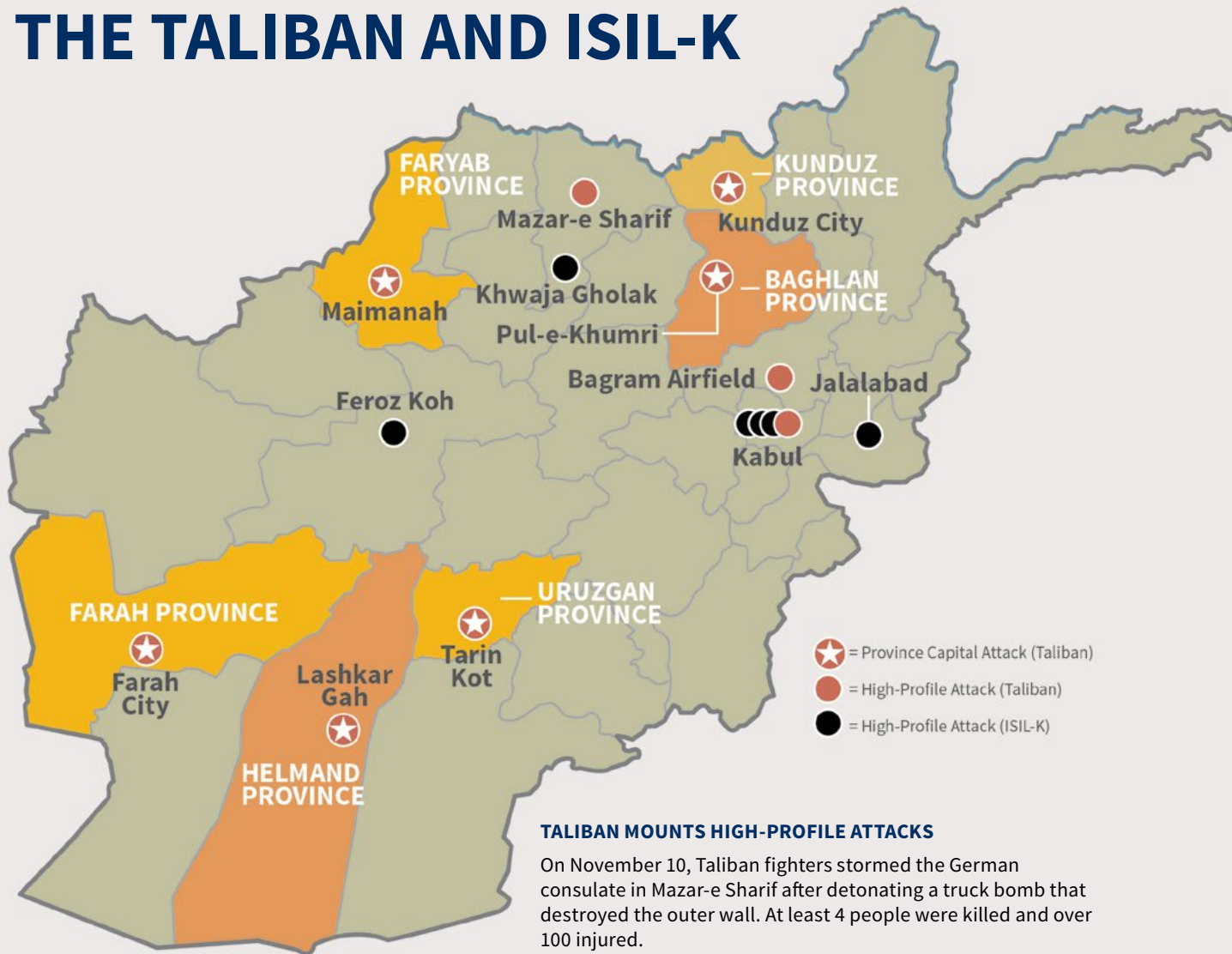
Despite these reported setbacks, ISIL-K launched several high-profile attacks this quarter, demonstrating that it remains a threat to Afghan security. According to media, UN, and non-government organizations, ISIL-K was responsible for the following attacks:

- **On October 11**, an ISIL-K gunman opened fire on a crowd of Shiite Muslims gathered in a shrine in Kabul.<sup>68</sup> The UN reported that 19 civilians were killed and more than 50 others wounded.<sup>69</sup>
- **On October 12**, according to Human Rights Watch, a global non-governmental organization, ISIL-K claimed responsibility for detonating an improvised explosive device that killed 15 members of the Hazara community in Balkh province who had gathered to commemorate a Shiite mourning day.<sup>70</sup>
- **On October 26**, media sources reported that ISIL-K fighters abducted and killed approximately 30 civilians (media numbers varied) in central-western Ghor province, reportedly in revenge for the killing of an ISIL-K commander in an earlier conflict with Afghan security forces.<sup>71</sup> When asked about this incident, USFOR-A stated that there was no active ISIL-K presence in Ghor province and that the attack was likely conducted by criminal elements.<sup>72</sup>
- **On October 30**, an ISIL-K suicide bomber killed at least six people at a gathering of tribal elders in Nangarhar province.<sup>73</sup>
- **On November 16**, an ISIL-K suicide bomber on a motorbike killed 8 Afghan civilians and injured 11 in an attack against the vehicle of the presidential protection security forces in Kabul.<sup>74</sup>
- **On November 21**, an ISIL-K suicide bomber detonated his explosives while mingling with a group of worshippers in a Shiite mosque in Kabul. The UN reported that the attack killed at least 32 civilians and injured more than 50 others.<sup>75</sup>

When asked about those high-profile attacks during a December press conference, Brigadier General Cleveland stated that “conducting a high-profile attack is not a sign of strength,” explaining “it’s not that difficult to smuggle in some suicide bomber” to attack a crowd. As Afghan security forces continue to aggressively target ISIL-K, more high-profile attacks from that terrorist group may be expected, according to Brigadier General Cleveland.<sup>76</sup>



# AFGHANISTAN UNDER ATTACK BY THE TALIBAN AND ISIL-K



## TALIBAN ATTACKS SIX PROVINCIAL CAPITALS IN OCTOBER

Attempting to achieve its goal of capturing at least one provincial capital before the end of its summer campaign, the Taliban attacked the capitals of Faryab, Kunduz, Baghlan, Farah, Helmand, and Uruzgan provinces during October. The ANDSF, with coalition assistance, prevented capture of the capitals.

**Sources:** See Endnotes, page 118.

## TALIBAN MOUNTS HIGH-PROFILE ATTACKS

On November 10, Taliban fighters stormed the German consulate in Mazar-e Sharif after detonating a truck bomb that destroyed the outer wall. At least 4 people were killed and over 100 injured.

Two days later a Taliban suicide bomber penetrated Bagram Airfield and detonated explosives that killed 5 Americans and injured 16 American and coalition personnel.

On December 21, a two-man suicide team attacked the home of a member of the Afghan parliament in Kabul.

## ISIL-K EXPANDS REACH WITH COUNTRY-WIDE ATTACKS

ISIL-K, largely confined to Nangarhar province before this quarter, demonstrated an ability to strike outside its home territory. In addition to one attack in Nangarhar, ISIL-K staged high-profile attacks in Kabul, Balkh, and Ghor provinces. Three of the attacks targeted Shiite Muslims gathered at worship sites.

## Al Qaeda Remains a Threat

In October, Brigadier General Cleveland reported that al Qaeda continued to maintain a presence in Afghanistan, primarily in the eastern provinces, despite the U.S. mission to target and defeat them.<sup>77</sup> USFOR-A estimated that the number of al Qaeda fighters in Afghanistan ranged between 50 and 100.<sup>78</sup>

According to the Pentagon, airstrikes in late October killed an al Qaeda leader, a deputy, and a senior explosives expert. The leader, Faruq al-Qatani, described as the “emir for eastern Afghanistan,” had been assigned by senior al Qaeda leadership to re-establish safe havens in Afghanistan and had a long history of directing attacks against U.S. forces. The strikes targeted al Qaeda leaders at their command-and-control locations in remote areas of Kunar province, which borders Pakistan. These three deaths allegedly disrupted the ability of al Qaeda in Afghanistan to threaten the United States and its allies.<sup>79</sup>

According to General Nicholson, continuing U.S. and Afghan counterterrorism operations have disrupted al Qaeda’s ability to attack the United States, but its capability to do so remained. He described the al Qaeda organization in Afghanistan as closely affiliated with “core al Qaeda” and explained that the two groups together “have the intent and the capability to conduct attacks outside of Afghanistan.”<sup>80</sup>

USFOR-A reported that a relationship between al Qaeda in Afghanistan and the Taliban exists at the tactical and district level.<sup>81</sup> The December 2016 DoD report stated that no evidence has emerged to indicate a strategic level relationship.<sup>82</sup> Although Ayman al-Zawahiri, the global al Qaeda leader, has pledged al Qaeda allegiance to Taliban leader Haibatullah Akhundzada, USFOR-A reported that the Taliban did not respond to the declaration, “a sign that they seek to publically distance themselves from al Qaeda.” Yet, USFOR-A expects al Qaeda to use relationships with low level Taliban leaders to maintain sanctuary in Afghanistan, rebuild their capabilities, and plan future operations.<sup>83</sup>

## RESOLUTE SUPPORT AND INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY RESPONDED TO MIGRATION CONCERNS

Afghans displaced by conflict and Afghan refugees returning from Pakistan continued to be a focus of the coalition and the international community during this quarter. On November 20, coalition and international representatives met as part of the recurring International Issues Forum to discuss internally displaced Afghans and Afghan refugees returning from Pakistan. According to USFOR-A, the forum, hosted by Resolute Support, serves as a means for Resolute Support to maintain awareness of non-military international efforts that affect Afghanistan’s border security and its relationships with neighboring countries.<sup>84</sup>

Attendees at the November meeting included representatives from coalition embassies and military forces, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Organization for Migration, and the Asia Development Bank. No agreements or actions resulted from the forum, although Italian Brigadier General Giovanni Parmiggiani, Deputy to the Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations at Resolute Support, stated that the meeting “injected dynamism in the international community working for the future of Afghanistan.”<sup>85</sup>

The UN High Commissioner for Refugees stated that over 450,000 Afghans were displaced by conflict in 2016 contributing to an estimated total of 1.2 million persons in Afghanistan. In addition to those displaced within the country, 371,960 Afghan refugees returned between January and November 2016. According to the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, 99.3 percent of the returnees were from Pakistan.<sup>86</sup> As reported previously, Pakistan announced its intention to repatriate all Afghan refugees by March 2017.<sup>87</sup> On November 23, the Pakistan government extended the deadline for repatriation to December 31, 2017.<sup>88</sup> The International Organization for Migration, a UN agency, reported that in a poll of returning Afghan refugees, 46 percent of respondents cited the demolition of refugee camps in Pakistan as a motivating factor for their return.<sup>89</sup>

The large influx of refugees and the large number of internally displaced persons are potentially destabilizing. According to a representative of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, 44 percent of returned refugees are unable to return to their place of origin. In the same poll, 72 percent of respondents reported difficulty finding employment. Sixty percent of returning refugees went to the urban provinces of Kabul and Nangarhar.<sup>90</sup> According to media reporting, the influx of people to informal settlements outside major cities is causing living costs to rapidly increase while depressing the labor market, potentially inviting friction between the returnees and long-term residents.<sup>91</sup> USFOR-A reported that the migration has not required the diversion of ANDSF resources to assist in humanitarian relief efforts.<sup>92</sup>

Similarly, the DoS reported that the influx of refugees returning from Pakistan has burdened the humanitarian response system in areas of Afghanistan where large numbers of returnees are settling, such as Nangarhar and Kabul provinces. The number of returnees has overwhelmed Afghan government capacity to provide access to housing, education, and health care. Moreover, the DoS reported that the continuing influx of large numbers of refugees into a country already facing serious economic, political, and security challenges could have an effect on security and stability in Afghanistan in the future.<sup>93</sup>

The stream of returning refugees is likely to continue. The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees stated that there were 1.3 million registered refugees in Pakistan.<sup>94</sup> The U.S. Institute of Peace stated that, in addition to the documented refugees in Pakistan, there were as many as 1.5 million undocumented Afghans in the country.<sup>95</sup>

**The UN High Commissioner for Refugees stated that over 450,000 Afghans were displaced by conflict in 2016 contributing to an estimated total of 1.2 million persons in Afghanistan. In addition to those displaced within the country, 371,960 Afghan refugees reportedly returned between January and November 2016.**



The international community is working to provide humanitarian assistance to returning refugees and internally displaced persons in Afghanistan. The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees provided \$400 per person as a repatriation grant for returning refugees. Additionally, during the quarter and in preparation for the coming winter, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees planned to support up to 25,000 households comprising internally displaced persons, returned refugees, and vulnerable local residents with cash assistance of up to \$300 per household.<sup>96</sup>

Additionally, the International Organization for Migration assisted returnees with immediate needs including basic transport, medical care, and meals. As of September, the International Organization for Migration had assisted 26,275 Afghan returnees in 2016.<sup>97</sup> On November 23, the DoS announced new humanitarian assistance funding for refugees returning to Afghanistan. The announcement stated that the United States was increasing its humanitarian response funding for Afghan refugees by \$39 million, bringing its total humanitarian response to \$207 million since the beginning of FY 2016. The increased funding included approximately \$19 million in support to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and \$20 million for the World Food Programme's Afghanistan Emergency Operation.<sup>98</sup>

## AFGHAN GOVERNANCE: TURMOIL CONTINUED

During the past quarter, the Afghan government continued to experience turmoil. The Afghan parliament expressed its displeasure with the administration of President Ashraf Ghani with a wave of impeachments. Additionally, support for the Afghan government among political leaders weakened along ethnic lines.<sup>99</sup>

In November, in a series of open hearings, the Afghan parliament voted to impeach seven of President Ghani's Cabinet Ministers—the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Public Works, Information Technology, Labor and Social Work, Education, Higher Education, and Transportation. President Ghani ordered the ministers to continue working and referred the matter to the Afghan Supreme Court. President Ghani also reportedly asked the parliament to delay the hearings, a request that was refused.<sup>100</sup>

According to media reports, these votes were the result of the ministers failing to spend their respective development budgets.<sup>101</sup> However, media reports also quoted analysts and Afghan officials who blamed the impeachment votes on corruption and the hopes among lawmakers of using the hearings as an opportunity to obtain patronage from current or would-be ministers.<sup>102</sup> The term of the current Afghan parliament expired over a year ago and new elections have yet to be held.<sup>103</sup>

The votes to remove the ministers came at an inopportune time for President Ghani, as his administration has reportedly been criticized by leaders of minority ethnic groups. Vice President Abdul Rashid Dostum, from the Uzbek ethnic group, has been highly critical of President Ghani's performance, has highlighted ethnic divisions, and

## Survey: The National Mood in Afghanistan at Record Low

In its 2016 *Survey of the Afghan People*, the Asia Foundation found that “the national mood in Afghanistan is at a record low.” The Asia Foundation, a nonprofit international development organization, began working in Afghanistan in 1954. It focused on developing subnational governance; strengthening key executive branch agencies; and supporting programs in civic education, women’s empowerment, education, Islam and development, and free and fair elections. It has conducted an annual survey of Afghan attitudes and opinions since 2004. This is the longest-running survey tracking Afghan perceptions of security, the economy, governance and government services, elections, media, women’s issues, and migration.

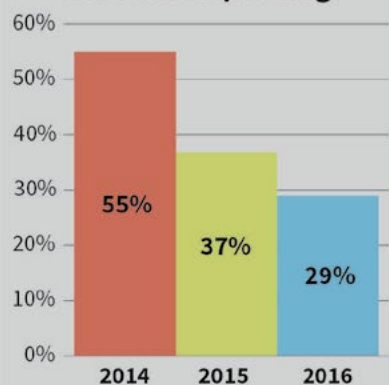
In 12,658 responses weighted to be “nationally representative,” including by gender, only 29.3 percent of Afghans said the country is moving in the right direction, the lowest level of optimism since the Asia Foundation began conducting the *Survey*. Afghans in 2016 expressed the highest recorded level of fear in over a decade—69.8 percent said they were “sometimes, often, or always feeling fear for their personal safety.” According to the survey, worsening violence and a marked rise in civilian casualties have led to the increased pessimism.

The survey found that financial security is also a serious concern, with 36.6 percent of respondents saying their financial situation has worsened, compared to 29.7 percent in 2015. The most economically affected areas include provinces that once housed foreign military camps, notably near Bagram Air Base, where dramatic reductions in spending have affected supply chains and the local economy. While 52 percent of Afghans cited unemployment as a reason they would leave the country, if given the opportunity, the percentage of Afghans expressing a desire to migrate decreased from 39.9 percent in 2015 to 26.6 percent in 2016.

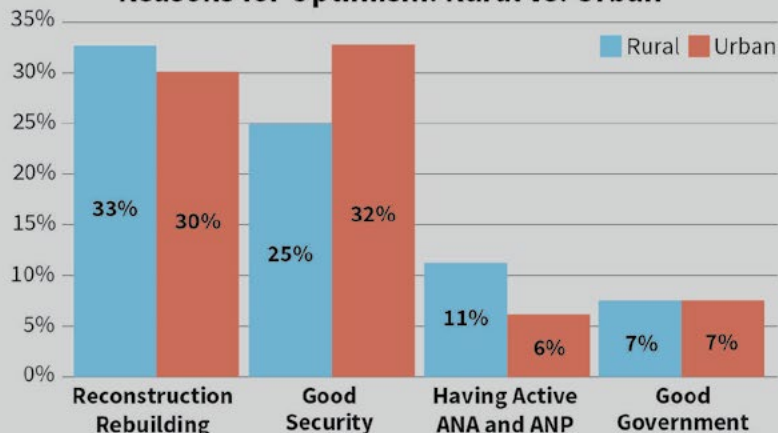
Although trends indicate a “sharp decline of confidence in public institutions,” the survey found some exceptions. For example, confidence in religious leaders (66.1 percent) and the media (64.5 percent) remained positive and many Afghans expressed “optimism” regarding the ANA and ANP. Of those who said that Afghanistan is moving “in the right direction,” 32.5 percent cited reconstruction and rebuilding, 26.6 percent security, and 10.4 percent an “active” ANA and ANP.

The survey also found that a record number of Afghans believe women should be able to work outside the home, with 82 percent of Afghan women and 65 percent of Afghan men saying that Afghan women should be allowed to work outside the home. However support for women in non-traditional roles, such as serving in government, the army or police, remained low.<sup>104</sup>

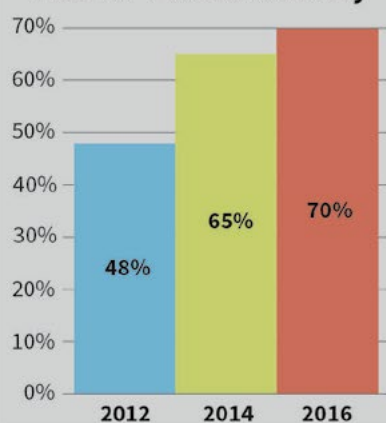
### Afghans Saying National Mood is Improving



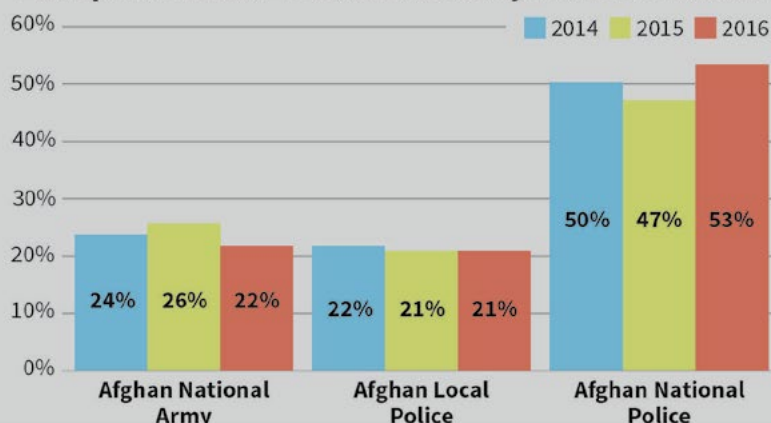
### Reasons for Optimism: Rural vs. Urban



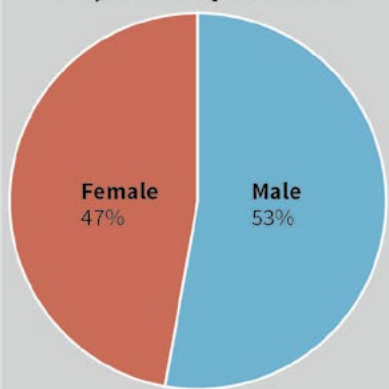
### Fear for Personal Safety



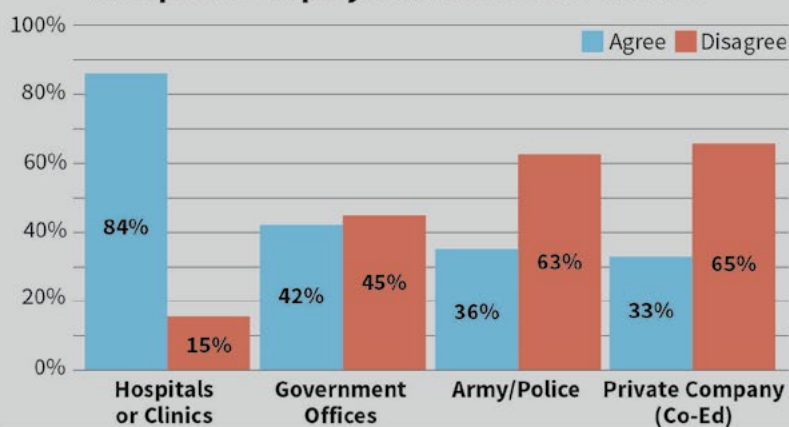
### Perception of Who Provides Security in the Local Area



### Afghan Poll: 12,658 Respondents



### Acceptable Employment Venues for Women





has implicitly threatened violence. At a press conference in October, Vice President Dostum accused the Afghan government of incompetence and corruption in the fight against the Taliban and of favoring the dominant Pashto and Tajik ethnicities over Vice President Dostum's own ethnic Uzbek population. Referring to President Ghani's Intelligence Chief, Vice President Dostum stated, "these kinds of people—I have blown them up, both politically and militarily."<sup>105</sup>

The Tajik provincial Governor Atta Mohammed Noor withdrew his support for the Afghan government's Chief Executive Officer Abdullah Abdullah. Governor Noor demanded more power and policy influence for his political party, Jamiat.<sup>106</sup>

In November, according to media reports, Vice President Dostum physically attacked political rival and former ally Ahmed Ishchi at a sporting event in Northern Afghanistan. After the scuffle, in full view of hundreds of spectators, Vice President Dostum's men reportedly loaded Mr. Ishchi into an armored vehicle and drove away.<sup>107</sup> Mr. Ishchi allegedly was held against his will for several days, tortured, and sexually assaulted. Vice President Dostum's office denied the reports, stating that Mr. Ishchi had been arrested by security forces based upon charges of supporting the Taliban.<sup>108</sup>

On December 13, U.S. Embassy Kabul published a statement welcoming the release of Mr. Ishchi and stating that the "unlawful detention and reported mistreatment of Mr. Ishchi by the First Vice President raises serious concerns." The statement called for an investigation of the allegations and reiterated the importance of the rule of law in a stable society.<sup>109</sup>

In his press conference on December 2, 2016, General Nicholson voiced concern with "the stability of the Afghan government going forward." He asserted that coalition partners respected the Afghan political process but made an appeal to Afghan leaders that they not allow the political process to undermine security gains.

In addressing potential security fallout from political instability, General Nicholson identified three possible risks. First, he stated that instability risked "fracture" of Afghan security forces, but emphasized that he had not seen that happen. Second, he indicated that political instability encouraged external actors, such as Pakistan, Russia, and Iran, to exert a malign influence on the security situation. He expressed concern with the "external enablement" of insurgent groups inside Afghanistan, which "enjoy sanctuary or support from outside governments."

Finally, General Nicholson stated that a strong Afghan government is needed to minimize the risk that insurgent groups operating in Afghanistan would converge into "more virulent strains." In that regard, he explained that insurgent alliances could become a greater threat to security than insurgent groups fighting alone. General Nicholson emphasized that the Afghan government needed to apply "continuous pressure" on insurgents to prevent the formation of such alliances.<sup>110</sup>

**Vice President Dostum accused the Afghan government of incompetence and corruption in the fight against the Taliban and of favoring the dominant Pashto and Tajik ethnicities over Vice President Dostum's own ethnic Uzbek population.**

## STATUS OF FUNDS

### Department of Defense Funding for OFS

In the *Cost of War* report, the DoD Comptroller details the fiscal year to date spending on OFS. This included a total of \$41.8 billion in obligations and \$27.3 billion in disbursements in FY 2016.<sup>111</sup> The principal categories for this funding are:

- **Afghanistan Security Forces Fund:** Supports the sustainment, operations, and professionalization of the ANDSF, which includes the ANA and the ANP. Also funds capacity development of the Afghan Ministries of Defense and Interior in support of these forces. While most DoD funding is appropriated for a single year, funds from the Afghanistan Security Forces Fund are made available for a 2-year period.<sup>112</sup> In FY 2016, the DoD obligated \$5.3 billion and disbursed \$5.0 billion from the Afghan Security Forces Fund.<sup>113</sup>
- **Joint Improvised-Threat Defeat Fund:** Supports efforts to understand, develop, procure, and field measures to defeat improvised threats to U.S. forces, closing the gap between the enemy's innovation cycles and operational capabilities used by the Joint Force.<sup>114</sup> In FY 2016, the DoD obligated \$461 million and disbursed \$323.6 million from the Joint Improvised-Threat Defeat Fund in support of OFS.<sup>115</sup>
- **Military Personnel:** Funds pay and allowances for U.S. service members, including costs related to permanent changes of station.<sup>116</sup> In FY 2016, the DoD obligated \$3.2 billion and disbursed \$3.1 billion for Military Personnel in support of OFS.<sup>117</sup>
- **Operation and Maintenance:** Provides for a wide range of services and consumable items to support sustainment of U.S. war-related activities, including fuel, training, airlift, base support, ammunition, and civilian and contractor personnel.<sup>118</sup> In FY 2016, the DoD obligated \$30.2 billion and disbursed \$18 billion for Operation and Maintenance in support of OFS.<sup>119</sup>
- **Procurement:** Supports acquisition of U.S. durable goods, such as aircraft, weapons systems, equipment, and vehicles.<sup>120</sup> While most DoD funding is appropriated for a single year, Procurement funds are made available for a three year period.<sup>121</sup> In FY 2016, the DoD obligated \$2.5 billion and disbursed \$718.9 million for Procurement in support of OFS.<sup>122</sup>
- **Research, Development, Testing, and Evaluation:** Funds basic and applied research by contractor and military scientists in support of advanced technology development for computer software, vehicles, weapons, and other defense-related systems.<sup>123</sup> In FY 2016, the DoD obligated \$33.6 million and disbursed \$14.2 million for Research, Development, Testing, and Evaluation in support of OFS.<sup>124</sup>

The congressionally mandated *Cost of War* report is the only source for monthly data on the DoD's spending in support of OCOs. However, according to a June 2016 DoD OIG audit, the *Cost of War* report is untimely and not fully accurate. For example, the audit found that the reports issued for third quarter of FY 2015 failed to accurately report \$237.9 million out of obligations totaling \$648.6 million, and \$209.9 million in disbursements out of a total of \$529.8 million, associated with Air Force Military Personnel and Operation and Maintenance.

In response to this audit, the DoD Comptroller stated that steps were being taken to improve the accuracy and timeliness of the *Cost of War* report.<sup>125</sup> The DoD Comptroller also stated that the *Cost of War* is an estimate of costs of an OCO and should not be used as an accounting tool.<sup>126</sup> Additional audits are planned to address similar issues across the other Services. The next one will be a Naval Audit Service assessment of the Navy's reporting on OCO obligations and disbursements.

## National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2017 Becomes Law

The NDAA for FY 2017, signed into law on December 23, 2016, authorizes the programs for the DoD for the fiscal year. The NDAA authorizes the statutory funding levels and prescribes DoD policy for these national security priorities. However, the NDAA does not allocate the actual funding, which is currently provided under a continuing resolution that funds most government agencies approximately at their FY 2016 spending levels through April 28, 2017.<sup>127</sup>

The NDAA includes several provisions related to OCOs. In addition to \$543.4 billion in base defense spending, the legislation authorizes \$59.5 billion in OCO defense funding.<sup>128</sup> This amount reflects the supplemental OCO request that President Obama submitted to Congress on November 10, 2016, to support several developments abroad, including the decision to limit the drawdown of U.S. troops in Afghanistan.<sup>129</sup>

Within the \$59.5 billion OCO authorization, the NDAA includes \$8.3 billion to support non-war, base defense budget needs that would otherwise be subject to the spending caps imposed by the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015.<sup>130</sup> The \$8.3 billion amount includes \$5.1 billion requested by the Obama Administration, spread across all areas of defense spending, as well as an additional \$3.2 billion added by Congress specifically to prevent the Administration's planned reduction in total active-duty military force strength. The NDAA sets the total number of active-duty military personnel in FY 2017 at 1,305,900, which is 24,000 more than the Obama Administration's request.<sup>131</sup>

The NDAA fully authorizes the Administration's request of \$4.3 billion to assist the Afghan security forces. This figure includes \$3.3 billion to support the ANA and \$931 million for the ANP. The law directs that between \$10 million and \$25 million be used to recruit and retain female personnel in the ANDSF, including any necessary

**The NDAA fully authorizes the Administration's request of \$4.3 billion to assist the Afghan security forces. This figure includes \$3.3 billion to support the ANA and \$931 million for the ANP.**

modifications to MoD and MoI facilities to accommodate female soldiers and police officers. This legislation also provides a 1-year extension of the DoD's authority to transfer to the ANDSF up to \$250 million of defense articles being used by U.S. forces in Afghanistan. In addition, it continues the exemption of transfers of excess defense articles in Afghanistan to other countries from limitations on the aggregate value of excess defense articles transferred as specified in the section 516 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961.<sup>132</sup>

The special immigrant visa program, which provides a path to U.S. immigration for Afghan citizens who have served as interpreters or translators for U.S. personnel in Afghanistan, was originally set to expire at the end of 2016. The NDAA extended the program through 2020 and increased the total number of these visas available from 7,000 to 8,500. The act also tightened requirements for new special immigrant visa applicants, who must show that they have served "as an interpreter or translator for United States military personnel in Afghanistan, particularly while traveling off-base with such personnel" or performed "sensitive and trusted activities for the United States Government in Afghanistan."<sup>133</sup> Nearly 12,000 Afghans have applied for these special visas.<sup>134</sup>

The NDAA also requires the Lead IG for OFS, in coordination with the DoS IG, the USAID IG, and SIGAR to report to Congress on coordination of oversight in Afghanistan.<sup>135</sup> The Senate committee report on the bill also directs the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to report on the coordination of oversight among the Lead IGs and SIGAR.<sup>136</sup> The Lead IG agencies are working with SIGAR to comply with both requirements.

## OCO Budget Amendment and Continuing Resolution

On July 6, 2016, President Obama announced a revised drawdown of U.S. forces in Afghanistan, retaining 8,400 troops rather than the 5,500 which the President's FY 2017 budget had requested.<sup>137</sup> In November 2016, the Obama Administration submitted a revised OCO budget to Congress, requesting an additional \$11.6 billion in OCO funding, including \$5.8 billion for the DoD and \$5.8 billion split between the DoS and USAID. In addition to supporting the new troop level in Afghanistan, this funding addresses other emerging issues in Afghanistan, the counter-ISIL mission in Iraq and Syria, and a planned increase in U.S. military presence in Europe to counter Russian aggression.<sup>138</sup>

On December 10, 2016, President Obama signed the continuing resolution to fund the Federal government through April 28, 2017.<sup>139</sup> In the absence of new appropriations for FY 2017, this legislation provides funding for most agencies and operations of the government at approximately their FY 2016 spending levels. Additionally, Division B of this Act, titled "the Security Assistance Appropriations Act, 2017," makes supplemental OCO funding and authorities available to the DoD, the DoS, and USAID, a detailed account of which is provided in Tables 2 and 3.



## Additional OCO Funding and Authorities Provided to the DoD in the Continuing Resolution

Senior DoD officials have cited numerous challenges operating under a continuing resolution for an extended period of time. These challenges include a prohibition on contracts for any new projects or requirements that were not already underway in the prior fiscal year unless explicitly permitted by law.<sup>140</sup> In addition to the funding and priorities in the OCO budget amendment, the Obama Administration transmitted to Congress a list of requests for exemptions to the budgetary restrictions that normally apply under a continuing resolution.<sup>141</sup> Through the continuing resolution, Congress provided the DoD with the requested authorizations for increased procurement of certain weapons and systems necessary for operations in support of OFS, including the KC-46A aerial refueling tanker, AH-64 Apache and UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters, Hellfire Missiles, Joint Direct Attack Munitions, and other munitions.<sup>142</sup>

While most of the Obama Administration's OCO priorities related to OFS received funding in the continuing resolution, Congress did not appropriate any of the \$814.5 million that was requested to modernize the Afghan Air Force's fleet of utility helicopters.<sup>143</sup> The DoD had requested this funding to begin replacing the ANDSF's 46 aging, Russian-made Mi-17 helicopters with the first 53 of a planned 159 U.S.-made Black Hawk helicopters.<sup>144</sup> General Nicholson stated that due to the delay in this funding, the first of these new aircraft will not be fielded until at least 2019, thus prolonging the need for U.S. aviation support.<sup>145</sup>

The Obama Administration's original budget for FY 2017 requested \$3.4 billion in OCO funding for the European Reassurance Initiative, the DoD's plan to increase the U.S. military presence within the borders of European allies who are concerned with Russia's occupation of Crimea and other provocative actions in Ukraine.<sup>146</sup> The OCO amendment did not change this request, and additional funding for this operation was not included in the DoD's \$5.8 billion supplemental request. However, Congress appropriated \$650 million for the European Reassurance Initiative from the \$5.8 billion in additional OCO funds included in the continuing resolution.<sup>147</sup>

Table 2 shows the amounts requested by the DoD in the OCO budget amendment and the enacted funding provided in the continuing resolution.

Table 2.

### Department of Defense FY2017 Overseas Contingency Operations Budget Amendment Request and Appropriation by Account

Appropriations Title	DoD FY 2017 OCO Amendment (requested)	Security Assistance Appropriations Act 2017 (enacted)
<b>Military Personnel</b>	<b>\$144,868</b>	<b>\$265, 118</b>
Army, counterterrorism	\$94,034	\$94,034
Navy, counterterrorism	\$7,354	\$7,354

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Marine Corps, counterterrorism	\$5,840	\$5,840
Air Force, counterterrorism	\$37,640	\$37,640
Army, European Reassurance Initiative	\$0	\$102,930
Navy, European Reassurance Initiative	\$0	\$3,130
Air Force, European Reassurance Initiative	\$0	\$14,190
<b>Operation and Maintenance</b>	<b>\$5,100,248</b>	<b>\$4,326,435</b>
Army, counterterrorism	\$2,934,269	\$2,734,952
Navy, counterterrorism	\$95,531	\$95,531
Marine Corps, counterterrorism	\$168,446	\$168,446
Air Force, counterterrorism	\$382,496	\$382,496
Defense-Wide, counterterrorism	\$412,959	\$412,959
Army, European Reassurance Initiative	\$0	\$438,727
Navy, European Reassurance Initiative	\$0	\$2,350
Marine Corps, European Reassurance Initiative	\$0	\$12,100
Air Force, European Reassurance Initiative	\$0	\$45,550
Defense-Wide, European Reassurance Initiative	\$0	\$33,324
Afghanistan Security Forces Fund-ANDSF Aviation Modernization	\$814,500	\$0
Defense Health Program	\$2,547	\$0
*Iraq Train and Equip Fund	\$289,500	—
<b>Iraq Train and Equip Fund</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>\$289,500</b>
<b>Procurement</b>	<b>\$387,684</b>	<b>\$724,447</b>
Army, Missiles	\$46,500	\$229,100
Army, Other	\$98,500	\$72,000
Air Force, Ammunition	\$0	\$201,563
Air Force, Missiles	\$0	\$83,900
Navy, Other	\$5,000	\$0
*Joint Improvised-Threat Defeat Fund	\$99,800	—
<b>Joint Improvised-Threat Defeat Fund</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>\$87,800</b>
<b>Research, Development, Test, and Evaluation</b>	<b>\$142,200</b>	<b>\$81,700</b>
Army	\$139,200	\$78,700
Defense-Wide	\$3,000	\$3,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$5,775,000</b>	<b>\$5,775,000</b>

Amounts shown in thousands.

**\*Note:** The DoD OCO amendment incorporated amounts for the Iraq Train and Equip Fund into its Operation and Maintenance account. The amendment also incorporated amounts for the Joint Improvised-Threat Defeat Fund into its procurement account. The continuing resolution appropriated funding for these requests separately.

**Sources:** U.S. Department of Defense FY 2017 Overseas Contingency Operations Budget Amendment, November 2016; Public Law No. 114-254, "Further Continuing and Security Assistance Appropriations Act, 2017," enacted 12/10/2016.

## Department of State Funding for OFS

The FY 2017 budget amendment submitted by President Obama to the U.S. Congress in November requested approximately \$1 billion in funding for the Embassy Security, Construction, and Maintenance account. The budget amendment stated that this funding would be used to speed up planned construction and security enhancements in several locations, including Kabul, Afghanistan. The Department of State Budget Amendment Summary, a document that provides further detail to the President's budget amendment, specified \$350 million in requested Embassy Security, Construction, and Maintenance account funding to be used for Embassy Kabul, Afghanistan.

On December 10, 2016, the President signed the Further Continuing and Security Assistance Appropriations Act, 2017. The act appropriates \$654.4 million in Overseas Contingency Operations funding for the DoS Embassy Security, Construction, and Maintenance account. The act does not specify at which embassy or embassies the funding is to be spent.

Table 3 contains, by account, the amounts requested in the November budget amendment and relevant country or geographic area for the request when defined, the enacted funding, and the difference between the two amounts.

Table 3.

### DoS, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs FY 2017 Overseas Contingency Operations Budget Amendment Request and Appropriation by Account

Account (Detailed Request in State's Budget Justification Document)	Nov. 2016 Amendment ("Supplemental") to the FY 2017 Budget Request	Security Assistance Appropriations Act 2017 (enacted)	Request vs. Enacted
<b>Diplomatic Engagement</b>	<b>\$1,772.1</b>	<b>\$1,709.3</b>	<b>\$(63.4)</b>
<b>Diplomatic and Consular Programs</b>	<b>\$746.2</b>	<b>\$1,052.4</b>	<b>\$306.2</b>
Iraq	\$22.6		
Syria	\$217.1		
Libya	\$293.0		
Yemen	\$110.7		
West Africa*	\$1.0		
Somalia	\$79.5		
Global Engagement Center	\$21.8		
Special Envoy for Counter-ISIL	\$5		
<b>Embassy Security, Construction, and Maintenance</b>	<b>\$1,024.0</b>	<b>\$654.4</b>	<b>\$(369.6)</b>
Iraq	\$10.1		
Syria	\$98.2		
Libya	\$50.7		

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West Africa*	\$165.0		
Somalia	\$225.0		
Other Global Threats	\$475.0		
<b>DoS OIG</b>	<b>\$2.5</b>	<b>\$2.5</b>	<b>—</b>
<b>Foreign Assistance</b>	<b>\$4,002.3</b>	<b>\$2,433.7</b>	<b>\$(1,568.6)</b>
<b>Economic Support Fund-Counter-ISIL</b>	<b>\$2,460.4</b>	<b>\$1,030.6</b>	<b>\$(1,429.9)</b>
Iraq	\$400.0		
Syria	\$570.0		
Libya	\$78.0		
Yemen	\$120.0		
West Africa*	\$107.4		
Somalia	\$5.0		
DoS Bureau of Counterterrorism and Countering Violent Extremism	\$20.0		
Relief and Recovery Fund	\$1,000.0		
<b>Nonproliferation, Antiterrorism, Demining and Related Programs-Counter-ISIL</b>	<b>\$128.0</b>	<b>\$128.0</b>	<b>—</b>
Iraq	\$30.0		
Syria	\$32.0		
Libya	\$39.5		
Yemen	\$11.5		
West Africa*	\$9.3		
Somalia	\$15.0		
<b>International Narcotics and Law Enforcement</b>	<b>\$19.3</b>	<b>\$26.3</b>	<b>\$7.0</b>
Libya-Counter-ISIL	\$10.0		
West Africa*	\$9.3		
<b>Foreign Military Financing</b>	<b>\$0.0</b>	<b>\$200.0</b>	<b>\$200.0</b>
<b>Migration and Refugee Assistance</b>	<b>\$260.4</b>	<b>\$300.0</b>	<b>\$39.6</b>
Iraq	\$260.4		
<b>Peacekeeping Operations</b>	<b>\$90.0</b>	<b>\$50.0</b>	<b>\$(40.0)</b>
West Africa*	\$20.0		
Countering Violent Extremism in Africa	\$70.0		
<b>International Disaster Assistance</b>	<b>\$953.2</b>	<b>\$616.1</b>	<b>\$(337.1)</b>
<b>Assistance to Europe, Eurasia, and Central Asia</b>	<b>\$0.0</b>	<b>\$157.0</b>	<b>\$157.0</b>
<b>Transition Initiatives</b>	<b>\$73.5</b>	<b>\$50.2</b>	<b>\$(23.3)</b>
<b>USAID Operating Expenses</b>	<b>\$15.0</b>	<b>\$5.0</b>	<b>\$(10.0)</b>
<b>USAID Office of the Inspector General</b>	<b>\$0.0</b>	<b>\$2.5</b>	<b>\$2.5</b>
<b>USAID Capital Investment Fund</b>	<b>\$0.0</b>	<b>\$25.0</b>	<b>\$25.0</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$5,775,000</b>	<b>\$4,300.00</b>	<b>\$(1,474.9)</b>

Amounts shown in millions. Detail may not sum to total due to rounding.

\*Nigeria, Niger, Chad, Cameroon.

Sources: Department of State, "Budget Amendment Summary, Department of State, Foreign Relations, and Related Programs," 11/10/2016. Public Law No. 114-254, "Further Continuing and Security Assistance Appropriations Act, 2017," enacted 12/10/2016.



## THE OFS COUNTERTERRORISM MISSION

The December 2016 DoD report described U.S. counterterrorism efforts as focused on defeating al Qaeda, ISIL-K, and associated terrorist groups; protecting U.S. forces; and preventing Afghanistan from becoming a safe haven for terrorists who threaten the U.S. homeland.<sup>148</sup> According to General Nicholson, the U.S. counterterrorism mission has two lines of effort—a “unilateral” U.S. effort focused on al Qaeda and ISIL-K and one “that is with our Afghan special forces, whom we advise and assist as they conduct operations against these [terrorist] threats in their country.”<sup>149</sup> While most of the U.S. troops in Afghanistan are focused on training the Afghan army and police, “a smaller contingent is authorized to conduct operations against terrorist groups.”<sup>150</sup>

Under the revised troop ceiling of 8,448,<sup>151</sup> roughly 2,000 U.S. military personnel are assigned to unilateral counterterrorism operations and to activities that support ANDSF counterterrorism operations.<sup>152</sup> In addition, U.S. counterterrorism forces in Afghanistan are able to call on additional resources outside of Afghanistan for operations against al Qaeda and ISIL-K. According to General Nicholson, USFOR-A has used this ability to augment its forces “numerous times” during this quarter.<sup>153</sup> According to the December 2016 DoD Report, “the limited U.S. direct counterterrorism action, coupled with a stronger and increasingly capable ANDSF, will help preserve the security gains to date and contribute to a robust, enduring counterterrorism partnership.”<sup>154</sup>

A number of terrorist organizations pose challenges to peace and security in Afghanistan. According to Brigadier General Cleveland, 20 organizations that are designated as “foreign terrorist organizations” by the DoS “operate in the Afghanistan/Pakistan region.”<sup>155</sup> During this quarter, Afghan officials met with strategic partners and discussed joint efforts to counter the terrorist threat. The UN reported that, at their trilateral meeting in New York in September, the United States, India, and Afghanistan “reaffirmed” a shared interest in advancing peace and security in the region and countering terrorism.<sup>156</sup>

Of the 20 terrorist groups known to be active in the Afghanistan-Pakistan region, the United States is focused primarily on ISIL-K and al Qaeda. According to the Pentagon, pursuing the Islamic State wherever it attempts to establish itself, including Afghanistan, is a continuing DoD objective.<sup>157</sup> With assistance from U.S. counterterrorism forces, the Afghan government will continue to target ISIL-K.<sup>158</sup> While about 80 percent of Afghan special operations are conducted independently, about 10 percent are “enabled” with U.S. assistance in planning, intelligence, or logistics.<sup>159</sup> U.S. forces accompany those Afghan Special Forces on the remaining 10 percent of operations.<sup>160</sup>

U.S. forces supported a series of ANDSF counterterrorism operations in Achin, Nangarhar, during the first two weeks in October.<sup>161</sup> These operations were spearheaded by Afghan special operation forces and then followed up by conventional

**While most of the U.S. troops in Afghanistan are focused on training the Afghan army and police, “a smaller contingent is authorized to conduct operations against terrorist groups.”**

Afghan forces, in this case the 201<sup>st</sup> Corps.<sup>162</sup> In southern Afghanistan, a specialized ANP unit known as the Narcotic Interdiction Unit along with ANP commandos found and destroyed \$3 million worth of drugs and equipment.<sup>163</sup>

During this quarter, Afghan forces, supported by U.S. counterterrorism forces, conducted 1,449 ground operations and launched 164 strikes targeting insurgent networks. According to USFOR-A, more than 791 insurgents were killed in action and over 419 insurgents apprehended and detained by the ANDSF.<sup>164</sup> The ANDSF conducted 1,156 of these operations independently. USFOR-A advised on 158 and participated to some degree in 135.<sup>165</sup> According to USFOR-A such activities are “indicative of significant progress” of our Afghanistan partners.<sup>166</sup>

According to General Nicholson, U.S. forces conducted 350 other counterterrorism operations this year against al Qaeda and ISIL-K, killing or capturing nearly 50 al Qaeda leaders and 200 other members of al Qaeda or ISIL-K.<sup>167</sup> Of that total, 230 involved airstrikes against terrorist organizations with “two-thirds to three-quarters” targeting ISIL-K fighters and the remainder targeting al Qaeda.<sup>168</sup> General Nicholson stated that these operations “have killed the top 12 leaders of ISIL-K” in 2016.<sup>169</sup>

According to the Director of the Center for Security Studies and the Security Studies Program at Georgetown University, although the efforts in Afghanistan are focused on ISIL-K, al Qaeda may be quietly and patiently rebuilding. Some have argued that al Qaeda is positioning “to emerge from the ISIS ashes.”<sup>170</sup> The National Counterterrorism Center reported that even though al Qaeda’s haven in Pakistan’s Federally Administered Tribal Areas—regions just to the west and south of Afghanistan’s Kunar, Nangarhar, Paktiya, Khost, and Paktika provinces—is shrinking, al Qaeda remains “global in scale and determined to attack the U.S.”<sup>171</sup>

## THE NATO-LED RESOLUTE SUPPORT MISSION

In addition to the U.S. counterterrorism mission in Afghanistan, the United States participates in the NATO-led Resolute Support mission, which focuses on developing the capacity of the MoD and MoI and on training, advising, and assisting the ANDSF.<sup>172</sup> The objective of the train, advise, and assist mission, according to Brigadier General Cleveland, is to help make the Afghan security forces “as strong as they can possibly be,” so that the Afghan government “has options in choosing how and when to negotiate” with the Taliban. Brigadier General Cleveland emphasized that “there is really no military solution” to achieving peace with Taliban insurgents. Rather, he stated, “It’s going to have to be reconciliation and it’s going to have to be something that the government of Afghanistan runs themselves.”<sup>173</sup>

As of November 30, 2016, Resolute Support was staffed by approximately 12,600 troops from 39 nations. The United States contributed the largest share with about 6,950 personnel, followed by 25 NATO allies that provided 4,000 personnel and 13 non-NATO partner nations that provided 1,650.<sup>174</sup> In his December 2016 press



General Nicholson and other NATO officials meet at NATO headquarters. (NATO photo)

conference, General Nicholson noted that commitments from NATO and partner nations this year will give Resolute Support “four more years of funding, time, and advising for the Afghan security forces.”<sup>175</sup>

Resolute Support follows a limited regional approach, with coalition advisors assigned to five train, advise, and assist commands, located in the north, south, east, west, and the capital of Kabul. The Resolute Support “hub” in Kabul includes Resolute Support headquarters; advisors to the MoD and MoI; and the Train, Advise, and Assist Command—Capital, which advises the 111<sup>th</sup> ANA Division responsible for security in Kabul.<sup>176</sup>

The United States, Germany, Italy, and Turkey serve as “framework nations,” each leading a regional train, advise, and assist command. The four train, advise, and assist commands outside of Kabul are aligned with four of the six ANA Corps and with the associated regional ANP zone headquarters. In a recent change, Resolute Support formed two regional task forces, Task Force Anvil and Task Force Forge, to oversee advising efforts involving the two remaining ANA Corps and ANP zones, one of which is responsible for Helmand province while the other covers seven provinces in southeastern Afghanistan. Previously, advise and assist cells operating out of the Kabul hub on an expeditionary basis provided advisory support in those locations.<sup>177</sup>

In his December 2016 press conference, General Nicholson stated that Resolute Support resources are reviewed every 6 months when he submits a report to NATO allies identifying “the capabilities we need” in the advising mission. General Nicholson noted that some nations, “Germans, the Italians, and some of the others,” increased their commitments in an effort to grow advising capabilities where needed. As an example, he reported that the Germans had recently added an expeditionary advising package to assist an ANA division in the northern Kunduz region. Germany leads the train, advise, and assist command in the North, which supports the ANA 209<sup>th</sup> Corps

and regional ANP zones. Additionally, the United States is reorganizing its advisory structure, according to General Nicholson, as part of the transition from 9,800 U.S. personnel to 8,448. He stated that advisors will be “spread out” to add training and sustainment teams in the two American zones of responsibility. (The United States leads the Train, Advise, and Assist Command-South and the Train, Advise, and Assist Command-East.)<sup>178</sup>

Additionally, as the number of U.S. military personnel in Afghanistan decreases, Resolute Support will continue to be augmented by U.S. civilian employees deployed to Afghanistan as well as contractor employees.<sup>179</sup> USFOR-A reported that it has converted less than 20 percent of its advisory structure from military to civilian.<sup>180</sup>

## The Resolute Support Approach

According to the December 2016 DoD report, Resolute Support advisory efforts focus on developing functions, systems, processes, and organization structures in the MoD and MoI that will support a sustainable, credible ANDSF that is capable of maintaining security in Afghanistan. To that end, Resolute Support advisors work with their Afghan counterparts on three levels:

- **Level One.** Advisors work with Afghan counterparts on a continuous basis, typically in a joint work space or through daily meetings or telephone contact.
- **Level Two.** Advisors work with their counterparts on a less frequent basis to ensure continuous progress. The frequency of interaction is dependent on the proximity and capability of Afghan counterparts, the threat level to advisors, and coalition resources.
- **Level Three.** Advisors are not co-located with the Afghan counterparts, but communicate from a central location, with periodic visits or deployments of advisory teams to assist Afghan security forces with operations and sustainment.<sup>181</sup>

Resolute Support focuses on eight key areas, known as “essential functions” (EFs), that provide the framework and guidance for the train, advise, and assist effort. In addition to the eight EFs, USFOR-A has established the Resolute Support Gender Office, a stand-alone advising directorate that provides guidance on gender-related issues to all EFs. Each EF has a gender focal point to ensure that gender considerations are incorporated into train, advise, and assist efforts.<sup>182</sup>

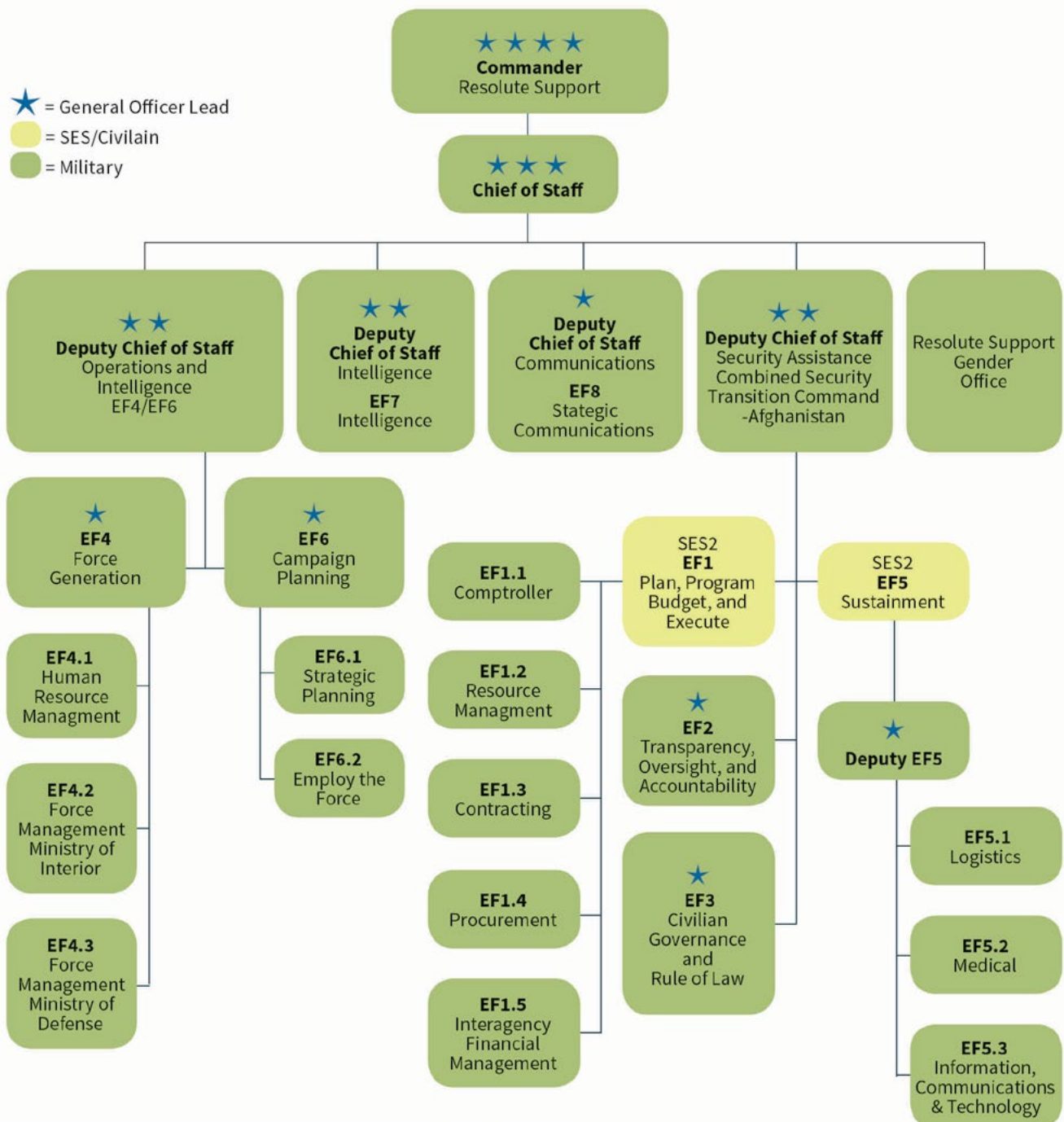
Within the Resolute Support organization, a senior DoD or coalition official is typically assigned as lead for each EF with all coalition advisors, aligned under the EF lead. The EF lead integrates advisory efforts from the ministerial level to the ANA Corps or ANP zone.<sup>183</sup> In addition, the December 2016 DoD report stated that the DoD has established pools of former advisors and regional experts to provide assistance to advisors serving in the MoD or MoI.<sup>184</sup> The graphic on the following page illustrates the EF structure within the Resolute Support organization. A list of EFs and their indicators of effectiveness is provided in Appendix C.

**Resolute Support advisory efforts focus on developing functions, systems, processes, and organization structures in the MoD and MoI that will support a sustainable, credible ANDSF that is capable of maintaining security in Afghanistan.**



# ESSENTIAL FUNCTION STRUCTURE

The Resolute Support train, advise, and assist mission focuses on building ANDSF capability in eight key areas, known as essential functions (EFs). A general officer or a member of the DoD Senior Executive Service heads each EF and is responsible for coordinating Resolute Support advisory efforts between ministry and operational levels. The chart below identifies each EF and illustrates the manner in which EF responsibilities are assigned within the Resolute Support organization.



Source: DoD, *Enhancing Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, 12/2016.

## BUILDING MINISTERIAL CAPACITY

This quarter, DoD sources reported varying degrees of progress in building institutional capacity in the MoD and MoI, which together administer all Afghan security forces. The MoD oversees the ANA, which includes the AAF and three special operations forces components. It has an authorized force structure of 195,000 military personnel, but as of November 2016 ANA strength was approximately 168,000 personnel. The MoI oversees the ANP, the Afghan Local Police, one police special forces unit, and five specialized police units. The ANP has an authorized strength of 157,000. As of November 2016, approximately 148,000 personnel were on duty. In addition, the Afghan Local Police, also under the MoI, are authorized 30,000 personnel. The Afghan Local Police is funded solely by the United States, and although it is under the MoI, it is not included in the 352,000 ANDSF force level that other international donors have agreed to support.<sup>185</sup>

USFOR-A and CSTC-A reported progress in several ministerial functional areas this quarter, such as the establishment of internal control mechanisms, implementation of automated systems for inventory and personnel management, and using intelligence assets.<sup>186</sup> Additionally, USFOR-A reported that the MoD and MoI demonstrated “marked progress” in conducting joint operational planning, noting that their jointly-produced winter campaign plan “was viewed by many...as the best planning product produced to date.”<sup>187</sup>

**USFOR-A and CSTC-A reported progress in several ministerial functional areas this quarter, such as the establishment of internal control mechanisms, implementation of automated systems for inventory and personnel management, and intelligence operations.**

However, significant impediments to achieving fully capable and sustainable security ministries remain. In his December 2016 press conference, General Nicholson identified “leadership and corruption” as two significant areas needing improvement, because those factors have led to “poor sustainment of soldiers in the field.”<sup>188</sup> Additionally, CSTC-A reported that MoD and MoI lack the capability to manage their own force structure and will require significant additional coalition assistance before they are able to independently establish force requirements and perform analysis to satisfy those requirements.<sup>189</sup> For the second time in two years, persistent corruption in U.S.-funded Afghan fuel contracting by Afghan officials and their contractor has led the Afghan government to request that DoD resume procurement of fuel for the ANDSF using a DoD contract. This, in part, reflects Afghan government concern about the risk that corruption in Afghan contracting processes poses to U.S. support for providing funding to the Afghan government.<sup>190</sup>

USFOR-A reported no change in the coalition reliance “almost exclusively” on data provided by the MoD and MoI to assess ANDSF readiness and effectiveness, because advisors had little visibility over ANDSF operations outside of ANA corps or ANP zone headquarters. USFOR-A considered the credibility of that data “questionable,” emphasizing the importance of advisory efforts that focused on strengthening the interaction between the ministries and the security forces they oversee.<sup>191</sup>

## Measuring Success

To assess ministerial progress, Resolute Support has established a rating system based on MoD/MoI attainment of milestones, which are established by mutual agreement between coalition advisors and their Afghan counterparts. Milestones are grouped by Essential Function (EF) and are accomplished over time through the execution of supporting actions to achieve the desired outcome. coalition advisors evaluate ministerial progress using a rating scale from one to five as follows.<sup>192</sup>

Table 4.

**EF Rating Scheme**

Rating	Meaning	Description
1	Scoped and Agreed Upon	The relevant Afghan organization has agreed with the specific supporting action.
2	Initiated	The Afghan organization has commenced work on the specific action.
3	Partially Capable and Effective	The Afghan organization has completed or almost completed work on the action and the result is partially effective.
4	Fully Capable and Effective	The Afghan organization has completed work on the action and the result is fully effective but may still require some coalition support.
5	Sustaining Capability	The Afghan organization has completed work on the action and the result is sustainable without further coalition support.

Although actual assessments of ministerial performance under this rating system are classified, USFOR-A provides unclassified predictions of ministerial capabilities expected to be achieved by the end of the fiscal year. From FY 2016 to 2017 USFOR-A lowered its assessment of MoD and MoI potential for improvement. In May 2016, USFOR-A predicted that the MoD would achieve a “fully capable” 4-rating in 34 percent of its milestones and “sustaining” 5-rating in 16 percent by the end of September 2016.<sup>193</sup> In its November 2016 assessment, however, USFOR-A predicted that the MoD would achieve a “fully capable” 4-rating in only 21 percent of its milestones and “sustaining” in 7 percent by the end of September 2017.<sup>194</sup>

Similarly, in May 2016 USFOR-A predicted that 46 percent of MoI milestones would achieve a “fully capable” rating by the end of September 2016, while 15 percent would achieve a “sustaining” rating.<sup>195</sup> In November 2016, USFOR-A lowered those predictions to 12 percent “fully capable” and 5 percent “sustaining” by September 2017.<sup>196</sup>

## Leadership: A Continuing Challenge

Speaking from the Resolute Support Headquarters in Kabul on October 23, 2016, General Nicholson attributed the high number of killed and wounded Afghan police, in part, to a “failure of leadership.” According to Nicholson, young police officers who risk their lives guarding checkpoints often lack sufficient support from their leaders, many of whom “lead” in absentia.<sup>197</sup> During his December 2, 2016 press conference,

General Nicholson said he had voiced these concerns, including a lack of supplies for troops, “very frankly” when he engaged with Afghan military and government leaders.<sup>198</sup>

The December 2016 DoD Report also highlighted the important role that leadership plays in the ANDSF, comparing the “ineffective leadership” of the ANA’s 205<sup>th</sup> and 215<sup>th</sup> Corps with the “strong leadership” of the ANA’s 203<sup>rd</sup> Corps. The report noted that the ANA’s 203<sup>rd</sup> Corps has most “contributed to an improved security situation.”<sup>199</sup>

Despite continuing leadership challenges, Resolute Support reported significant improvements in some areas such as operational planning. According to Resolute Support both the ANA and the ANP have increased their independent operational planning capacity as a result of advice and guidance from Resolute Support personnel. During this quarter, ANDSF leadership took ownership of their planning processes and products. Moreover, during the current winter campaign, Afghan security force planners, without Resolute Support assistance, designated main efforts, conducted formal planning briefs to senior leaders, and held a conference to ensure the campaign plans were briefed to the appropriate zone and corps commanders.<sup>200</sup> Despite this progress, Resolute Support reported there was still room for improvement as the content of the briefings focused primarily on materiel requests, not operational designs and objectives.<sup>201</sup>

During this quarter, President Ghani took an important administrative step towards improving leadership quality by moving towards a centralized “merit-based system” for personnel in the MoD and the MoI. General Nicholson described the change as “very, very important,” because it will move both institutions toward a more transparent process, reduce nepotism and corruption, and enable both institutions to hire, retain and promote the best personnel.<sup>202</sup> To this end USFOR-A is focusing its training and mentoring of senior leadership on the immediate and long-term benefits of a merit-based system for personnel actions.<sup>203</sup>

## **Resolute Support Remained Involved in the Afghanistan-Pakistan Relationship**

During this quarter, U.S. officials said that there had been more direct discussions between members of the Afghan and Pakistani security forces on increasing cross-border cooperation, but that the relationship between the two countries remained tense and mistrustful.<sup>204</sup> USFOR-A reported that dialogue amongst military members has increased to include direct engagement between Resolute Support and the Afghan national security advisor on the issue of increasing border cooperation.<sup>205</sup> Although USFOR-A reported no significant instances of armed conflict this quarter, cross-border artillery attacks continued due, in part to the Afghan government’s objection to the recent construction of a Pakistan military outpost at the Chaman border check point along the porous and contested border.<sup>206</sup>

According to USFOR-A, much of the communication between the Afghan and Pakistani security forces centered on perceived collusion or inaction by border forces with respect to insurgent groups which attack posts on both sides of the border.<sup>207</sup> The December 2016



DoD Report attributed the cross-border attacks to Pakistani-based terrorist networks that “continue to undermine the bilateral relationship more than any other issue.”<sup>208</sup> The report also described the importance of the Afghan government’s relationship with Pakistan, as a “critical aspect of enhancing security and stability in Afghanistan.”<sup>209</sup>

USFOR-A reported that progress regarding border cooperation is being achieved during the monthly “one-star tripartite” meetings that were reconvened in October 2016 at Resolute Support headquarters. According to USFOR-A, the conferences demonstrated that the Afghans and Pakistanis are willing to reestablish coordination in border areas, by pursuing two initiatives: improving communication between border posts and sponsoring meetings between relevant tactical commanders. However, unlike their Pakistani counterparts, ANDSF officials were not authorized to act on these measures until late November when the Afghan National Security Council granted permission to do so.<sup>210</sup>

Flag-officer conferences between the two sides at the two-star level will require sustained involvement from Resolute Support if they are to flourish. The two-star conference scheduled in October to address ISIL-K was postponed because of political unrest in Pakistan and the retirement of the Pakistan Army’s chief of staff.<sup>211</sup> That conference was expected to review recent operations against ISIL-K in Nangarhar province and focus on measures to expand cooperation between Afghan and Pakistani forces fighting ISIL-K.

Despite efforts to resolve border issues through military-to-military channels, a Pakistani military flag-lowering ceremony held at a border crossing on November 18, 2016, was protested by Afghanistan through informed diplomatic channels without first going through the established military-to-military proper channels.<sup>212</sup>

The Afghan Office of the National Security Council is attempting to restart routine “flag meetings” in the near-border areas to ensure better communication and obviate the need for diplomatic intervention.<sup>213</sup> USFOR-A reported that flag-officer conferences at all levels regarding these border initiatives will require continued involvement by Resolute Support leadership.<sup>214</sup>

According to USFOR-A, the Taliban and its component, the Haqqani Network, maintain connections that stretch across the border of Afghanistan and Pakistan. The border region between Afghanistan and Pakistan is difficult to control, as the challenging terrain and the lack of state institutions create ungoverned spaces.<sup>215</sup> Senior Taliban and Haqqani Network leaders exploit ungoverned spaces and are able to transit the area freely.<sup>216</sup>

The NDAA for FY 2017 authorized \$900 million for Pakistan in Coalition Support Funds. The NDAA specified that, in order to release \$400 million of FY 2017 Coalition Support Funds, the Secretary of Defense must certify to Congress that the Pakistan government has taken specific actions against the Haqqani Network. Those actions include demonstrating its commitment to prevent the Haqqani Network from using any Pakistani territory as a safe haven; actively coordinating with the Afghan government to restrict the movement of militants, such as the Haqqani Network, along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border; and showing progress in arresting and prosecuting Haqqani Network senior leaders and mid-level operatives.<sup>217</sup>

## Commitment Letters Continue to Exercise Control over U.S. Funding

CSTC-A continues to place financial controls on U.S. and international contributions through a series of annual bilateral financial commitment letters with the MoD and the MoI. Commitment letters signed by the relevant Afghan minister and CSTC-A commander establish conditions that the ANDSF must meet to help ensure that funding from the United States and international donors is used properly.<sup>218</sup>

The commitment letters for Afghan FY 1395 (running from December 21, 2015, though December 20, 2016) include 86 conditions to encourage transparency and accountability of equipment and resources. These letters establish expectations for the responsible management of direct contributions from donor nations. If the criteria spelled out in the commitment letters are not met, funds can be deducted from total direct contributions or withheld until corrective action is taken. These enforcement mechanisms underpin U.S. messaging to Afghan leadership that they must demonstrate accountability and transparency in the expenditure of donor funds.<sup>219</sup>

The coalition conducts quarterly reviews at the two-star level to assess MoD and MoI progress on meeting conditions outlined in the commitment letters and determine corrective action when conditions are not met.<sup>220</sup> Table 5 contains the number of CSTC-A reported corrected actions and the results of those actions.<sup>221</sup>

Table 5.

### CSTC-A Recommended Corrective Actions, for period ending 9/30/2016

	Number of Conditions Reviewed	Satisfactory Progress	Incentive Awarded	Insufficient Progress	Penalty Assessed
MoD	59	35 (59%)	0	24 (41%)	8 (14%)
MoI	74	37 (50%)	0	37 (50%)	5 (7%)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>72 (54%)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>61 (46%)</b>	<b>13 (8%)</b>

These results reflect a downward trend from the previous quarterly assessment (period ending June 30, 2016) when 66 percent of the conditions showed satisfactory progress (74 percent MoD and 59 percent MoI). A total of 5 incentives were awarded and 5 penalties assessed.<sup>222</sup>

Although progress was insufficient on 61 of the commitment letter conditions for the assessment ending September 30, CSTC-A did not assess penalties on 48 conditions. Reasons for not assessing penalties can include CSTC-A's determination that the failure to attain the specified condition was beyond the control of the ministry, the conditions were insufficiently measureable or assessable, corrective action was already taken, or enforcing the penalties could have affected the ANDSF's ability to execute combat operations.<sup>223</sup> However, CSTC-A advised the ministries that those 48 conditions

A Senior Airman adjusts his night vision goggles in the back of a C-130J Super Hercules before a sortie at Bagram Air Field. (U.S. Air Force photo)



required “significant improvement” to avoid incurring penalties after the next quarterly assessment.<sup>224</sup>

The Commander, CSTC-A, advised the Ministers of Defense and Interior of the results of their second quarter conditionality assessment by letters dated November 4, 2016.

#### **Penalties Assessed against the MoD:**

- Withholding of 20 percent of building construction funds for the failure to enter drawings, maps, and inventories for 10 MoD installations into the Afghanistan Infrastructure Data Integration System.
- Suspension of deliveries of night vision devices to 4 ANA units for their failure to properly account for those devices.
- Suspension of small arms issue for the failure to maintain accurate inventories of small arms or properly document the loss of those weapons.

CSTC-A waived penalties for the failure to maintain accurate ammunition inventories and properly document ammunition consumption because sufficient corrective action had been taken at the time of the assessment.<sup>225</sup>

#### **Penalties Assessed against the MoI:**

- Withholding of travel funds and pay raises from 6 MoI offices that make up the Gross Violation of Human Rights Committee for the committee’s failure to investigate all credible incidents of human rights violations brought to its attention.
- Withholding of 50 million Afghanis (\$833,000) from the Afghan Local Police account for the failure to complete inventories of all on-hand equipment.
- Withholding of 50 million Afghanis (\$833,000) from the ANP special operations forces account for the failure to complete inventories of all on-hand equipment.

- Suspension of deliveries of night vision devices to ANP units that failed to submit acceptable inventories of those devices.
- Suspension of small arms issue for the failure to maintain accurate inventories of small arms or properly document the loss of those weapons.<sup>226</sup>

## Oversight of Donor Funds

The DoD OIG continues to audit funding provided by the United States directly to the Afghan government to support the ANDSF. On December 1, 2016, the DoD OIG reported results of an audit to determine whether CSTC-A, MoD, and MoI had established and implemented effective controls over the management process for contracts awarded by MoD or MoI and funded by the United States.<sup>227</sup>

The audit found that the Afghan government and CSTC-A had implemented several measures to strengthen controls over the contract management process, but determined that shortfalls in the contracting process remained. In an effort to reduce corruption, the Afghan government updated its procurement law and established regulatory bodies to scrutinize procurement actions. CSTC-A had created a process to improve the development of requirements packages and imposed penalties for the failure to meet commitment letter requirements.<sup>228</sup>

However, the audit found that inadequate Afghan government contracting practices continued to place U.S. direct assistance funding at risk. Specifically, the Afghan government allows contractors to begin work without a formal contract. The audit found that MoI contractors provided goods and services valued at \$142 million before formal contracts were in place. Additionally, the audit found that the Afghan government had not identified high-risk areas in the contract process that warranted increased oversight to prevent fraud, waste, and abuse. Finally, the audit noted that commitment letter enforcement was inconsistent and that a more formal process for evaluating commitment letter compliance was needed. Because CSTC-A took immediate action to address deficiencies and implement audit recommendations made on-site, the audit made no further recommendations.<sup>229</sup>

From July to December 2016, the DoD OIG conducted an audit to determine whether CSTC-A and the MoD had established effective controls over MoD-awarded fuel contracts.<sup>230</sup> The audit team conducted a site visit to Resolute Support Headquarters in October where it interviewed CSTC-A officials responsible for some aspect of the fuel contracting process. Audit results will be available next quarter.

This audit was similar to a DoD OIG oversight project concerning MoI-awarded fuel contracts that was completed in January 2016. The audit found that CSTC-A did not have reasonable assurance that fuel valued at nearly \$260 million supported actual ANP requirements and was used for its intended purpose.<sup>231</sup>

CSTC-A carries out a separate audit program, staffed by 14 auditors, to evaluate specific MoD and MoI operations. This quarter CSTC-A completed audits to determine

**The audit found that the Afghan government and CSTC-A had implemented several measures to strengthen controls over the contract management process, but determined that shortfalls in the contracting process remained.**



whether the MoD accurately calculated pension deductions from the salaries of ANA service members and accurately calculated pension payments to military personnel who retired from the 111th Capital Division. It found that MoD pension deductions may have been incorrect because guidance concerning the method of calculation was vague and open to interpretation. However, it found that pension payments to retired service members who served in the 111th Capital Division were correct.

Seven ongoing CSTC-A audits are examining accountability for ammunition and vehicles, adequacy of MoD and MoI facility maintenance, utilization of MoD and MoI training courses, management of the MoI pharmaceutical inventory, and performance of MoI family response units.<sup>232</sup>

## Improving Functional Capacity in the MoD and MoI

In the area of financial management, both ministries obligated funds for payroll according to schedule but encountered delays in obligating funds for goods and services because of excessive time needed to award and administer contracts.<sup>233</sup> CSTC-A reported that both ministries continued to face challenges in each step of the procurement process—requirements development, processing proposals, and administering awarded contracts.<sup>234</sup> As of December 5, 2016, the MoD had awarded 25 of 48 planned “framework” contracts (multi-year contracts for logistics and facilities maintenance), while the MoI had awarded 1 of 3. Impediments to progress, according to CSTC-A, included excessive oversight on small dollar procurement actions in the MoD and a lack of procurement expertise in both ministries.<sup>235</sup>

To strengthen the functional capabilities of the ministerial workforces, the MoD and MoI have each established a program to employ (under a contract arrangement) young, college-educated Afghans and develop them into functional experts in specific management areas.<sup>236</sup> As of December 2016, the MoD program, known as Functional Area Support Team, employed 169 personnel, of which half served in financial or procurement operations.<sup>237</sup> In December 2016, Resolute Support sponsored a seminar for financial management trainees in the program to give them a better understanding of the Afghan financial systems and facilitate networking throughout the ministry.<sup>238</sup> A similar program in the MoI, known as the Subject Matter Expert program, employs 269 personnel, with over 40 percent in finance and procurement operations.<sup>239</sup> The ultimate objective is to transition the trainees into long-term ministerial employees, thereby establishing institutional expertise in basic functional areas.

## Personnel and Force Management

CSTC-A reported that both ministries face significant challenges in developing the capability to independently manage their force structures—the process that determines required numbers and skill sets of military personnel, records and updates that information in an allowance document (known as the *tashkil* in Dari), and develops programs to build policing and combat capability. The MoI is particularly deficient, according to CSTC-A, in part because of a 4-year absence of coalition advising on force



MoD personnel attend a seminar on financial management. The seminar covered budget programming and analysis, gender integration, and anti-corruption reform methods. (U.S. Navy photo)

structure management. Advising resumed in December 2015. Since then, the MoI has demonstrated the ability to carry out coalition instructions but lacks an understanding of the entire process. The MoI did not submit an updated *tashkil* for CSTC-A review until December 6, 2016, two weeks before it was to become effective.<sup>240</sup>

CSTC-A reported that the MoD, which received uninterrupted coalition support, is able to perform administrative updates to force management documents, but lacks the ability to perform more complex force management tasks, such as requirements validation or trade-off analysis. To strengthen ministerial capabilities in this area, two military officers with expertise in force management reported to CSTC-A in November 2016 to train Afghan counterparts in conducting analysis needed to identify force capability gaps, propose solutions, and conduct trade-off analysis.<sup>241</sup>

An accurate *tashkil* is a critical input to the Afghan Personnel and Pay System (APPS), an overarching electronic system that will integrate personnel and payroll information to ensure that Afghan military personnel are promptly and accurately paid.<sup>242</sup> Expected to be operational in the MoI by summer 2017 and in the MoD by August 2017, APPS also depends on the migration of data from the Afghan Human Resources Management System (AHRIMS) that contains information on personnel serving in an authorized *tashkil* position.<sup>243</sup>

This quarter, coalition advisors continued efforts to increase the coverage and accuracy of personnel records in AHRIMS. As of mid-November, 88 percent of ANDSF personnel were slotted into a *tashkil* position (i.e., an individual is matched to an actual billet) in AHRIMS, according to CSTC-A, and this effort is ongoing.<sup>244</sup> To improve the accuracy of AHRIMS information, coalition advisors continued to assist the ministries in conducting a “personnel asset inventory” of AHRIMS records. This project will validate the 20 data elements entered for each Afghan service member and make corrections as needed. Because of the wide dispersal of its personnel, the MoI has established 20 locations country-wide where ANP members will be given an opportunity to validate their records in AHRIMS.<sup>245</sup>

Another component critical to APPS implementation is the registration of all ANDSF personnel in the biometric identification system. This system generates a unique biometric identification number for ANDSF personnel and captures iris and fingerprint scans. The biometric information is integrated with AHRIMS to facilitate data entry and reduce errors. To ensure that all ANDSF members are enrolled in the biometric system, MoD and MoI teams travel to different locations to facilitate member participation and to training sites to enroll recruits. According to DoD, 90 to 95 percent of the ANP and 80 percent of ANA personnel have been registered in the biometric identification system.<sup>246</sup>

Despite continuing coalition efforts, the December 2016 DoD report stated that AHRIMS implementation remained slow because of limited personnel skills and network access. Additionally, according to the DoD, ANDSF leaders have not emphasized the use of AHRIMS for the full range of personnel actions. As a result, personnel managers failed to enter personnel transfers, retirements, or other actions into AHRIMS, which jeopardized overall accuracy of the data. To address these problems, coalition advisors increased AHRIMS training and emphasized the use of the system to ANDSF commanders.<sup>247</sup>

## Sustainment

In early November 2016, according to TOLONews, a widely read Afghan news source, President Ghani sharply criticized government departments for failing to deliver fuel and supplies, such as food and ammunition to soldiers on the battlefield. In addition to citing corruption as a factor, President Ghani attributed the problem to mismanagement by responsible security institutions and ordered security leaders to develop a strategy to address the problem.<sup>248</sup>

According to the December 2016 DoD report, the ANDSF continued to encounter a variety of challenges in obtaining and distributing supplies. The central MoD supply depot was unable to distribute supplies to forward supply depots in a timely, predictable, and transparent manner. In turn, the manner in which forward supply depots issue materiel to the ANA Corps often depended on personal relationships between corps commanders and depot personnel. The ANA logistics command has not taken action to impose a more structured method of distribution.<sup>249</sup> Similarly DoD reported that the MoI has experienced months of delays in obtaining needed supplies.<sup>250</sup>

DoD and command sources cited a number of issues that contributed to the supply distribution problem. The shortage of skilled logistics personnel continued to impact the effectiveness of ministerial supply chains. The MoD has additional requirements for trained specialists in transportation and distribution who could focus on optimizing available methods to move supplies and equipment. The MoI regularly moved logistics specialists into operational assignments outside of their specialties.<sup>251</sup>

Another factor involved the ANDSF failure to fully utilize the Core-Information Management System (Core-IMS), an automated inventory management system

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developed by a DoD contractor that will be a critical component of a responsive, demand-based supply system. For over 6 years, coalition advisors have assisted Afghan counterparts to implement Core-IMS.<sup>252</sup> These efforts have been hampered by problems related to internet access and gaps in identification of standard stock numbers. This quarter, CSTC-A reported that all major commodities were loaded into Core-IMS, that training professionals were assigned throughout the country to familiarize ANDSF personnel with logistics operations, and that the system was operational at all national and regional nodes.<sup>253</sup>

In October 2016, a new capability was added to Core-IMS that documents the transfer of materiel from one warehouse to another. According to CSTC-A, this capability will improve supply availability, decrease processing errors, and improve visibility over inventories. At the same time, Core-IMS was linked to DoD's Security Cooperation Information Portal, which enabled automatic loading into the Core-IMS database of materiel when it is shipped to Afghanistan from the United States on Foreign Military Sales cases. Working with Afghan counterparts, CSTC-A's focus has now turned to reconciling physical inventories with quantities reflected in Core-IMS and monitoring receipt/issue transactions processed by Core-IMS.<sup>254</sup>

CSTC-A reports that the ministries have not fully adopted Core-IMS for inventory management purposes and continue to depend, in part, on paper based processes. The major impediment is the failure of senior Afghan leaders to insist that all supply transactions be handled through Core-IMS. To promote senior leader involvement, CSTC-A has assigned several logistics advisors to the ANDSF general staff.<sup>255</sup>

## Vehicle Readiness

CSTC-A reported that equipment readiness rates across ANA Corps increased slightly or remained constant this quarter despite heavy fighting in several regions.<sup>256</sup> According to the December 2016 DoD report, the ANA continued to build organic (in-house) maintenance capabilities, but progress varied significantly by ANA corps, depending on corps leadership. For example, the level of maintenance proficiency in the 207<sup>th</sup> Corps "has surpassed expectations" because of its desire to maintain and repair its vehicles, according to the December 2016 DoD report. Conversely, commanders in the 215<sup>th</sup> Corps have assigned mechanics to positions outside their specialty rather than to maintenance billets.<sup>257</sup> According to CSTC-A, the 207<sup>th</sup> Corps, responsible for 5 western provinces, recorded the highest level of equipment availability this quarter (80 percent), while the 215<sup>th</sup> Corps, responsible for Helmand province, recorded the lowest (34 percent).<sup>258</sup>

Major repairs to MoD vehicles are performed under a logistics support contract at nine sites throughout the country.<sup>259</sup> On October 13, 2016, the Army Contracting Command-Warren issued a "Letter of Concern" to the contractor to highlight a "significant lack of performance" that required immediate resolution. According to the letter, performance deficiencies included the failure to complete 80 percent of work orders within 15 days as required by contract, the lack of employee technical and managerial



Mechanics from the 215th Corps fix military vehicles during a visit by U.S. and Afghan high ranking officers. The visitors toured the 215th Corps' logistics warehouses in Helmand to assess logistical challenges and evaluate next steps to build capacity and sustainment. (U.S. Navy photo)



skills, and a deficiency of diagnostic equipment.<sup>260</sup> In its response dated October 31, 2016, the contractor stated that it had coordinated with vendors to expedite delivery of repair parts, assigned a new in-country manager, and conducted a review of contractor personnel to ensure that unqualified personnel were replaced.<sup>261</sup> According to the December 2016 DoD report, the MoI relies almost entirely on contractor maintenance for its fleet. An acceptable level of contractor performance has resulted in high MoI vehicle readiness rates.<sup>262</sup>

These contracts will be consolidated under one overarching contract that will provide maintenance and repair services to a portion of MoD and MoI vehicle fleets, while training Afghan mechanics and logistics personnel.<sup>263</sup> The solicitation for this initiative, known as the National Maintenance Strategy, was published on June 15, 2016, and closed in October 2016. An award is expected in mid-May 2017.<sup>264</sup>

## Intelligence Gathering, Integration Capabilities

USFOR-A reported advancements in intelligence processing within the ANDSF and in using intelligence data to improve combat effectiveness. The first ANA ScanEagle unmanned aerial system crew completed training on October 6, 2016, and began flying operations in Helmand province shortly thereafter. The crew demonstrated the ability to launch, fly, and recover ScanEagle operations with minimal U.S. oversight.

According to USFOR-A, the Afghan targeting process continues to improve as ANA corps have transitioned from a paper-based targeting system to the new digital targeting module available in the National Information Management System. Use of the module facilitates tracking and review of targeting packages and has led to regular targeting working groups that approve or reject proposals.<sup>265</sup>

Since September 2016, the National Military Intelligence Center processed 155 targeting requests. While not all of these requests resulted in combat strikes

against insurgent targets, USFOR-A reported several successes, including the destruction of a narcotics laboratory in Helmand province on October 31 and an insurgent weapons depot on November 5. On October 29, the 215<sup>th</sup> Corps in Helmand province conducted its first successful mission using ScanEagle data, enabling an MD530 helicopter strike on an insurgent compound.<sup>266</sup>

Coalition advisors continued to assist Afghan counterparts in conducting intelligence training. This quarter a total of 477 students from different ANA corps graduated from training courses at the Intelligence Training Center. The MoI's Police Intelligence Training Center provided police intelligence-based training to 338 personnel this quarter and is in process of establishing permanent mobile training teams to expand training opportunities for the ANP.<sup>267</sup>

MoI intelligence operatives continued to screen personnel as part of force protection efforts. MoI officials interviewed nearly 3,200 personnel this period in an effort to detect insider attack risks, clear nominees for senior MoI positions, and augment counter-corruption efforts.<sup>268</sup>

## DoD OIG Intelligence Oversight Projects

In an oversight project completed in November 2016, DoD OIG personnel evaluated the effectiveness of U.S. intelligence training being provided to the MoD. Project personnel considered information gathered from documents, on-site interviews, and firsthand accounts in reaching conclusions and recommendations. The evaluation found that training provided by USFOR-A was well designed and professionally conducted. However, the evaluation identified challenges that prevented Afghan security forces from achieving full benefits from the training.

The report recommended that USFOR-A provide incentives to Afghan ministries, through the commitment letter process, that will encourage the MoD to meet intelligence fusion, training, and equipment maintenance goals established by the ministerial development plan. USFOR-A did not concur with the recommendation, indicating that it would instead use advisor rapport and incentives rather than commitment letters to achieve desired outcomes. The DoD OIG requested that USFOR-A identify those incentives.

The report also recommended that Resolute Support establish a training plan that will contribute to the achievement of established EF 7 (intelligence) milestones. Resolute Support did not concur with the recommendation, indicating that intelligence training is already being conducted and tracked. However, because the DoD OIG identified continuing obstacles in the training program, it requested that Resolute Support provide an "objective training plan that mitigates identified training obstacles." Command responses to the DoD OIG requests are expected next quarter.<sup>269</sup>

The DoD OIG continued a second intelligence-related project this quarter that sought to determine whether the USFOR-A airborne intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance allocation process effectively supported U.S. counterterrorism

**MoI officials interviewed nearly 3,200 personnel this period in an effort to detect insider attack risks, clear nominees for senior MoI positions, and augment counter corruption efforts.**

operations.<sup>270</sup> The project was initiated in August 2016 based on feedback from U.S. leaders in Afghanistan who identified intelligence support to counterterrorism as an issue that warranted review.<sup>271</sup>

## Strategic Communication

Informational combat power is an important part of a military operations.<sup>272</sup>

The Afghan government continues to emphasize the importance of strategic communication and the capacity to publicize its achievements and counter insurgent messaging. USFOR-A reported that the Afghan government demonstrated some growth in sophistication of its public affairs capability when preparing for the Brussels conference on Afghanistan in October. That effort supported the Afghan government's successful request for international support of \$15.2 billion. USFOR-A evaluated the Afghan strategic communication program for the conference as "quite successful at a time when political tensions within the National Unity [Afghan] Government played out quite publicly in the media."<sup>273</sup>

To assist Afghan ministries in carrying out national strategic communication policy, President Ghani issued a new decree on October 16, 2016, to improve the public's access to information. Among other provisions, the decree requires that government ministries conduct monthly news conferences and accelerate responses to requests for information. Additionally, the Afghan government issued a "code of conduct" for journalists. Described by USFOR-A as "relatively progressive," the code of conduct sets forth guidelines for responding to insurgent propaganda, using unnamed sources, and avoiding government pressure to produce biased reporting.<sup>274</sup>

This quarter, coalition advisors continued to build strategic communication in the ministries. In concert with the corresponding national effort, the coalition worked toward empowering public affairs staffs, assisting with budgeting and procurement processes, implementing standard operating procedures, and encouraging proactive public affairs planning.<sup>275</sup>

A successful, coordinated ministerial public affairs effort occurred in early November, according to USFOR-A, when MoD, MoI, and Resolute Support spokespersons participated in a joint press conference to address reports of over 30 civilian casualties caused by a coalition airstrike in Kunduz province. USFOR-A noted that the press conference demonstrated a proactive approach by the Afghans, specifically the "need to be out in front of the story"—and growing Afghan commitment to transparency.<sup>276</sup>

With coalition assistance, the MoD and MoI improved coordination between headquarters and subordinate commands in the strategic communication area according to USFOR-A. The MoI further developed messaging coordination with ANP zone headquarters and updated its annual communication strategy for 2017 which sets forth a goal of improving Afghan favorable public opinion of the ANP from 61 percent to 70 percent.<sup>277</sup> As an example of a successful MoI strategic communication effort, USFOR-A cited the MoI publicity campaign beginning in October 2016 that informed

the Afghan public of ANP operations, which led to the capture of 90 tons of narcotics and arrests of 284 suspects, including 7 policemen. USFOR-A noted that the publicity campaign was conducted without coalition assistance.<sup>278</sup>

Although ANA corps commanders have the authority to communicate with the media about any topic in their areas of control, corps media engagements had been limited because of the reluctance to do so without headquarters-level direction. To promote corps-level public affairs activities, the MoD established a corps liaison section in headquarters and intervened directly with corps public affairs personnel to increase their use of television, radio, and social media to highlight corps activities.<sup>279</sup>

According to USFOR-A, those initiatives have made a positive impact as illustrated by “reliable and synchronized” messaging produced by the 209th Corps in northern Kunduz province to describe successful operations against the Taliban this quarter. Such efforts countered statements from “uniformed representatives like local police personnel,” who sometimes provided an inaccurate and negative picture of ANDSF combat operations, which may have “aided enemy propaganda.”<sup>280</sup> USFOR-A reported, however, that ANA Corps in southern Afghanistan struggle to embrace the concept of independent media operations and will be the focus of coalition advisory efforts during the winter campaign.<sup>281</sup>

## Ministerial Integrity

CSTC-A reported that the Ministers of Defense and Interior remained committed to the principles of transparency and accountability in their organizations and have made “some progress” in promoting those concepts with their organizations. According to CSTC-A, the directorate for EF 2 (transparency, accountability, and oversight) provided training to hundreds of coalition advisors this quarter in order to strengthen advisory skills that help Afghan counterparts to implement effective internal controls over key processes (known as the “ministerial internal control program”).<sup>282</sup>

Ministerial internal control programs are led by MoD and MoI IGs, who support the programs, but have encountered varying levels of acceptance from leaders of subordinate IG offices. To promote acceptance, coalition advisors have conducted numerous engagements with leaders throughout the ministerial IG organizations to emphasize the value of internal control programs and facilitate their implementation.<sup>283</sup>

However, CSTC-A reports that progress is slow. In the MoI, some IG directorates have completed evaluations of their internal control programs to the satisfaction of advisors, but others require additional work. In the MoD, internal control programs have been completed, but their implementation remains “slow or stalled” according to CSTC-A. A significant challenge is the lack of in-depth knowledge on internal control processes in MoD IG offices. CSTC-A reports that future advising efforts will concentrate on developing priorities for implementation and on focusing MoD IG’s efforts where most needed.<sup>284</sup>

Coalition advisors worked with both ministries this quarter to improve their inspection programs. In the MoD, advisors assisted in developing a risk-based inspection program



for 2017 that is expected to increase the ability of inspectors to detect corruption.<sup>285</sup> In the MoI, IG officials have successfully executed their inspection plan this year, conducted numerous unannounced inspections, and developed next year's program. However, CSTC-A cautioned that both inspection plans are "extremely ambitious" and unlikely to be executed as currently written.<sup>286</sup>

CSTC-A also reported that MoI fuel consumption reporting continues to be problematic. Reports are not submitted in a timely manner and information cannot be verified. Although the MoI IG made a commitment to inspect five fuel sites per month to examine fueling records, coalition advisors were unable to confirm whether, in fact, those inspections were conducted. In one case, advisors concluded that five sites were not inspected and brought the problem to the attention of the MoI IG. CSTC-A stated that coalition advisors will continue to press the issue.<sup>287</sup> The need to inspect MoI fueling operations was highlighted by a DoD OIG audit completed in January 2016 that found CSTC-A did not have reasonable assurance that U.S.-funded fuel valued at nearly \$260 million actually supported MoI requirements and was used for its intended purpose.<sup>288</sup>

Another coalition effort designed to improve integrity in Afghan ministries involves assisting the ANDSF to prevent and respond to events involving the gross violation of human rights, such as extra-judicial killings.<sup>289</sup> This quarter CSTC-A reported improvements in MoD and MoI programs to identify and document such violations. The number of cases identified by the MoD increased from 4 to 16 over the past quarter; the number identified by the MoI increased from 24 to 30. In the MoD, CSTC-A reported that coalition advisors have enabled completion (remediation) or significant progress on all 16 cases. In the MoI, coalition advisors spurred an increase from 0 to 22 in cases completed or having measurable progress.<sup>290</sup>

Additionally, this quarter coalition advisors facilitated training for over 120 Afghan legal personnel in a 4-day seminar conducted by the Defense Institute for International Legal Studies. The training included topics such as the law of armed conflict, human rights, and children involved in armed conflict.<sup>291</sup>

This quarter the DoD OIG continued an oversight project to assess coalition efforts to enable the MoD and its subordinate organizations to develop an oversight and internal control capability that helps the MoD to run efficient operations, report reliable information, and comply with laws and regulations. The assessment is expected to be completed in early 2017.<sup>292</sup>

## Gender Affairs

This quarter, USFOR-A reported that it made some progress towards improving women's status in the ANDSF. According to the December 2016 DoD Report, the Afghan government is determined to increase women's participation in the security sector and has specifically listed the MoD and the MoI as the implementing agencies for its National Action Plan. Although both ministries formally committed to supporting initiatives for women, the DoD 2016 report also noted that implementation has been "uneven" and harassment of women in the ministries and ANDSF "remains a pervasive problem".<sup>293</sup>



Afghanistan's first female Non-Commissioned Officer attends the 12th ANDSF Conference at the Kabul Military Training Center, near Kabul. (U.S. Air Force photo)

Resolute Support continued to support efforts to expand women's participation in the military through its Gender Advisor's Office. This office appointed a representative to serve in each EF and in some Resolute Support headquarters offices. According to USFOR-A, these representatives ensure that a gender perspective is included in all aspects of the broader train, advise and assist mission.<sup>294</sup> The MoD and MoI have set a target of employing 5,000 women each in the ANA and ANP.<sup>295</sup> Due to difficulty recruiting and retaining female soldiers and police officers, approximately 1,137 women served in the ANA and AAF combined; 3,130 women served in the ANP, according to USFOR-A.<sup>296</sup> This is an increase from August, when USFOR-A reported 1,000 women serving in the ANA and 3,000 women serving in the ANP.<sup>297</sup>

Female soldiers receive separate but similar training to their male counterparts in firearms, physical fitness, military tactics, and medical care to prepare for non-combat roles, such as human resources, logistics, radio operations, and intelligence. Both during and after their training, these women face obstacles to their service, including threats from the Taliban, hostility from male colleagues, and opposition from family members.<sup>298</sup> The December 2016 DoD report also identified the lack of a career progression model for female ANDSF personnel as an additional impediment to their recruitment and retention.<sup>299</sup>

USFOR-A provided the following examples of its Gender Office accomplishments during the quarter:<sup>300</sup>

- Bi-weekly gender meetings brought together the regional commands and other stakeholders such as the UN Assistance Mission-Afghanistan and the U.S. Embassy.
- The advisors have weekly meetings with Afghan officials from the MoD and MoI.
- The MoD and MoI have made progress in their efforts to offer initiatives to encourage increased representation of women in the ministries.

- The Gender Office is working with Resolute Support and its Afghan partners to ensure that there are “gender considerations” in the bathrooms and changing rooms within official buildings, gender based violence training for all personnel, public awareness programs about gender equality and respect for female soldiers and police, and that women receive equal opportunities for training and promotion.
- The Gender Advisor’s Office noted that it takes a “great deal of unified effort and collaboration” across all of Resolute Support’s EFs to achieve specific positive outcomes for women in the security sector.<sup>301</sup>

## High-profile Case Illustrated Challenges Faced by Women in the ANDSF

On December 22, after completing a 15-month training course in the United States, Captain Niloofar Rahmani, the first female fixed-wing pilot in the AAF, revealed to her U.S. trainers that she had filed a petition seeking asylum in the United States. According to media sources, Captain Rahmini based the petition on her belief that her life would be in danger if she returned to Afghanistan on December 24 as scheduled. Additionally, Captain Rahmani’s immediate family in Afghanistan reportedly received threats after she arrived in the United States, forcing them to relocate.<sup>302</sup>



Afghan Air Force Capt. Niloofar Rahmani visited the Blue Angels at the Naval Air Facility El Centro in southern California. (DoD photo)

Captain Rahmani’s achievements have been celebrated as a milestone for women’s advancement in Afghanistan, and she was presented with the DoS’s International Women of Courage Award in 2015. The citation for that award acknowledged the sacrifices she and her family had made and the enduring threats they have received from the Taliban, as well as relatives and colleagues.<sup>303</sup> The Afghan MoD dismissed Rahmani’s claims and requested that the United States deny her asylum petition.<sup>304</sup>

While Rahmani’s case is high-profile, women serving in the ANDSF face significant challenges due to cultural perceptions of the role of women in society. A 2016 report by the non-profit Asia Foundation found that, while 74 percent of the 11,623 Afghans surveyed believe that women should be allowed to work outside the home, only 36 percent of that population approve of women serving in the police or armed forces.<sup>305</sup>

## ANDSF: WINTER CAMPAIGN PROVIDES TIME TO TRAIN AND REBUILD

The December 2016 DoD report stated that the ANDSF has made promising but inconsistent progress. The Afghan security forces proved capable of defending critical population centers and infrastructure as well as quickly retaking lost territory. However, they continued to struggle in deterring high-profile attacks and coordinating joint efforts between military and police components. In providing an assessment of their overall performance, General Nicholson stated that Afghan security forces “were tested and they prevailed.” He noted that combat strategy improved, with the ANDSF following a campaign plan this year, compared to 2015 when its operations were largely “a reaction to enemy activity.”<sup>306</sup>

During the winter campaign, according to the December 2016 DoD report, the ANDSF expects to capitalize on its achievements made over the summer. Specifically, the Afghan forces will focus on securing gains made in government-controlled areas, regenerating combat and police force strength, improving training, and promoting leadership development.<sup>307</sup>

This quarter, Resolute Support reported that the ANDSF achieved small but measurable gains in the conduct of their operations, highlighting the ANA’s increased independence in conducting intelligence operations and its enhanced coordination of artillery and aviation assets.<sup>308</sup> The ANDSF’s ability to plan operations also improved. The Afghans proved capable of independently developing plans and briefing them to senior leaders, who then issued orders to corps and zone commanders. Initially, opportunities to hear from the lower level commanders were used primarily to highlight functional limitations and shortages of material. However, after direction from the Chief of General Staff for an additional brief, the corps and zone commanders were able to explain their training and operational priorities and brief on operational designs and objectives. While Resolute Support continues to provide advice and guidance, this year’s winter campaign plans, including the designation of priorities and allocation of resources, were the product of ANDSF planners.<sup>309</sup>

Resolute Support also reported that ANDSF headquarters continued to use the special operations forces in conventional roles, despite an agreement between Resolute Support and the MoD to curb such misuse.<sup>310</sup> This tendency to overuse the ASSF was due primarily to the fact that these units comprise the most effective, reliable, and competent troops in the ANDSF. However, employing these specialized forces in routine missions, such as personal security detachments and security checkpoints, weakened the ASSF by undermining their rest and training cycles. It also prevented the regular army and police units from being held accountable in their assigned roles.<sup>311</sup>

**The Afghan security forces proved capable of defending critical population centers and infrastructure as well as quickly retaking lost territory. However, they continued to struggle in deterring high-profile attacks and coordinating joint efforts between military and police components.**



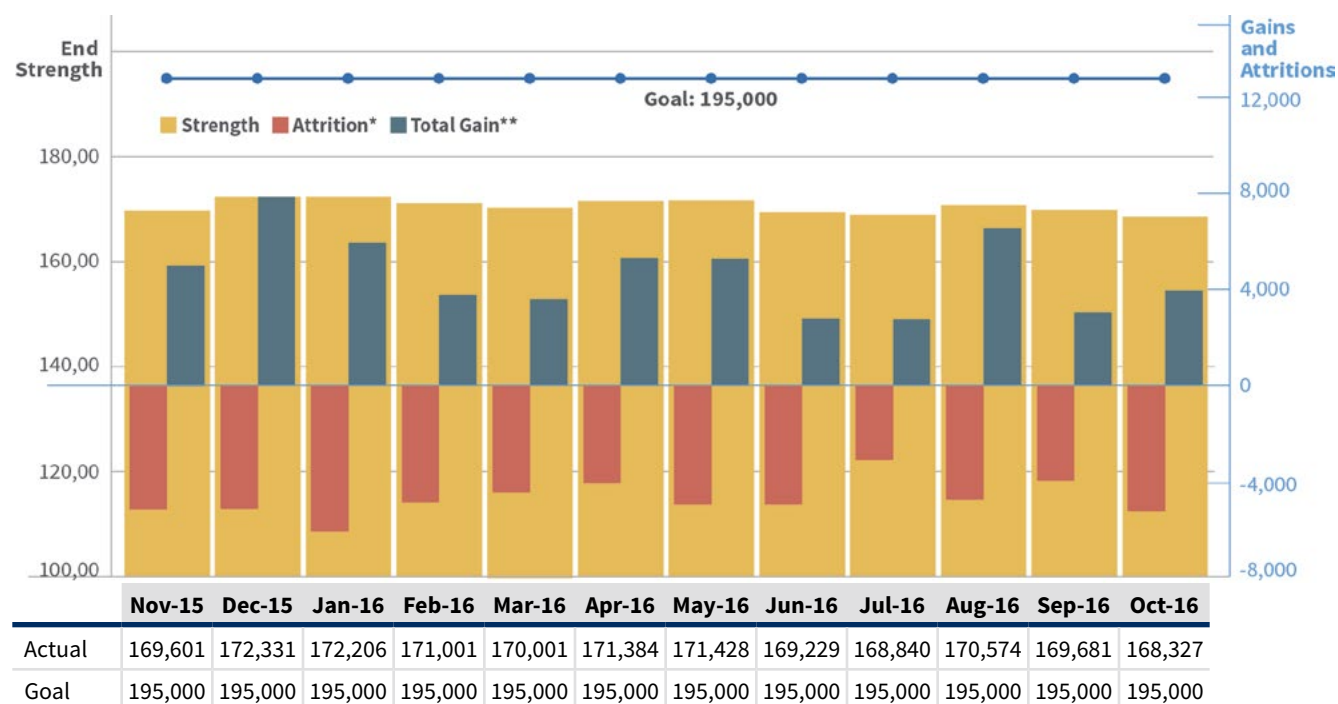
## ANA Recruitment and Retention Efforts

The ANA continued to work towards the goal of filling its authorized strength level of 195,000 personnel. As of November 2016, the ANA's total force strength was 168,327, including 7,660 members of the AAF (excluding civilians). As the graph in Figure 1 indicates, high attrition rates remain a major obstacle towards achieving target troop strength. Some of the most common causes cited for attrition included poor leadership, quality of life issues, compensation, inadequate living and working conditions, and insufficient care for wounded soldiers and the families of the fallen.<sup>312</sup>

In October 2016, USFOR-A initiated a Recruiter Sustainment Training program to support ANA efforts to increase recruitment and retention. Under this program, senior U.S. advisors and their Afghan MoD counterparts traveled to ANA corps headquarters around the country to meet with commanders, recruiters, and re-contracting (reenlisting) non-commissioned officers to better understand the recruitment and retention challenges they faced. The goal of these meetings was to identify obstacles and determine their ability at the corps level to achieve the ANA's fully authorized end strength of 195,000 by March 2017.<sup>313</sup>

Figure 1.

### ANA-Total Force Strength



**Notes:** The ANA military strength depicted above includes the military members of the AAF, which is a component of the ANA. \* Attrition encompasses all unplanned and planned losses. \*\*Gain includes all gains (recruits, re-accessions, and return from dropped from the rolls) to ANA strength.

**Source:** DoD, *Enhancing Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, 12/2016, p. 51.

USFOR-A noted that without a dedicated budget, the ANA Recruiting Command was unable to retain the necessary security infrastructure to conduct recruitment efforts in high-risk areas, where they estimated there are thousands of unreached potential recruits. USFOR-A also cited this lack of funding as preventing the national command from being able to provide local offices with “Relationship Building Items,” such as ANA logo t-shirts, cups, and keychains, or to support social gatherings where village elders and religious leaders can appeal to potential recruits about the opportunities available to them through the ANA.<sup>314</sup> Although the ANA is met recruiting goals, total end strength was negatively impacted by retention rates.<sup>315</sup>

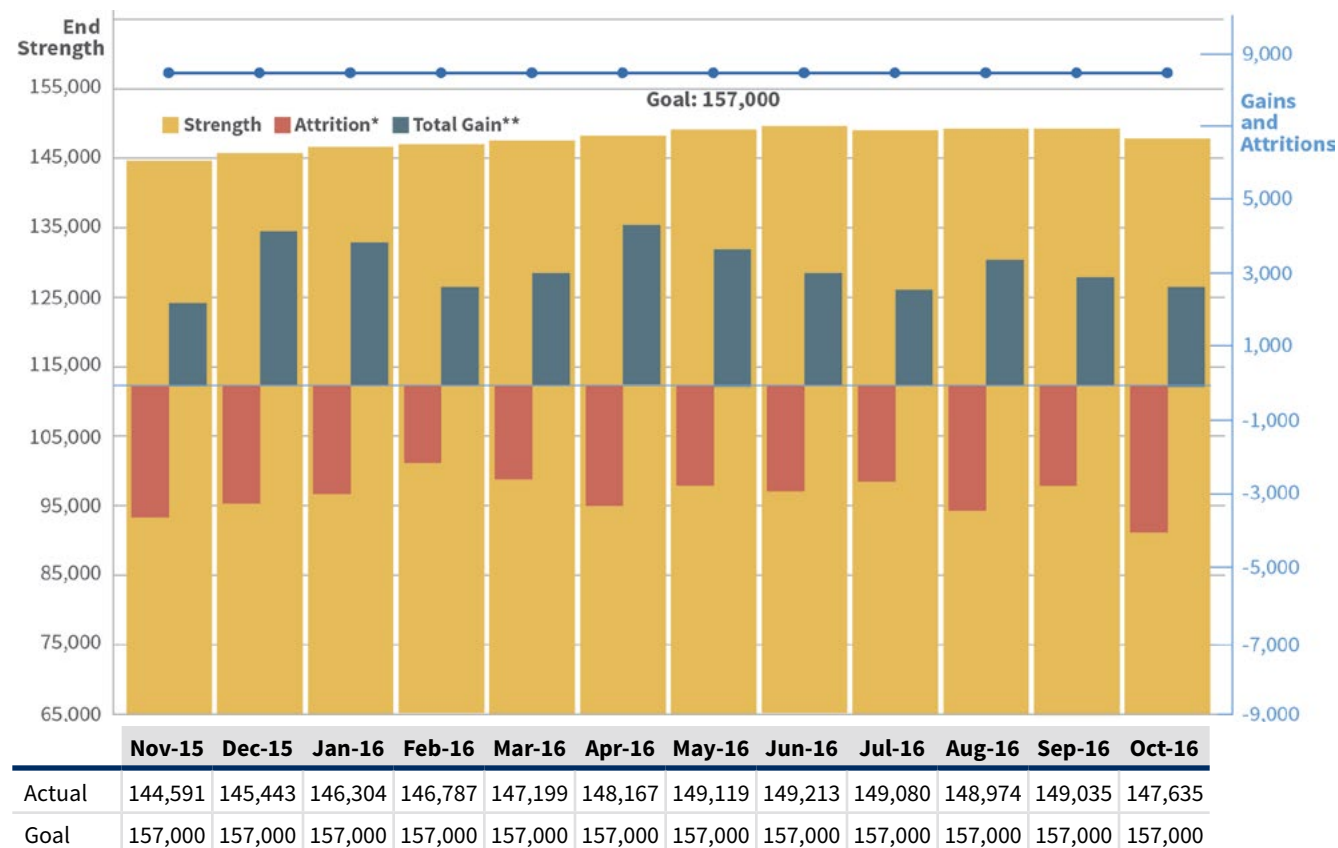
The MoD took steps to mitigate personnel shortages by creating reserve battalions, which employ former ANA soldiers in local support functions, such as base security and checkpoints, according to the December 2016 DoD report. As of September 2016, the 201st and 209th Corps in the central-eastern and northern provinces, respectively, had established reserve units of approximately 600 soldiers each. The 111th Capital Division in Kabul now has a reserve unit of 300, and the 207th Corps in the western provinces is in the process of establishing a reserve force. For reporting purposes, these reserve soldiers count toward the ANA’s total authorized force level.<sup>316</sup>

In an effort to improve retention by implementing a regular training cycle, planned operations for the winter months focus less on active engagement and more on force regeneration and training. Most ANDSF units have implemented standard cycles for troop training, fighting, and rest.<sup>317</sup> At the regional level, Resolute Support reported that some ANA corps and ANP zones met their goals of implementing regular training cycles for their units, but those in regions significantly challenged by enemy activity were most lacking in this regard.<sup>318</sup> In addition to the strain imposed on these units by the Taliban, Resolute Support indicated that corps and zone leaders have failed to prioritize collective training.<sup>319</sup> Resolute Support also noted that reporting from the corps and zone headquarters was generally poor, which not only limited the information available to the Afghan and U.S. governments, but also resulted in poor situational awareness at the headquarters level.<sup>320</sup>

## **ANP Continued to Fight Despite Losses**

According to Resolute Support, high casualties have reduced the combat effectiveness of certain ANDSF units, especially within the ANP.<sup>321</sup> The ANP’s attrition rate steadily increased for most of 2016 and peaked in October at 2.5 percent. Seventy-five percent of these losses were due to personnel who went absent without leave. USFOR-A attributed poor leadership and a lack of accountability as the primary factors driving ANP attrition. In most areas, police operations continued despite these losses.<sup>322</sup> As of November 2016, the ANP had approximately 147,635 personnel out of its full authorized end strength of 157,000.<sup>323</sup>

Figure 2.

**ANP-Total Force Strength**

\* Attrition encompasses all unplanned and planned losses.

\*\*Gain includes all gains to strength (recruits, re-accessions, and return from dropped from the rolls).

**Source:** DoD, *Enhancing Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, 12/2016, p. 79

ANP recruitment from March through October 2016 averaged 3,176 per month. The MoI's priority during this quarter has been to bolster the unstable Helmand and Uruzgan provinces with a total of 5,000 new police, with recruitment completed by December 2016 and trained personnel deployed by March 2017. As of December 1, 2016, the ANP had recruited 3,519 prospective police for this effort.<sup>324</sup>

ANDSF leadership continued to stress to its lower level commanders the importance of maintaining an offensive posture. Resolute Support cited the failure of the ANA and ANP to conduct joint operations as often leaving police units in vulnerable, defensive positions. In particular, reliance on checkpoints, which were frequently overrun by insurgents, left ANP units on the defensive. According to Resolute Support, both the ANA and ANP held to their summer campaign plans and will work on joint planning at the ministerial level as part of the winter campaign.<sup>325</sup>



Train, Advise, Assist Command-Air advisors watch as members of the AAF offload Mark-81 bombs from an A-29 Super Tucano at Mazar-e Sharif. (U.S. Air Force photo)

## Afghan Air Force

The U.S. 9th Air and Space Expeditionary Task Force–Afghanistan reported that the AAF increased both its combat and lift capacity this quarter with the addition of new aircraft and aircrews. In November, aircraft that had been forward deployed to the northern city of Mazar-e Sharif were relocated to southern Kandahar Airfield to better support operations in nearby Helmand province.<sup>326</sup>

An oversight project completed by SIGAR this quarter found that the U.S. Air Force contract supporting the AAF Special Mission Wing's Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System at Kandahar Airfield did not promote cost effectiveness and resulted in a payment of \$7.6 million in fees. The contracting officers in question responded to all of SIGAR's recommendations and began taking corrective actions.<sup>327</sup>

The AAF continued to integrate its primary attack helicopter, the MD-530, into ANA operations. Operating out of Kabul, Kandahar, and Mazar-e Sharif, the MD-530s have also been forward deployed around the country to support the ANA as needed. Combat capacity is expected to be enhanced with the addition of 26 new MD-530 pilots who are training over the winter months all will be ready to fly by early 2017. From January 1 through November 30, 2016, the MD-530s flew 2403 combat sorties.<sup>328</sup>

The A-29 Super Tucano is the principal fixed wing attack aircraft of the AAF, employed for bombing missions as well as providing close air support for ground troops. From January 1 through December 6, 2016, the A-29 crews flew 162 combat sorties, employing 416 bombs and 379 rockets against the enemy. According to U.S. Air force officials, their capacity for striking targets has increased, as has their ability to avoid targets when there is a significant likelihood of civilian casualties.<sup>329</sup>





The C-208 and C-130 cargo planes moved 75 percent more cargo in 2016 than in 2015, due both to an increase in the number of available pilots and more efficient use being made of the aircraft. Two additional C-130 crews were expected to complete training in the coming year. The C-130s provide critical support transporting the short-range MD-530s to their forward deployment locations across Afghanistan.<sup>330</sup>

An AAF MD-530 helicopter flies over ANDSF personnel during an air-to-ground integration exercise. (NATO photo)

## AAF Modernization Effort

Congress did not include the Obama Administration's request in the December 2016 continuing resolution for an additional \$814.5 million to begin the modernization of the AAF.<sup>331</sup> This request would have funded procurement from the U.S. Army, as well as refurbishment and upgrades, of the first 53 UH-60A Black Hawk helicopters for the AAF and Special Mission Wing of a total requirement of 159 of these helicopters. The DoD's plan includes transition training for pilots, crews, and maintainers.<sup>332</sup> These aircraft would replace Afghanistan's current fleet of 75 Russian-made Mi-17s, which serve as the ANDSF's primary tactical lift helicopter. Three Mi-17s were lost this quarter to combat action and, combined with the induction of higher numbers of aircraft into overhaul as a result of heavy use, 11 fewer Mi-17s were available at the start of the 2016 summer campaign compared to the previous year.<sup>333</sup>

The lack of funding was a disappointment to USFOR-A, as General Nicholson expressed in a letter to the Committee on Armed Services, United States Senate, immediately after the continuing resolution was passed. He assessed that by delaying funding for the AAF transition into 2017, new aircraft will not be fielded until at least 2019, thus prolonging the need for U.S. aviation support.<sup>334</sup>

In November 2016, the Indian government completed the transfer of four Russian Mi-25 attack helicopters to Afghanistan as part of a strategic partnership agreement between the two countries signed in 2011. The DoD does not fund the costs of operating and maintaining these helicopters. While there have been official discussions between Afghanistan and other countries about possible support for the Afghan Mi-17 fleet, there have been no indications that such assistance is forthcoming.<sup>335</sup>

## AAF Medical Evacuation Capabilities

According to the 9th Air and Space Expeditionary Task Force–Afghanistan, AAF medical evacuation capacity improved this quarter, as the first 11 of a planned 20 new AAF medics were fielded. Additionally, the AAF continued to make progress in transitioning away from the aging Mi-17 helicopters for medical evacuation to the C-208 for regional patient movement and the larger C-130 for flights from regional ANA Corps Hospitals to the National Military Hospital in Kabul.<sup>336</sup>

Despite the progress being made, capacity gaps still existed, and medical evacuation crews often flew two missions a day. Given the taxing nature of the work, the 9th Air and Space Expeditionary Task Force–Afghanistan expressed concerns about losing flight medics to burnout after significant resources had been invested in training these professionals. Retention bonuses for medical evacuation crews have been considered but not yet approved. Another retention strategy of rotating personnel between forward locations was fielded in the second half of FY 2016, and its effectiveness was still being evaluated.<sup>337</sup>

The 9th Air and Space Expeditionary Task Force–Afghanistan also identified a shortage of casualty evacuation capacity in the AAF. Given the limited number of aircraft available, AAF medical evacuation teams were focused primarily on transporting patients between medical centers. As a result, extractions from the point of injury often rely on ground transportation in unarmored ambulances to the battalion aid station or regional hospital. This caused significant delays in the time between injury and medical treatment.<sup>338</sup> To meet these needs, a course for ANA medics in casualty evacuation concepts is scheduled for the winter months. Another mitigation strategy under consideration called for embedding the newly trained, incoming flight medics within the ANA corps. This proposal, however, was dependent on the availability of suitable aircraft.<sup>339</sup>

**Afghan medical evacuation teams are working to improve their ability to transport critical care patients.**

The final gap identified by 9th Air and Space Expeditionary Task Force–Afghanistan this quarter concerned medical evacuation crew skillsets. Generally, U.S. advisors worked to improve the overall knowledge and capability of these crew members, whose effectiveness was gradually increasing but still fell short of western medical standards. Specifically, Afghan medical evacuation teams were working to improve their ability to transport critical care patients. The National Military Hospital had several critical care specialists with the necessary skillset, and U.S. advisors were planning a joint critical care air transport team course for AAF and National Military Hospital personnel to build a collaborative team for combat operations in the summer of 2017. If successful, these critical care specialists will accompany AAF medical evacuation crews during the three to four missions a month that require additional critical care expertise.<sup>340</sup>



Secretary of Defense  
Ash Carter meets with  
Afghanistan President  
Ashraf Ghani in Kabul.  
(DOD photo)

## ANTI-CORRUPTION EFFORTS

On October 31, 2016, President Ghani addressed the 4th National Conference of Prosecutors at the Presidential Palace.<sup>341</sup> In his remarks, Ghani stated, “I believe in independence of the judicial institutions and will not allow anyone to interfere in their activity.” He admonished those present that if they “see any violation of the law by me or any other person, act against it according to the law.” Ghani pledged to increase salaries for prosecutors and reaffirmed the non-political nature of their work. Ghani has made battling corruption a major theme of his presidency. However, progress in reigning in graft and holding corrupt actors accountable has been slow.<sup>342</sup>

Corruption has been labeled by both President Ghani<sup>343</sup> and General Nicholson as a major security issue in Afghanistan. Regarding the effectiveness of the ANDSF, General Nicholson stated that soldiers in the field are not always provided with the equipment they need—ammunition, water, and food—in order to conduct the fight.<sup>344</sup> Therefore, “fixing the corruption and diversion” of supplies required by security forces was one of the main focuses of this quarter.<sup>345</sup>

The issue of systemic corruption in Afghanistan is well documented. Transparency International’s 2016 *Corruption Perceptions Index* rated Afghanistan number 169 out of 176 countries in the world.<sup>346</sup> Further detail on this level of corruption was documented by Integrity Watch Afghanistan, an Afghanistan-based non-governmental organization committed to increasing transparency, integrity, and accountability in Afghanistan. It reported this quarter that Afghans paid an estimate \$3 billion in bribes in the past year, a nearly 50 percent increase compared to 2014, and a larger amount than the national government’s revenue estimated for 2016.<sup>347</sup>



Integrity Watch Afghanistan's survey respondents who had dealt with the Afghan court system reported that they had been asked for bribes 55 percent of the time.<sup>348</sup> These results accord with those found by another study done by the Asia Foundation, which reported that of the Afghans surveyed who had dealt with the court system, 32 percent were solicited for a bribe or gift all or most of the time and 28 percent said they were asked for a bribe some of the time or in isolated cases.<sup>349</sup> Another report released by Transparency International this quarter highlighted 50 anti-corruption commitments made by the Afghan government since taking power in 2014 and recommended steps the government should take to make good on these commitments.<sup>350</sup>

## Major Crimes Task Force Improved Capacity

CSTC-A reported that MoI's Major Crimes Task Force made progress this quarter. However, opposition to the task force within the government persists, which has resulted in a lack of funding. The MoI cut the task force's quarterly budget in half from approximately \$45,000 to \$22,500. CSTC-A believes that the reduction in funding coincides with an increase in arrests and prosecutions of high-ranking government officials.<sup>351</sup>

Coalition advisors to the Major Crimes Task Force reported working to identify and remedy obstacles to the investigation of corruption cases by enhancing the training and operational capacity of investigators as well as by identifying strong cases to test the government's political will to fight corruption. Although the advisors were not co-located with the task force, and in-person meetings decreased this quarter due to security concerns, the advisory team and the task force maintained contact via telephone and email.<sup>352</sup>

Organizational improvements and the development of a new Criminal Intelligence/Analytical Unit significantly enhanced productivity of the Major Crimes Task Force. CSTC-A attributed much of this success to the leadership of Brigadier General Abdul Andarabi and reported that in the ten months since he assumed command, the task force opened 276 cases, including 112 corruption investigations, and made 148 arrests. During the seven month period before Andarabi's arrival, the task force opened 25 cases and made 36 arrests. Currently, the task force employed 130 personnel, including leadership, investigators, and support such as administrative assistants and drivers.<sup>353</sup>

According to CSTC-A, the Major Crimes Task Force had to contend with political interference from MoI, the Attorney General's Office, parliament, and other high ranking officials in nearly all significant cases. In some instances, General Andarabi defied direct orders from superiors attempting to derail task force investigations. Regarding some cases, investigators and staff were summoned to the parliament to endure questioning sessions on matters which had already been resolved. However, the task force did not have independent hiring authority and was dependent on MoI, which recently assigned it 13 new officers with no experience or training. In addition to

**Coalition advisors to the Major Crimes Task Force reported working to identify and remedy obstacles to the investigation of corruption cases by enhancing the training and operational capacity of investigators as well as by identifying strong cases to test the government's political will to fight corruption.**



dealing with unqualified personnel, the Major Crimes Task Force struggled to prevent agents of corrupt officials from penetrating the unit. To address these concerns, General Andarabi appointed an eight person committee to review all transfers into the task force to ensure that they meet minimum standards.<sup>354</sup>

According to CSTC-A, the Major Crimes Task Force improved its administrative capacity this quarter in terms of personnel, training, and logistics. However, additional workforce and resources were still needed. The Major Crimes Task Force has three embedded investigative prosecutors, but the Attorney General's Office lacked the transparency necessary to follow a majority of the task force's cases through to prosecution. Cases submitted by the Major Crimes Task Force to the Attorney General's Office were often lost to bureaucratic inaction in a system that affords little visibility.

CSTC-A reported that the task force's Crimes Scene Investigative Unit is proficient in processing crime scenes, including the collection and preservation of evidence. Laboratory analysis remained limited, and labs were not capable of DNA testing. Digital evidence also presented challenges. While the Major Crimes Task Force has the capability to extract basic data from mobile phones, they were not able to conduct forensic analysis of computers. The coalition forensic lab in Bagram provided this service, which CSTC-A maintained was not a sustainable solution.<sup>355</sup>

While CSTC-A reported general confidence in the Major Crimes Task Force, corruption and bureaucratic intransigence within the Attorney General's Office remained major obstacles to prosecution. All cases referred by the task force were requested to pass through multiple prosecution offices before ultimately being adjudicated. Each step in the process represented an opportunity for undue influence and bribery. The recently formed Anti-Corruption Justice Center represented an opportunity for improvement in this area. All investigators, prosecutors, and judges with the justice center were required to be vetted and polygraphed, although the Attorney General's Office pushed back against enforcing this rule.<sup>356</sup>

## Anti-Corruption Justice Center Opened for Business

The Anti-Corruption Justice Center, first established by presidential decree on June 30, 2016, and formally inaugurated on August 3, is tasked with investigating and prosecuting serious and high-profile corruption by senior government officials and powerful individuals at the national level.<sup>357</sup> The Justice Center, designed to remain independent from political and other outside pressure, employs specialized police, prosecution units, and judges under the same roof.<sup>358</sup> During this quarter, the justice center employed 35 personnel, including 14 judges, and had a budget of \$500,000 for its first four months, according to media sources.<sup>359</sup>

This quarter, CSTC-A reported that the Anti-Corruption Justice Center prosecuted two cases against major figures in its first two months. In the Center's first trial, held on November 12, 2016, the court convicted Azizi bank executive, Farid Ahmad,

**The Anti-Corruption Justice Center reported that as of December 3, 2016, it had 55 cases pending against high ranking officials.**

of embezzlement and forgery, sentencing him to 10 years and 8 months in prison. The second trial, on November 19, found Major General Abdulhai Jurat, who had previously headed the prosecution unit of the Attorney General's Office, guilty of accepting a bribe. He was sentenced to two and a half years in prison and assessed a fine roughly equal to \$750<sup>360</sup> (the value of the bribe he was convicted of accepting<sup>361</sup>). Both trials were open to the public with media present. The Anti-Corruption Justice Center reported that as of December 3, 2016, it had 55 cases pending against high ranking officials.<sup>362</sup>

Afghanistan's attorney general, Farid Hamidi, pledged that the Anti-Corruption Justice Center would pursue major corruption cases involving large sums of money, which stood in contrast to the relatively small amount in the recent matter of the conviction of General Jurat, a career military prosecutor who accepted a bribe. However, Afghan officials explained that the defendant in this case was more significant than the dollar figure. By convicting General Jurat, the Justice Center sought to demonstrate that influential individuals within the Attorney General's Office are no longer immune from justice themselves. "We want to show that we are serious, and we want to start by cleaning our own yard," Hamidi told reporters.<sup>363</sup>



Standing in one of the new court rooms of the Afghan Anti-Corruption Justice Center, Major General Richard G. Kaiser, Commanding General of CSTC-A speaks to Afghan officials in charge of fighting corruption. (DoD photo)







Members of Able Platoon, 1st Squadron, 3rd Cavalry Regiment, and 817th Expeditionary Air Support Operations Squadron fly in a CH-47 Chinook. (U.S. Air Force photo)

# COMPLETED OVERSIGHT ACTIVITY

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Outreach	70
Completed Audit, Inspection, and Evaluation Projects	72
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# COMPLETED OVERSIGHT ACTIVITY

As required by Section 8L of the Inspector General Act, the Lead IG is responsible for planning, conducting, and reporting on oversight of overseas contingency operations. This section of the report provides information on Lead IG staffing approaches to perform these oversight functions; outreach efforts by Lead IG agencies; completed Lead IG oversight work related to audits, inspections, and evaluations during the past 3-month period, October 1, 2016 through December 31, 2016; Lead IG investigative activity; and the OIGs' hotline activities.

USAID has ongoing efforts in Afghanistan but no OFS-related programs or activities. As a result, the USAID OIG conducts audits and investigations in Afghanistan and coordinates these activities as appropriate with other audit and law enforcement organizations.

## Lead IG Staffing

The Lead IG agencies use dedicated, rotational, and temporary employees to conduct oversight projects, investigate fraud and corruption, and perform various operational activities, such as strategic planning and reporting. Each Lead IG agency has hired new staff through the special hiring authority provided within 5 U.S.C. § 3161, and the re-employment of annuitants provided within 10 U.S.C. § 9902, and has assigned existing permanent staff to perform Lead IG work.

The Lead IG agencies have adopted an expeditionary workforce model to support audit, evaluation, and inspection efforts. Oversight teams from the Lead IG agencies travel to Afghanistan and other locations in the region on a temporary basis to conduct the field work for their respective projects. The DoD OIG established a field office in Afghanistan to support its regional activity with a small contingent of oversight staff assigned to the office on 6-month rotations. The DoS OIG also maintains a field office in Embassy Kabul with a small contingent of oversight staff on 1-year assignments.

For their investigative work, the Lead IG agencies use deployed criminal investigators to the region, and from the United States, to investigate OFS-related fraud and corruption. The Defense Criminal Investigative Service (DCIS), which is the DoD OIG's investigative component, has deployed special agents to Afghanistan, and DoS OIG has special agents on 1-year tours in Afghanistan and maintains a regional office in Germany.

## Outreach

Outreach and coordination continue to be important aspects of Lead IG work. Keeping the Congress informed on critical issues, travel into the theater of operation, and coordination with oversight partners and agency officials contribute to the Lead IG agencies' understanding of the issues affecting OFS and support oversight efforts.

During the quarter, the Acting DoD IG continued to highlight Lead IG efforts and common audit issues in his quarterly meetings with the Service Inspector Generals and the Service Auditors General. Investigative briefings and the OIGs' Hotline are other avenues for outreach that are discussed later in this section.

In February 2017, the Acting DoD IG, in his role as Lead IG, the DoS IG, and the USAID IG will travel into the OFS theater of operations to meet with military commanders, embassy officials, and USAID administrators. The purpose of these meetings is to discuss the Lead IG responsibilities, activities, and challenges, as well as learn about the challenges and environment facing the commanders and coalition

## Lead IG Agencies Recognized for Exemplary Service

On October 20, 2016, the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency recognized employees of the DoD OIG, the DoS OIG, and USAID OIG with one of its top awards, the Glenn/Roth Award for Exemplary Service, for their outstanding work on Lead IG oversight of overseas contingency operations. The Glenn/Roth Award for Exemplary Service recognizes the work and behavior of the individual or group that has provided demonstrated value to the Congress as it relates to Congress' ability to enact legislation or perform oversight that improves the effectiveness and efficiency of Government programs.

The Glenn/Roth award recognized the combined efforts of OIG personnel from the DoD, the DoS, and USAID to provide independent, relevant, timely, and effective oversight of overseas contingency operations, and the programs and operations which support those contingency operations. This whole of government model enabled each inspector general to plan and conduct oversight of overseas contingency operations and related programs with less duplication of effort and an improved application of resources. This structure has enabled the Lead IG agencies to provide more comprehensive oversight of the nation's overseas contingency operations.

*The Glenn/Roth Award was named after the late Senator John Glenn of Ohio, and the late Senator William Roth of Delaware. The Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency is an independent entity established within the executive branch to address integrity, economy and effectiveness issues that transcend individual Government agencies and aid in the establishment of a professional, well-trained and highly skilled workforce in the Offices of Inspectors General.*

officials involved with OFS and the delivery of humanitarian assistance in the region. This is the first time that all three IG's responsible for Lead IG reporting have traveled in theater together, and it reflects our commitment to a coordinated and whole of government approach to oversight of overseas contingency operations.

## COMPLETED AUDIT, INSPECTION, AND EVALUATION PROJECTS

Lead IG agencies and partners released four reports relating to OFS from October 1, 2016, through December 31, 2016. These projects examined controls over direct assistance funding, intelligence training, embassy contract management, and construction at Kandahar Airfield.

### IGs Discuss Management Challenges

On December 8, 2016, the IGs for the DoS and USAID testified before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, Subcommittee on State Department and USAID Management, International Operations, and Bilateral International Development about their top management challenges and opportunities for the next Administration. During the hearing, DoS IG Linick and USAID IG Calvaresi Barr described the close cooperation among the three Lead IG agencies in the oversight of overseas contingency operations and the challenges evident in such high-risk environments.

IG Linick testified about several of the issues of paramount importance to DoS operations in a contingency environment, including the security of embassies and their personnel, the need for proper emergency action plans, and the safeguarding of information. IG Linick noted that an inspection identified life, health, and safety risks to building occupants due to hazardous spikes in electrical current in both the office and apartment complexes at Embassy Kabul.

The DoD OIG included the FY 2017 top management challenges in its FY 2017 Oversight Plan. Several of these challenges, in particular countering the terrorist threat and contract management, relate to overseas contingency operations. The DoD OIG identified these challenges based on its oversight work, research, and judgment; oversight work done by other components within the DoD; input from DoD leaders; and oversight projects by the GAO.

## Final Reports

### DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL OVERSIGHT

#### ***The Combined Security Transition Command–Afghanistan Needs to Strengthen the Controls Over U.S. Direct Assistance Funding***

DODIG-2017-027, December 1, 2016

This DoD OIG report is one in a series of DoD OIG audits and evaluations regarding U.S. direct assistance provided to the Afghan government. The objective of these reviews is to determine if Combined Security Transition Command–Afghanistan and the Afghan government have established and implemented effective controls over the contract management process for both the Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of Interior. The DoD OIG initiated the series of audits in response to the FY 2015 National Defense Authorization Act, which required that the DoD OIG conduct a comprehensive assessment of the financial management capacity and risks within the Afghanistan Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Interior.

The DoD OIG found that the Afghan government initiated several measures to strengthen controls over the ministries' contract management process, specifically in the establishment of the National Procurement Authority and National Procurement Commission. However, additional controls are needed as the ministries allowed Afghan provincial leaders to enter into informal agreements with contractors without the authority to obligate the ministry, and did not identify areas of high risk in the procurement process. In addition, Combined Security Transition Command–Afghanistan did not penalize Afghan officials effectively for commitment letter violations.

The DoD OIG recommended that the Commander, Combined Security Transition Command–Afghanistan assist the Ministry of Interior with centralizing its procurement process to eliminate provincial leaders' ability to enter into informal agreement with contractors and implement additional controls to improve continuing shortfalls the contracting process. The management actions taken during the audit addressed the recommendation, obviating the need for additional recommendations. However, as U.S. direct assistance funding continues to be vulnerable to fraud, waste, and abuse, the DoD OIG will continue to monitor progress in implementing the corrective actions to address these issues.

#### ***Evaluation of U.S. Forces–Afghanistan Intelligence Training for Afghan Ministry of Defense***

DODIG-2017-025, November 21, 2016

The DoD OIG initiated this project to assess the effectiveness of the U.S. intelligence train, advise, and assist mission in support of the NATO Resolute Support mission, with a particular focus on the U.S. intelligence training to the Afghan Ministry of Defense. The DoD OIG found that despite relevant and focused training provided by U.S. forces, challenges existed which prevented Afghan security forces from achieving full benefits from that training.



The DoD OIG recommended that the USFOR-A provide incentives to Afghan ministries through the commitment letter process, in order to encourage the Ministry of Defense to meet intelligence fusion, training, and equipment maintenance goals established by their ministerial development plan. The USFOR-A did not concur with the recommendation, and instead asked if they could use incentives to achieve desired outcomes. The DoD OIG requested that the USFOR-A identify specific incentives.

Additionally, the report recommends that Resolute Support establish a training plan that would contribute to the achievement of established EF 7 (intelligence) milestones. Resolute Support did not concur with the recommendation, indicating that intelligence training is already being conducted and tracked. However, because the DoD OIG identified obstacles in the training program, it requested that Resolute Support provide an “objective training plan that mitigates identified training obstacles.”

Command responses to both DoD OIG requests are expected next quarter. This report is classified.

## **DEPARTMENT OF STATE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL OVERSIGHT**

### ***Management Assistance Report: Contract Management—Lessons Learned From Embassy Kabul, Afghanistan, Operations and Maintenance Contract***

AUD-MERO-17-04, October 5, 2016

The DoS OIG issued a Management Assistance Report concerning the \$119 million Operations and Maintenance contract for Embassy Kabul. This contract required the contractor to provide engineering, management, logistics, and administrative services to operate and maintain the Embassy Compound and its support facilities. During an audit, the DoS OIG found that the contract’s statement of work lacked sufficient performance metrics (specific tasks) to adequately assess the contractor’s performance in fulfilling contract requirements. The DoS OIG found that because the requirements were overly general, the contract did not require performance of specific tasks, and as a result the contractor did not consistently perform adequate preventative maintenance functions, causing major equipment systems to fail or to work improperly.

Additionally, the DoS OIG identified an insufficient number of qualified contract oversight staff, leading to individuals without proper authority directing work. Further, the DoS lacked the historical records necessary to remove the contractor, had performance not improved.

Finally, the DoS OIG found that the contracting officer added three services, at a cost of \$11.8 million, to the operations and maintenance contract that were outside of the contract’s scope. The DoS OIG found that the addition of these services to the operations and maintenance contract lacked full and open competition.

The DoS OIG issued the Management Assistance Report to assist the DoS in the ongoing drafting of a worldwide operations and maintenance contract. In the report, the DoS OIG made three recommendations to the DoS Bureau of Administration to ensure that the new operations and maintenance contract contains adequate performance measures. The DoS OIG made two further recommendations to the DoS Bureau of Overseas Building Operations to ensure sufficient oversight of contracts in the future. Both bureaus and Embassy Kabul concurred with the DoS OIG recommendations.

## **SPECIAL INSPECTOR GENERAL FOR AFGHANISTAN RECONSTRUCTION OVERSIGHT**

### ***Special Mission Wing Facilities at Kandahar Airfield: Construction Generally Met Contract Requirements, but Problems with Noncompliance, Maintenance, and Quality Assurance Need to be Addressed***

SIGAR-17-03-IP, October 14, 2016

SIGAR initiated this project to determine whether the Air Force made cost-effective purchases on the performance-based logistics contract to support the E-8C Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System aircraft. SIGAR found that the contract did not promote cost effectiveness.

On September 15, 2000, the Air Force Space and Special Systems awarded a cost-plus-award-fee contract to Northrop Grumman Corporation to provide Total System Support Responsibility services to sustain 16 E-8C Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System aircraft. SIGAR found that the Special Mission Wing's 2nd Air Squadron's facilities and infrastructure were generally constructed in accordance with contract requirements and technical specifications. However, the Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System contracting officer did not promote cost effectiveness and paid unallowable award fees totaling \$7.6 million, which could have been put to better use.

SIGAR recommended that the Senior Center Contracting Official, Robins Air Force Base, direct the contracting officer to: 1) establish adequate oversight procedures for over and above repairs; 2) establish cost performance incentives; and 3) perform an alternative airframe study to identify the most cost effective airframe platform to support Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System aircraft.

Comments from the Program Executive Officer for Battle Management, in collaboration with the Senior Center Contracting Official, Robins Air Force Base, addressed all specifics of the recommendations and no further response is required.

## INVESTIGATIONS

Lead IG agencies conduct investigative activity through the DCIS and the DoS OIG criminal investigative components. During the quarter, these components maintained an investigative presence at in-theater locations, including Afghanistan, Pakistan, Germany, and the United States.

These Lead IG agency components and representatives from the military criminal investigative organizations form the Fraud and Corruption Investigative Working Group. SIGAR and the Federal Bureau of Investigation are collaborating agencies. The USAID OIG does not participate in the Working Group for OFS and does not have investigations specific to OFS.

The members of the Working Group work together to detect, investigate, and prevent fraud and corruption in OFS-related programs and operations. During the quarter, the Working Group representatives synchronized investigative operations and de-conflicted information across 22 investigations.

### Investigative Activity

During the quarter, the Lead IG investigative components and the military investigative organizations initiated four new OFS-related investigations. Two investigations were closed during the period.

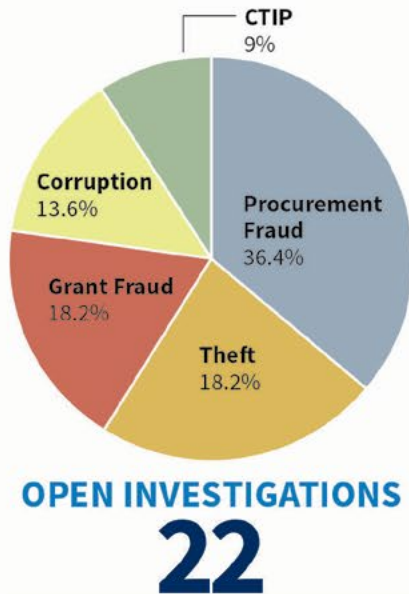
As of December 31, 2016, 22 investigations involving OFS-related programs and operations remained open. These investigations involved allegations of procurement, grant, and other program fraud; corruption involving U.S. government officials; theft and diversion of government funds or equipment; and trafficking in persons. These open investigations do not include “legacy cases” that the DCIS and the DoS OIG special agents are continuing to pursue related to actions committed during Operation Enduring Freedom, the combat mission in Afghanistan that concluded in December 2014, or in investigations that SIGAR is conducting.

### DCIS Leads New Trafficking in Persons Initiative

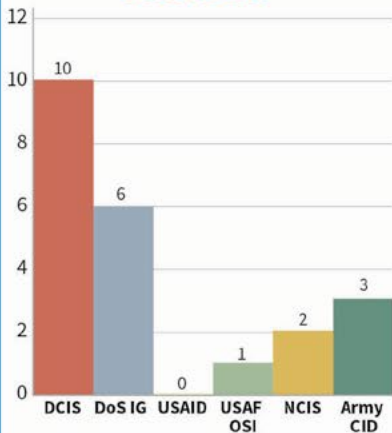
In December 2016, the DCIS published new policy guidance for all DCIS agents on the conduct of Trafficking in Persons investigations. The DCIS Trafficking in Persons Investigations Program is responsible for and addresses allegations of trafficking in persons that relate to or affect a DoD contract, subcontract (any tier), contractor, subcontractor (any tier), or a U.S. military installation. Trafficking in persons includes forced labor, involuntary servitude, debt bondage, document tampering, and sex trafficking. The DCIS opened two trafficking in persons investigations related to OFS this quarter.

# ACTIVITY BY FRAUD AND CORRUPTION INVESTIGATIVE WORKING GROUP

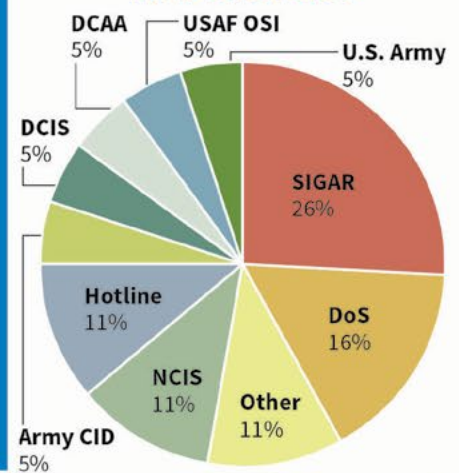
OPERATION FREEDOM'S SENTINEL  
As of December 31, 2016



## OPEN INVESTIGATIONS BY WORKING GROUP MEMBER\*



## SOURCES OF ALLEGATIONS



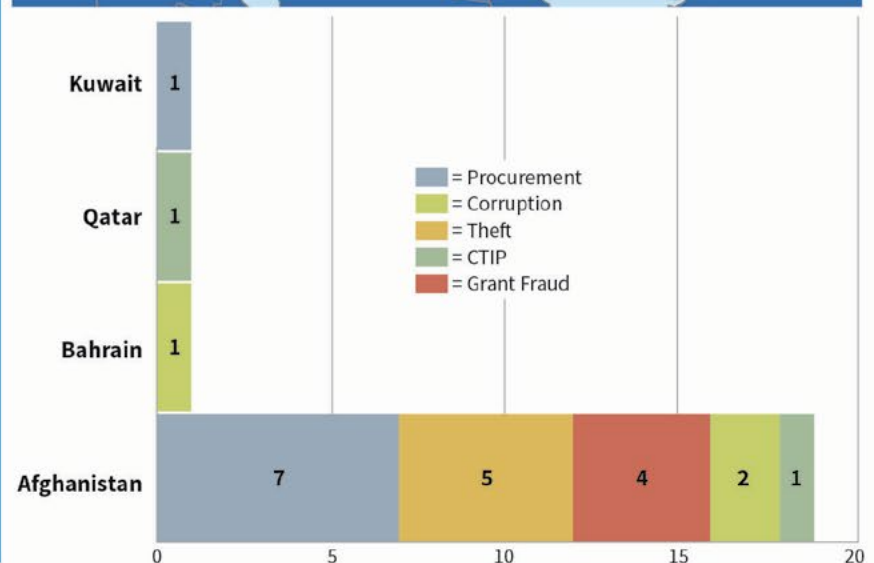
## Q1 FY 2015 RESULTS

Arrests	—
Criminal Charges	—
Criminal Convictions	—
Savings/Recoveries	—
Suspensions/Debarments	49
Job Terminations	—
Personnel Actions	46
Systemic Program Changes	1

## Q1 FY 2017 BRIEFINGS

No. of Briefings	19
No. of Attendees	87

## PRIMARY OFFENSE LOCATIONS



\*Some investigations are being worked jointly by more than one agency. Therefore, the total number of open cases by FCIWG Agency may not equal the total number of open investigations. **Note:** Cumulative since Jan. 1, 2015



## Fraud Awareness Briefings Continue

During this quarter, each of the Lead IG investigative components and the military investigative organizations conducted fraud awareness briefings to educate individuals on the investigative mission and how to identify indicators of fraud. In total, investigators led 19 fraud awareness briefings attended by over 85 government, civilian, and military personnel; contractors; law enforcement personnel; and foreign officials. These briefings promote fraud awareness, help develop relationships, and uncover information about potential fraud and corruption in government programs.

A consolidated look at the activities of these investigative components during this quarter can be found in the dashboard on the previous page.

## HOTLINE ACTIVITY

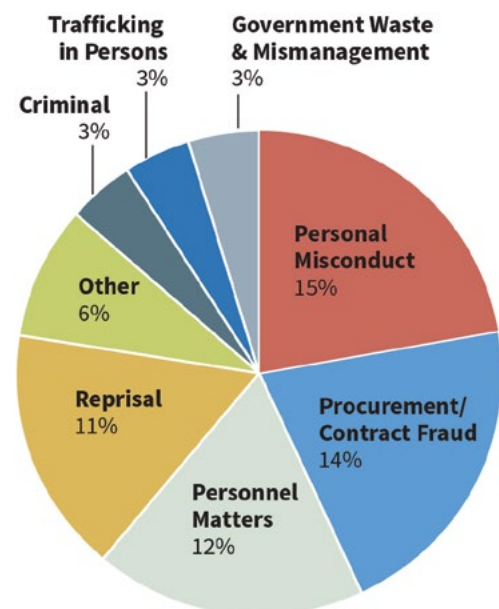
The OIGs' hotlines provide a confidential, reliable means for individuals to report violations of law, rule or regulation; mismanagement; gross waste of funds; and abuse of authority for independent review.

Each Lead IG agency maintains its own hotline to receive complaints and contacts specific to their own agency. Hotline representatives process the complaints they receive and then refer these complaints in accordance with their respective protocols. Any hotline complaint that merits referral is sent to the responsible organization for investigation or informational purposes.

The DoD OIG has assigned an investigator to coordinate the contacts received among the Lead IG agencies and others as appropriate. During the quarter, the investigator received and coordinated 81 contacts related to OFS and opened 67 cases, which were referred within DoD OIG, to other Lead IG agencies, or to other investigative organizations. As noted in Figure 3, the majority of the complaints received during this quarter related to personal misconduct, procurement or contract administration irregularities, personnel matters, and allegations of reprisal.

Figure 3.

Hotline Activity









A U.S. Air Force F-16 Fighting Falcon refuels from a KC-135 Stratotanker in support of an Operation Freedom's Sentinel mission over Afghanistan. (U.S. Air Force photo)

# ONGOING AND PLANNED OVERSIGHT ACTIVITY

Strategic Planning	82
Ongoing Projects	84
Planned Projects	90



# ONGOING AND PLANNED OVERSIGHT ACTIVITY

This section of the report discusses the ongoing Lead IG strategic planning process as well as ongoing and planned audit, inspection, and evaluation work. The ongoing and planned oversight projects, as of December 31, 2016, are listed in separate tables.

## STRATEGIC PLANNING

As required by Section 8L, the Lead IG must develop and carry out a joint strategic plan, which is updated annually, to guide comprehensive oversight of programs and operations for each OCO. This effort includes reviewing and analyzing completed independent oversight, internal management, and other relevant reports to identify systemic problems, trends, lessons learned, and best practices to inform future oversight projects.

### FY 2017 Plan Issued

During the last 6 months of FY 2016, the Lead IG representatives, SIGAR, and other partner oversight agencies coordinated efforts to examine major oversight areas, identify oversight gaps, and decide how to balance oversight resources against identified oversight priorities. These representatives considered many factors in identifying the relevant strategic oversight objectives, which included coalition objectives; congressional appropriations that support military, diplomatic, and humanitarian activities; major departmental management challenges each agency has identified; and feedback from departmental and congressional stakeholders. In the planning process, the representatives considered the practical challenges that conducting oversight of an overseas contingency operation presents to both oversight agencies and implementing agencies, including the limited size of the U.S. footprint, the dynamic nature of the conflict, the security situation, and the availability of transportation into and within the theater.

This strategic planning activity resulted in the *FY 2017 Joint Strategic Oversight Plan for Afghanistan*. The plan covers oversight of the ongoing activities in Afghanistan and Southwest Asia, oversight of the U.S. military mission and counterterrorism activities related to OFS, and the continuing U.S. reconstruction activities geared to empower the government of Afghanistan's economic and social development.

This plan, effective October 1, 2016, was included in the *FY 2017 Comprehensive Oversight Plan for Overseas Contingency Operations*. The document can be found at [http://www.dodig.mil/IGInformation/archives/FY2017\\_COP\\_OCO\\_Oct2016.pdf](http://www.dodig.mil/IGInformation/archives/FY2017_COP_OCO_Oct2016.pdf).



Lead IG Projects for FY 2017

The Joint Strategic Oversight Plan for Afghanistan organizes Afghanistan-related oversight projects into eight strategic oversight areas. These strategic oversight areas are listed in Table 6.

Table 6.  
FY 2017 Strategic Oversight Areas

Building the capacity and capabilities of the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces and administering and maintaining accountability of the Afghanistan Security Forces Fund
Building Afghan governance capacity and sustaining U.S. investment in Afghan institutions and infrastructure
Implementing and executing anti-corruption and counternarcotics programs
Awarding and administering reconstruction contracts
Property management
Contract management and oversight
Transition from the Resolute Support Mission to a more traditional (peacetime military engagement) U.S.-Afghanistan security cooperation relationship
Intelligence and counterterrorism

FY 2018 Planning

The DoD OIG plans to host a meeting during the next quarter to begin the FY 2018 joint strategic planning process for Afghanistan. Representatives from the Lead IG agencies and SIGAR will meet to discuss oversight planning efforts and identify the strategic oversight areas necessary for FY 2018 oversight planning. Part of this discussion will involve exploring whether the current strategic oversight areas are appropriate for FY 2018 or if other oversight areas should be used instead. The representatives will continue meeting to refine the details of FY 2018 strategic oversight areas and begin project planning consistent with these areas.

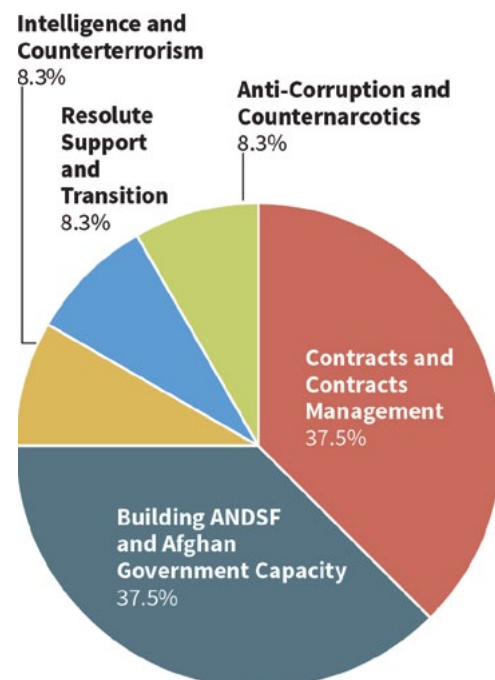
## ONGOING PROJECTS

As of December 31, 2016, the Lead IG agencies and oversight partners had 26 ongoing projects directly related to OFS. The discussion that follows highlights some of the ongoing projects by oversight area. Table 7 provides the project title and objective for each of these ongoing projects.

- Building ANDSF and Afghan Government Capacity:** Nine projects are ongoing related to two strategic oversight areas—building capacity and capability in the ANDSF and Afghan government. The DoD OIG is assessing the U.S. and coalition efforts to enable the Afghan Ministry of Defense to develop oversight and internal control capabilities. The DoS OIG is conducting an inspection of the Embassy of Islamabad (and constituent posts) to determine whether the Chief of Mission is effectively coordinating and supporting security and counterterrorism activities in the region. The GAO is examining the capability of ANDSF's major weapons systems and how this equipment supports the overall strategy for the ANDSF. SIGAR has ongoing projects related to the Afghanistan Financial Management Information System; the Army Research Laboratory contracting efforts, planning during the reconstruction effort in Afghanistan, and non-intrusive border-crossing inspection equipment. In addition, the DoD OIG and SIGAR have ongoing projects related to allegations of child sexual abuse by members of the ANDSF.
- Anti-Corruption and Counternarcotics:** The DoD OIG has an ongoing audit to determine whether the DoD effectively supported counternarcotics requirements agreed upon between the Department of Justice and DoD. The DoS OIG is conducting an audit of a counternarcotics police reform program in Afghanistan and Pakistan.
- Contracts and Contract Management:** Nine oversight projects are examining specific contracts, contract management and controls, or OCO funding. The DoD OIG is conducting audits regarding the reliability of Navy financial data reported for OFS and the effectiveness of oversight controls of ministry fuel contracts. The DoS OIG is conducting three audits, one is related to the oversight of invoices for OCO contracts, another involves the award process for embassy support services, and a third on DoS's acceptance of construction work in Kabul. The GAO is reviewing the DoD's use of OCO funds. SIGAR has five ongoing inspection projects to determine if these specific projects were completed in accordance with contract requirement and applicable construction standards, and that the constructed projects are being maintained and used as intended.

Figure 4.

Ongoing Projects by Strategic Oversight Area



- **Resolute Support and Transition:** The DoD OIG is conducting a follow-up inspection related to the compliance of the Kandahar Air Field facilities with DoD health and safety policies and standards, and SIGAR has a project assessing the extent to which the Afghan government uses and sustains assets transferred from DoD to the Afghan government.
- **Intelligence and Counterterrorism:** Two ongoing oversight projects focus on this strategic oversight area. The DoD OIG is evaluating intelligence training for MoD forces and the airborne intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance allocation process. The DoS OIG is auditing the antiterrorism assistance program regarding oversight monitoring and outcome metrics.

## Military Service Auditor Generals Have Long Served as Oversight Partners

Since 2005, the Military Service Auditor Generals, as members of the DoD oversight community, have conducted audits of military operations in theater. The U.S. Army Audit Agency and Naval Audit Service are continuing their work to contribute to the Lead IG oversight efforts. The Air Force Audit Agency conducts oversight in theater that is outside the OFS mission.

The U.S. Army Audit Agency has deployed auditors to Afghanistan, Iraq, Kuwait and other countries located in Southwest Asia. In June 2014, the Army Audit Agency went from a permanent staff of 30 auditors in theater to an expeditionary team structure. The expeditionary approach allows Army Audit Agency staff to conduct requested work by deployed Commanders in the logistics, contracting, financial management, property accountability, and readiness areas. In FY 2016, the Army Audit Agency completed an audit to verify that sexual assault victims could successfully seek immediate assistance using the Army's 24X7 sexual assault helpline phone numbers posted on the DoD Safe Helpline.

To support OFS, the Army Audit Agency is planning to audit the financial accuracy and timeliness of OFS financial data (obligations and disbursements) that supports the Cost of War Report. This project is scheduled to begin by the end of FY 2017. (See Planned Projects list, on page 91.)

The Naval Audit Service has been conducting audits of naval operations in Afghanistan, Iraq, Kuwait and other countries located in Southwest Asia, in various functional areas, such as logistics, financial management, property accountability, and readiness. During FY 2017, the Naval Audit Service is planning an audit of the Department of the Navy's obligations and disbursements supporting OCOs, including OFS. (See Planned Projects list, on page 91.)



Table 7.

**Ongoing Oversight Projects, as of 12/31/2016**

<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Objective</b>
<b>DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL</b>	
<i><b>Allegations of Child Sexual Abuse by Members of the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces</b></i>	To focus on answering a number of specific questions, including DoD implementation of Title 10 Leahy Laws regarding human rights violations, raised by several Members of Congress and congressional staff.
<i><b>Audit of Reliability of Navy Financial Data Reported for Operation Freedom's Sentinel</b></i>	To determine whether the U.S. Navy has adequate accountability of DoD funds supporting OFS by determining the accuracy of obligations and disbursements, as reported in the <i>Cost of War</i> report for select Navy appropriations.
<i><b>Assessment of U.S. and Coalition Efforts to Enable the Afghan Ministry of Defense to Develop its Oversight and Internal Control Capability</b></i>	To determine whether the Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan and the Afghan MoD and MoI have established and implemented effective controls over the contract management process. This project is part of a series of audits related to U.S. direct assistance for the ANDSF.
<i><b>Audit of Controls Over Afghanistan Ministry of Defense Fuel Contracts</b></i>	To determine whether CSTC-A and the Afghan MoD have established effective controls for oversight of MoD fuel contracts.
<i><b>Evaluation of Airborne Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance Supporting Counterterrorism Operations in Afghanistan</b></i>	To determine if USFOR-A's airborne intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance allocation process is supporting U.S. counterterrorism operations.
<i><b>Kandahar Air Field Afghanistan Follow-up Inspection</b></i>	To determine whether U.S. military-occupied facilities supporting Overseas Contingency Operations comply with Department of Defense health and safety policies and standards regarding electrical, fire protection systems
<i><b>Audit of DoD Support for Counternarcotics Requirements</b></i>	To determine 1) whether DoD effectively supported counternarcotics requirements agreed upon between the Department of Justice and DoD, and 2) how DoD used funding to support those requirements.
<b>DEPARTMENT OF STATE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL</b>	
<i><b>Inspection of Embassy Islamabad and Constituent Posts</b></i>	As part of the inspection of Embassy Islamabad, to determine whether the Chief of Mission is effectively coordinating and supporting security and counterterrorism activities in Pakistan. This project will include a classified component.
<i><b>Audit of the Antiterrorism Assistance Program in Countries Under the Department of State Bureaus of Near Eastern Affairs and South and Central Asian Affairs</b></i>	To determine the extent to which the Bureaus of Diplomatic Security and Counterterrorism have 1) developed specific, measureable, and outcome-oriented goals and objectives; 2) developed and implemented an evaluation process to assess host country performance; and 3) established letters of agreement with host countries for sustaining the Antiterrorism Assistance programs. The audit will also assess the bureaus' contract monitoring and oversight, and invoice review processes.

<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Objective</b>
<b><i>Audit of Contracting Officer Representatives Responsibility for Overseeing Invoices for Overseas Contingency Operations Contracts</i></b>	To 1) determine whether invoice review policies and procedures, training, staffing, invoice review practices, and accountability measures are sufficient to support overseas contingency operations; and 2) ensure invoice payments are reviewed in accordance with Federal requirements and Department guidance.
<b><i>Audit of Afghanistan Life Support Services Contract Planning &amp; Solicitation and Award Process</i></b>	To determine whether the DoS is planning and implementing the solicitation and award process for the Afghanistan Life Support Services contract in accordance with acquisition regulations and Department guidance.
<b><i>Audit of Counternarcotics and Police Reform Program Compliance Follow-up in Pakistan and Afghanistan</i></b>	To determine whether Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs has 1) complied with prior OIG recommendations to implement performance measurement plans for its programs in Pakistan and Afghanistan, monitored progress towards its program goals, and funded its programs appropriately; and 2) applied the recommendations to its programs in other countries.
<b><i>Audit of Embassy Kabul Construction and Commissioning</i></b>	To determine whether the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations followed DoS policies and guidance governing the affirmation of substantial completion and final acceptance of construction projects at U.S. Embassy Kabul.
<b>GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE</b>	
<b><i>DoD's Use of Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) Funds</i></b>	To determine 1) the amount of obligated war funds DoD has authorized or appropriated with the OCO/Global War on Terror or emergency designation and the extent to which DoD has identified and reported these obligations; 2) the extent to which Congress has appropriated war funds for non-war purposes; 3) the extent to which DoD has applied the Office of Management and Budget or other criteria in identifying costs for inclusion in its war funding requests; and 4) the extent to which DoD has established and implemented guidance and a plan with milestones for transitioning enduring OCO costs to its base budget.
<b><i>Afghan Defense &amp; Security Forces' Equipment and Capability</i></b>	To 1) outline all major weapon systems and equipment procured for the ANDSF, consistent with the program of record; 2) summarize how such weapon systems and equipment support the overall strategy for the ANDSF; 3) describe the current capability and capacity of the ANDSF to operate and sustain such weapon systems and equipment; and 4) identify gaps in ANDSF capability given the evolving security situation and overall strategy.

Project Title	Objective
<b>SPECIAL INSPECTOR GENERAL FOR AFGHANISTAN RECONSTRUCTION</b>	
<b><i>DoD Oversight of Infrastructure Projects Transferred to the Afghan Government</i></b>	To assess the 1) extent to which the Afghan government uses and sustains assets transferred from DoD; and 2) challenges, if any, that DoD faces in overseeing the use and sustainment of infrastructure that has been transferred to the Afghan government.
<b><i>Use of the Afghanistan Financial Management Information System to Track and Monitor U.S. Direct Assistance Funding to the Afghan Government</i></b>	To 1) describe how the Afghan government uses the Afghanistan Financial Management Information System to track and monitor U.S. direct assistance funds; 2) identify the capabilities and weaknesses of the Afghanistan Financial Management Information System for tracking and monitoring U.S. direct assistance funds; and 3) determine the extent to which U.S. agencies are working with the Afghan Ministry of Finance to address weaknesses within the system.
<b><i>Award, Administration, and Performance of Legacy Research Contracts</i></b>	To determine the extent to which 1) the Army Research Laboratory developed and awarded legacy contracts in accordance with its broad agency announcements for research and analysis contracts, and DoD and federal regulations; 2) the Army Research Laboratory provided oversight of the tasks performed by Imperatis and New Century Consulting in accordance with the broad agency agreements and terms of the contracts; and 3) Imperatis and New Century Consulting performed tasks in accordance with the Army Research Laboratory broad agency agreements and terms of the contracts.
<b><i>Inspection of the Ministry of Interior's Headquarters Complex</i></b>	To assess whether 1) the work was completed in accordance with contract requirements and applicable construction standards; and 2) the complex is being maintained and used as intended.
<b><i>Inspection of the Afghanistan Defense Ministry Headquarters Support and Security Brigade Expansion Phase II</i></b>	To assess whether 1) the work was completed in accordance with contract requirements and applicable construction standards; and 2) the complex is being maintained and used as intended.
<b><i>Inspection of Afghan National Army Camp Commando Phase III</i></b>	To assess whether 1) the work was completed in accordance with contract requirements and applicable construction standards; and 2) the project is being maintained and used as intended.
<b><i>Inspection of Afghan National Army Camp Commando Phase IV</i></b>	To assess whether 1) the work was completed in accordance with contract requirements and applicable construction standards; and 2) the project is being maintained and used as intended.
<b><i>Inspection of the Afghan National Army's Ground Forces Command, Garrison Support Unit, and Army Support Command</i></b>	To assess whether 1) the work was completed in accordance with contract requirements and applicable construction standards; and 2) the project is being maintained and used as intended.

Project Title	Objective
<b><i>Review of the U.S. Government's Implementation of 22 U.S.C. §2378d and 10 U.S.C. §2249e, Commonly Referred To As The "Leahy Law"</i></b>	To determine whether the Leahy Law may prohibit assistance to the ANDSF. The Leahy Law prohibits DoD and DoS from providing assistance to units of foreign security forces.
<b><i>Security Sector Reconstruction</i></b>	To trace the role that strategy and planning played throughout the U.S. reconstruction effort in Afghanistan, and answer the following questions: 1) What were the U.S. policy goals for the ANDSF, why, and how did these goals evolve, and what were the implications on ANDSF design? 2) What were the various designs considered for the ANDSF, why were they chosen, and why did they evolve? 3) How well was the ANDSF design implemented (inputs and outputs)? 4) How well have the ANDSF achieved expected strategic outcomes and why? 5) What are the critical policy and strategy lessons learned from Afghan security sector reconstruction? More than one report may be produced.
<b><i>Non-Intrusive Inspection Equipment of Afghan Border Crossing Points</i></b>	To examine the quantity, types, and costs of non-intrusive inspection equipment purchased with Department funding for installation and use at Afghanistan's border crossing points, and assess the extent to which such equipment is currently being maintained and used as intended.



215th Corps, 2/3 Kandak course graduation. (Resolute Support Media photo)





## PLANNED PROJECTS

As of December 31, 2016, the Lead IG agencies and their oversight partners plan to start 22 oversight projects related to OFS by the end of FY 2017. The discussion that follows highlights some of these planned projects by oversight area. At this time, the Lead IG agencies and their oversight partners do not have projects they plan to start during FY 2017 in the Resolute Support and Transition oversight area. Table 8 provides the project title and objective for each of these ongoing projects.

**Expeditionary Maintenance Squadron engine technicians conduct an operations check on an F-16 Fighting Falcon at Bagram Airfield. (U.S. Air Force photo)**

- Building ANDSF and Afghan Government Capacity:** Seventeen projects are planned related to two strategic oversight areas—building capacity and capability in the ANDSF and Afghan government. The Army Audit Agency and Naval Audit Service are planning projects related to the OCO obligations and disbursements for OFS. The DoD OIG is planning two projects to evaluate the U.S. and coalition train, advise, and assist efforts. One project involves the Afghan Ministry of Interior ability to develop effective and efficient oversight capabilities and the other involves the AAF.
 

SIGAR has 13 planned projects in this oversight area. These projects include the AAF use and maintenance of its Mi-17 fleet, the Afghan Special Mission Wing's use and maintenance of its PC-12 fleet, equipment requirements for the ANDSF, effectiveness of on-budget assistance to the Afghan ministries, and reviews of Commander's Emergency Response Program funds.
- Anti-Corruption and Counternarcotics:** SIGAR has one planned project to determine the extent to which counternarcotics police specialized units are achieving their goals.
- Contracts and Contract Management:** The DoS OIG has two planned projects. One is to audit the construction of the new embassy compound in Islamabad and another to audit the Department's invoice review process in Afghanistan.
- Intelligence and Counterterrorism:** The DoD OIG has two planned projects. One involves biometric enabled intelligence and the other is follow-up on implementation of prior DoD OIG recommendations.

Table 8.

**Planned Projects, as of 12/31/2016**

<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Objective</b>
<b>ARMY AUDIT AGENCY</b>	
<i><b>Audit of the Army's Reporting of Obligations and Expenditures for Operation Freedom's Sentinel</b></i>	To verify the accuracy of the Army's obligations and disbursements reported in the Cost of War report for Operation Freedom's Sentinel.
<b>DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE INSPECTOR GENERAL</b>	
<i><b>Evaluations of U.S. and Coalition Efforts to Train, Advise, and Assist the Afghan Air Force</b></i>	To evaluate the U.S. and coalition progress toward, and its planned efforts to accomplish, the Train, Advise, and Assist Command--Air mission of training, advising, and assisting their Afghan partners to develop into a professional, capable, and sustainable Air Force.
<i><b>Assessment of U.S. and Coalition Efforts to Enable the Afghan Ministry of Interior to Develop its Oversight and Internal Control Capability</b></i>	To determine whether U.S. Government and coalition train, advise, and assist efforts will enable the Afghan MoI and subordinate organizations to develop a transparency, accountability and oversight capability that helps the MoI run efficient and effective operations, report reliable information about its operations, and comply with applicable laws and regulations.
<i><b>Summary Report of Recommendations from OCO Intel Evaluations</b></i>	To determine if recommendations from LIG OCO intelligence evaluations affecting OIR and OFS have been implemented.
<i><b>Evaluation of DoD Biometric Enabled Intel Operations for OFS</b></i>	To determine whether Biometric Enabled Intelligence effectively supports the OFS Commander's requirements.
<b>DEPARTMENT OF STATE INSPECTOR GENERAL</b>	
<i><b>Audit of Construction of the New Embassy Compound -Islamabad</b></i>	To determine whether the Department is effectively administering the construction contracts for the new embassy compound in Islamabad
<i><b>Audit of the Department's Invoice Review Processes in Iraq and Afghanistan</b></i>	To 1) determine whether invoice review policies and procedures, training, staffing, invoice review practices, and accountability measures are sufficient to support overseas contingency operations; and 2) ensure invoice payments are reviewed in accordance with Federal requirements and Department guidance.
<b>NAVAL AUDIT SERVICE</b>	
<i><b>Department of the Navy Overseas Contingency Operations</b></i>	To verify that the Department of the Navy's obligations and disbursements supporting overseas contingency operations are in compliance with applicable laws and regulations, and that internal controls were in place and functioning as intended.
<b>SPECIAL INSPECTOR GENERAL FOR AFGHISTAN RECONSTRUCTION</b>	
<i><b>Review of Counternarcotics Police of Afghanistan Specialized Units</b></i>	To 1) determine the extent to which counternarcotics police specialized units are achieving their goals; 2) assess the oversight of salary payments made to personnel in the specialized units; and 3) assess the long-term sustainability of the specialized units.

Project Title	Objective
<b><i>Review of DoD Procurement of Proprietary Textiles for the ANDSF</i></b>	To determine 1) the cost to the U.S. government of using proprietary textile patterns for ANDSF uniforms; and 2) how and why the U.S. government generated the requirement for proprietary patterns for ANDSF uniforms.
<b><i>The Effect of AWOL Afghan Military Trainees on Afghan Reconstruction Programs</i></b>	To 1) determine how many Afghan military trainees have gone absent without leave while training in the United States; the trainees rank, specialty, command, the program(s) supported by the training effort; and the impact on the program(s) by the loss of these students (financial, operational, morale, etc.); 2) identify the disposition of the these trainees and obtain justifications for State to provide immigration status; and 3) determine the extent to which this issue has impacted the U.S. government's reconstruction effort.
<b><i>Assistance to Improve Governance in Afghanistan</i></b>	To 1) identify DoD, State, and USAID programs focused on improving governance in Afghanistan; 2) assess how these efforts contributed to improvements in government institutions in Afghanistan; and 3) determine lessons for future governance efforts in conflict affected countries
<b><i>Afghan Air Force Use and Maintenance of Its Mi-17 Fleet</i></b>	To assess 1) the extent to which the Afghan Air Force can operate and maintain the Mi-17s currently in its fleet; and 2) DoD's efforts to ensure that the Special Mission Wing can operate and maintain the Mi-17s, including any contracts DoD is funding or plans to fund to provide those services.
<b><i>Afghan Special Mission Wing Use and Maintenance of Its PC-12s</i></b>	To assess 1) the extent to which the Special Mission Wing can operate and maintain the PC-12s currently in its fleet; and 2) DoD's efforts to ensure that the Special Mission Wing can operate and maintain the PC-12s, including any contracts DoD is funding or plans to fund to provide those services.
<b><i>Department of Defense Efforts to Advise the Afghan Ministries of Defense and Interior</i></b>	To assess 1) the extent to which DoD has clearly articulated the goals, objectives, and strategy of its advisory efforts; 2) DoD's advisory efforts, including funding; the number of advisors and contractors; their assigned locations; and criteria for selecting the advisors, among other things; and 3) the methods DoD uses to measure success.
<b><i>ANDSF Equipment Requirement Generation Process</i></b>	To 1) describe the process(es) by which DoD develops equipment requirements for the ANDSF; 2) assess the extent to which DoD oversees these procurement processes; and 3) assess the extent to which DoD evaluates the performance of this equipment once fielded and makes adjustments, if needed. This may result in a series of audits examining different types of equipment.

Project Title	Objective
<i>Afghan Air Force Use and Maintenance of Its A-29 Fleet</i>	To 1) describe DoD's process for selecting the A-29 as a platform for the Afghan Air Force; 2) assess the extent to which the Afghan Air Force can operate and maintain the A-29 currently in its fleet, including DoD's measures for determining success; 3) assess DoD's efforts to ensure that the Afghan Air Force can operate and maintain the A-29, including any contracts DoD is funding or plans to fund to provide those services; and 4) determine the extent to which the Afghan Air Force will be able to sustain this fleet in the future.
<i>Afghan Air Force Use and Maintenance of Its MD-530 Fleet</i>	To 1) describe DoD's process for selecting the MD-530 as a platform for the Afghan Air Force; 2) assess the extent to which the Afghan Air Force can operate and maintain the MD-530 currently in its fleet, including DoD's measures for determining success; 3) assess DoD's efforts to ensure that the Afghan Air Force can operate and maintain the MD-530, including any contracts DoD is funding or plans to fund to provide those services; and 4) determine the extent to which the Afghan Air Force will be able to sustain this fleet in the future.
<i>Implementation and Effectiveness of On-Budget Assistance</i>	To 1) determine the amount of on-budget assistance provided to Afghanistan from 2001-2014 and the mechanisms used to provide the assistance; 2) assess the impact of on-budget assistance provided to develop the capacity of Afghan ministries; and 3) evaluate potentially negative issues that affected on-budget assistance, e.g., corruption, and how these externalities were mitigated.
<i>Commander's Emergency Response Program Schools in Kapisa Province</i>	To 1) review the accuracy of geographic location data; 2) assess current conditions and usability; and 3) collect community-based information regarding the value derived from the construction of health facilities constructed or rehabilitated through U.S.-funded Commander's Emergency Response Program projects in Afghanistan.
<i>Commander's Emergency Response Program Health Facilities in Nangarhar Province</i>	To 1) review the accuracy of geographic location data; 2) assess current conditions and usability; and 3) collect community-based information regarding the value derived from the construction of health facilities constructed or rehabilitated through U.S.-funded Commander's Emergency Response Program projects in Afghanistan.
<i>Commander's Emergency Response Program Health Facilities in Kandahar Province</i>	To 1) review the accuracy of geographic location data; 2) assess current conditions and usability; and 3) collect community-based information regarding the value derived from the construction of health facilities constructed or rehabilitated through U.S.-funded Commander's Emergency Response Program projects in Afghanistan.







U.S. Army Soldiers with the 3rd Cavalry Regiment conduct a fire mission while actress Scarlett Johansson observes during the annual Chairman's USO Holiday Tour. (DoD photo)

# APPENDICES

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## APPENDIX A:

# Lead Inspector General Statutory Requirements

Section 8L, Inspector General Act of 1978, as Amended	Pages
Appoint, from among the offices of the other Inspectors General specified in subsection (c), an Inspector General to act as associate Inspector General for the contingency operation who shall act in a coordinating role to assist the lead Inspector General in the discharge of responsibilities under this subsection.	1
Develop and carry out, in coordination with the offices of the other Inspectors General specified in subsection (c) a joint strategic plan to conduct comprehensive oversight over all aspects of the contingency operation and to ensure through either joint or individual audits, inspections, and investigations, independent and effective oversight of all programs and operations of the Federal government in support of the contingency operation.	69-93
Review and ascertain the accuracy of information provided by Federal agencies relating to obligations and expenditures, costs of programs and projects, accountability of funds, and the award and execution of major contracts, grants, and agreements in support of the contingency operation.	27-28; 86
Employ, or authorize the employment by the other Inspectors General specified in subsection (c), on a temporary basis using the authorities in section 3161 of title 5, United States Code, such auditors, investigators, and other personnel as the lead Inspector General considers appropriate to assist the lead Inspector General and such other Inspectors General on matters relating to the contingency operation.	70
Submit to Congress on a biannual basis, and to make available on an Internet website available to the public, a report on the activities of the lead Inspector General and the other Inspectors General specified in subsection (c) with respect to the contingency operation, including:	
status and results of investigations, inspections, and audits and of referrals to the Department of Justice; and	5-6; 69-93
overall plans for the review of the contingency operation by inspectors general, including plans for investigations, inspections, and audits.	81-93
Submit to Congress on a quarterly basis, and to make available on an Internet website available to the public, a report on the contingency operation.	1-118
<b>Note:</b> The Inspectors General specified in subsection (c) are the Inspector General of the Department of Defense, Inspector General of the Department of State, and the Inspector General of the United States Agency for International Development.	



## APPENDIX B

# Methodology for Preparing Lead IG Quarterly Report

This report is issued pursuant to sections 2, 4, and 8L of the Inspector General Act of 1978, which requires that the designated Lead IG provide a quarterly report, available to the public, on an overseas contingency operation. The DoD IG is the designated Lead IG for OFS. The DoS IG is the Associate Lead IG for the operation.

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) IG is designated by the Inspector General Act as the third IG responsible for overseas contingency operations, but USAID has no OFS-related programs or activities. However, the USAID OIG does conduct audits, investigations, and other activities in Afghanistan. USAID OIG coordinates those activities as appropriate, with other oversight entities, but those activities are not discussed in this report.

This report contains information from two Lead IG agencies—DoD and DoS—as well as from partner oversight agencies. This unclassified report covers the period from October 1 through December 31, 2016.

To fulfill its congressional mandate to produce a quarterly report on OFS, the Lead IG gathers data and information from federal agencies and open sources. Data and information used in this report are attributed to their source in endnotes to the text or notes to the tables and figures. Except for references to Lead IG and oversight partner agency audits or investigations in the text or in sidebars, the Lead IG has not independently verified and assessed all the data included in this report.

## Data Call

Each quarter, the Lead IG directs a series of questions, or data calls, to federal agencies about their programs and operations related to OFS. The OFS data call developed by the Lead IG is coordinated with SIGAR, which also issues a data call to support its quarterly report, to avoid duplication and minimize the burden on reporting agencies. The Lead IG agencies use responses to these data calls to develop sections of the OFS quarterly report, as well as to inform decisions concerning future audits and evaluations.

The commands and offices that participated in the data call for OFS this quarter included:

- The Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Policy)
- The U.S. Central Command
- U.S. Forces-Afghanistan
- The Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan
- The Defense Security Cooperation Agency
- The DoD Comptroller
- The Defense Criminal Investigative Service
- The DoS OIG



An Afghan boy gives the thumbs up to U.S. Army and Czech Republic Soldiers delivering school supplies to a local school in Afghanistan. (USFOR-A public affairs photo)



## Open-Source Research

This report also draws on current, publicly available information from reputable sources. Sources used in this report include the following:

- Information publicly released by U.S. agencies included in the data call
- Combating Terrorism Center at West Point
- Congressional testimonies
- Press conferences, especially DoD and DoS Briefings
- Congressional Research Service
- UN (and relevant branches)
- Reports issued by non-governmental organizations
- Media reports

The use of media reports in this quarterly report included information from Reuters, the New York Times, the Washington Post, the Wall Street Journal, Voice of America, Radio Free Europe, NBC News, Agence France-Presse, TOLONews, and Pajhwok Afghan News.

Materials collected through open source research provide information to describe the status of the operation and help the Lead IG agencies assess information provided in their agency data calls. However, in light of the operational realities and dynamic nature of OFS, the Lead IG agencies have limited time to test, verify, and independently assess the assertions made by these agencies. This is particularly true where the Lead IG agencies have not yet provided oversight of these assertions through audits, inspections, or evaluations.

## Report Production

The Lead IG is responsible for assembling and producing this report. The DoD OIG coordinates with the DoS OIG, which drafted sections of the report related to the activities of the DoS. Every Lead IG agency participates in reviewing and editing the entire quarterly report.

The Lead IG provides the offices who have responded to the data call with two opportunities to verify and clarify the content of the report. During the first review, the Lead IG asks agencies to correct inaccuracies and provide additional documentation. The Lead IG incorporates agency comments and sends the report back to the agencies for a final review. Each OIG coordinates the review process with its own agency.

## APPENDIX C:

# Resolute Support Essential Functions

The Resolute Support Mission focuses on eight essential functions (EF) and associated sub-functions in order to develop capable and sustainable Afghan security ministries and forces.<sup>1</sup> These EFs comprise the following:

### ESSENTIAL FUNCTION 1: PLAN, PROGRAM, BUDGET, AND EXECUTE

EF 1 has three priorities: increase resource management capability within the ministries; build donor confidence and trust that the Afghan resource management process is transparent, accountable, and effective; and set conditions to sustain an effective ANDSF in the future. Under EF 1 resource management includes formulating a defense strategy, generating requirements by determining the products and services that need to be purchased to support that strategy, developing a resource-informed budget to meet prioritized requirements, executing a spend plan by awarding contracts to purchase items from the budget, and monitoring the status of funds being spent.

#### Indicators of effectiveness:

- MoD and MoI are able to accurately identify requirements, programs, and funding over a three-year horizon based on strategic guidance
- Ministry of Finance provides timely guidance to enable MoI and MoD to develop a budget
- MoD and MoI are able to formulate an accurate annual budget to meet internal and external requirements
- MoD and MoI are able to develop an executable procurement plan and execute their spend plan within budget and stipulated timeframes
- MoD and MoI are able to submit, award, and complete contracts to ensure execution as planned
- MoD can fully pay all their employees accurately and in a timely and secure fashion.
- Ministry of Finance provides timely approvals, in-year guidance, and funds to MoI and MoD
- MoD and MoI possess an effective and efficient system to recruit and hire subject matter experts

## **ESSENTIAL FUNCTION 2: TRANSPARENCY, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND OVERSIGHT**

Ensuring third-party oversight of the planning, programming, budgeting, and execution process is an international community-stipulated requirement for continued funding.

EF 2 advisors work with the MoD and the Mol to help improve internal controls, as well as maintain accountability and oversight to improve transparency. Under EF 2, CSTC-A administers measures, such as financial commitment letters, that establish performance expectations and implement internal controls over all aspects of resource management, to ensure the Afghan government's proper use of funds from the United States and international donors.

### **Indicators of effectiveness:**

- MoD Ministerial Internal Controls Program is effectively implemented and sustainable
- MoD and Mol IG has an effective accountability oversight program for sustainability
- General Staff IG has an effective accountability oversight program for sustainability
- Critical items (the “big four” issues—fuel, ammunition, food, and pay) are managed by transparent, accountable, and sustainable processes to the appropriate organizational level
- Ensure appropriate engagement of relevant external and internal agencies to establish transparency, accountability, and oversight within the Afghan government

## **ESSENTIAL FUNCTION 3: CIVILIAN GOVERNANCE OF THE AFGHAN SECURITY INSTITUTIONS AND ADHERENCE TO RULE OF LAW**

An ANDSF that operates effectively and respects human rights is central to the U.S. strategy in Afghanistan, as these traits are integral to a professional ANDSF's ability to provide security, retain public support, and instill confidence in Afghanistan's institutions of governance.

EF 3 advisors work with the MoD and the Mol to help ensure the ANDSF respect and adhere to the rule of law and operate in accordance with Afghanistan's constitution, domestic laws, and international obligations. Efforts focus primarily on preventing and responding properly to gross violations of human rights, such as extra-judicial killings, and significant acts of corruption.

### **Indicators of effectiveness:**

- MoD and Mol have appropriately staffed and qualified units to prevent or address extra-judicial killings and other gross violations of human rights
- MoD and Mol identify, investigate, and appropriately act upon acts of major corruption and gross violations of human rights
- MoD and Mol inter-ministerial cooperation with the Attorney General's Office on corruption adjudication, and with the Attorney General's Office on gross violations of human rights allegations

## ESSENTIAL FUNCTION 4: FORCE GENERATION

EF 4 advisors work with the MoD and the Mol to build combat power through recruiting, training, retaining, managing, and developing a professional security force. The ANA and ANP utilize the Afghan Human Resource Information Management System (AHRIMS) to store human resources information, track recruits, record training, and assign qualified personnel into needed assignments based on force requirements. The force generation train, advise, and assist mission is grounded in an interconnected and mutually supportive five-fold effort: recruit, train, retain, manage, and develop. These five focus areas help the ANDSF build a more professional force.

### Indicators of effectiveness:

- MoD utilizes AHRIMS down to the corps level to manage the force, and Mol utilizes AHRIMS down to the provincial headquarters level to manage the force
- MoD implements civilianization goals and objectives as outlined in the bilateral agreement
- MoD and Mol manpower plans are developed and used to project future manpower requirements that inform recruiting goals, mitigate attrition rates, and achieve desired end strength
- MoD and Mol establish systems to integrate lessons learned; tactics, techniques, and procedures; doctrine; and programs of instruction
- All untrained ANP receive formal police training, and Mol prevents future untrained police by forecasting training requirements and scheduling courses to accommodate recruit intakes
- The ANA has established a system for training in air and ground coordination; capability established and used for information operations delivery
- Training delivered that results in reduced casualties



Training at the ANA Officers Academy. (Resolute Support Media photo)



## ESSENTIAL FUNCTION 5: SUSTAIN THE FORCE

EF 5 advisors work to help the ANDSF sustain combat power through maintenance, medical support, and logistics systems. EF 5 is divided into three parts. First, advisors assist the ANP and ANA in logistics and maintenance of vehicles, equipment, and weapons predominantly at the corps and national levels. Second, advisors assist the ANP and ANA on points of injury care, ground medical evacuation, medical logistics, equipment maintenance, medical support planning, and medical staffing. Third, advisors assist in the fields of communications, information, and infrastructure to develop a sustainable communications network.

### Indicators of effectiveness:

- Measurement and reporting has command emphasis
- ANDSF documents processes for generating and capturing requirements
- ANDSF has adequately executed a demand-based inventory management system
- ANDSF organic maintenance is supplemented by contractors
- MoI assumes responsibility for equipment maintenance, which is transitioned from the coalition-funded AMS contract
- MoD has developed an operational medical resource optimization process that is sustainable
- MoD and MoI have sufficient numbers of trained and qualified health care personnel to fill *tashkil*, the official list of personnel and equipment requirements
- MoD and MoI have an operational and sustainable medical logistics process
- ANP operates inventory management processes, including cold chain management for medicines
- The Afghan government-backed Afghan Medical Council establishes and sustains ANDSF and Afghan national healthcare
- MoD is capable of managing its portion of the frequency spectrum for the Afghan government
- MoD and MoI are able to identify and sustain key information and communications technology infrastructure
- MoD is able to sustain information management systems throughout its lifecycle
- MoD implements fundamental cybersecurity structures and processes to ensure the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of critical information and information systems
- MoD is able to produce and sustain information and communications technology forces that are manned, trained, and equipped to conduct operations
- MoI is capable of managing its portion of frequency spectrum for the Afghan government

## **ESSENTIAL FUNCTION 6: PLAN, RESOURCE, AND EXECUTE EFFECTIVE SECURITY CAMPAIGNS**

EF 6 advisors work to help the ANDSF effectively employ combat power in support of the Afghan government. It is divided into two parts: strategic planning and policy, and execution and employment of the force. In support of developing strategic planning and policy, advisors assist with strategic planning efforts at the Office of the National Security Council, the MoD, and the MoI. These efforts are designed to develop the capability of the MoD and the MoI to coordinate, plan, and execute in support of national-level objectives while strategic guidance and objectives are in turn translated into operational and seasonal plans supported by effective security campaigns.

### **Indicators of effectiveness:**

- Office of the National Security Council delivers national security guidance through the national strategic security document set (National Threat Assessment, National Security Policy, and National Security Strategy)
- Assistant MoD for Strategy and Policy leads and delivers strategic documents (National Military Strategy and Guidance for Operational Planning) on time and of sufficient quality (focused, threat informed, and resource aware) to inform subordinate planning
- Assistant MoD for Strategy and Policy leads and delivers the Defense Capabilities Planning Guidance on time and of sufficient quality to inform and drive the departmental capability development process
- General Staff Plans Directorate deliver planning guidance and a coherent, synchronized campaign planning process
- The MoI Deputy Minister of Strategy and Policy delivers strategic documents on time and of sufficient quality (focused, threat informed, and resource aware), monitors implementation and manages change through a robust force management process
- The MoI Deputy Minister of Strategy and Policy monitors the implementation of strategy and planning, and delivers guidance to ensure a robust departmental force management process
- ANA has an established and sustainable capability to conduct combined arms operations
- ANA has an established and sustainable capability to conduct operations in coordination with ANP
- ANA has assessed its capability gaps at the operational level and implemented improvements to address the gaps
- ANA has a sustainable capability to prepare detailed plans and orders at the corps level with strategic guidance from the MoD
- ANP has an established and sustainable capability to coordinate ANP inputs to ANA operations
- ANA Special Operations Command develops as a strategic MoD asset capable of manning, equipping, training, employing, and sustaining the force
- ANA Special Operations Command is able to synchronize special operations brigade and special operations district operations within the framework of corps security operations in support of the Afghan government and MoD objectives
- Special Mission Wing develops as a strategic Afghan government organization capable of manning, equipping, training, employing, and sustaining a force to conduct special operations force air assault and airborne intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance capability in support of the Afghan Special Security Forces
- Afghan Air Force has developed sustainable enterprise manning, a sustainable aerial fires capability, and a sustainable theatre mobility system

## ESSENTIAL FUNCTION 7: DEVELOP SUFFICIENT INTELLIGENCE CAPABILITIES AND PROCESSES

EF 7 advisors work to help the ANDSF develop and integrate intelligence into operations. Advisors work with several organizations, including the Assistant MoD for Intelligence, the ANA General Staff Intelligence Directorate, the MoI Directorate of Police Intelligence, and the National Threat Intelligence Center, also known as the Nasrat. The goal of this effort is to ensure that the ANDSF collect, process, analyze, and disseminate intelligence effectively and integrate intelligence into combat operations.

### Indicators of effectiveness:

- Afghan police intelligence model effectively engages security issues
- MoD intelligence integrates into MoD strategic decision-making and into ANA Special Operation Command and ANA corps level operations
- Directorate of Police intelligence human intelligence institutes a sustainable human intelligence network that can act and report on intelligence requirements and tasking
- Establish a National Military Intelligence Center as an operational intelligence center capable of retrieving and analyzing information obtained from various intelligence sensors and developing products that support Afghan government intelligence operations
- Directorate of Police intelligence trains technically proficient personnel for intelligence operational needs and manages intelligence sustainment requirements to meet operational needs
- Establish enduring and sustainable organic intelligence capability at Intelligence Training Center, ANA corps, and ANA Special Operation Command



Two Afghan National Army officers with the 201st Corps discuss call for fire missions during an attack battle drill near Camp Torah, Afghanistan. (U.S. Army photo)

## **ESSENTIAL FUNCTION 8: MAINTAIN INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION CAPABILITY**

EF 8 advisors work with the Afghan government to counter insurgent messaging and offer a positive narrative to the Afghan people and the international community. Efforts seek to help Afghan partners speak with one consistent voice, both within their own organizations and externally. Advisors focus on bridging gaps and overcoming challenges to improved communications within the Afghan security ministries and forces while continuing to reinforce successes and look for opportunities to improve.

### **Indicators of effectiveness:**

- Develops and sustains events and mechanisms designed to facilitate cross-ministerial coordination and delivery of strategic communication guidance, priorities, and direction.
- Afghan government develops and distributes strategic communication guidance; guidance will be utilized to develop respective MoD and MoI communication plans and products
- General Staff Operations Directorate Information Operations has the knowledge and capability to submit effectively (and modify as necessary) yearly [personnel and equipment] *tashkil* inputs, as well as to plan and submit its yearly budget requirements, which will enable the MoD information operations capability throughout the country.

## **RESOLUTE SUPPORT GENDER OFFICE**

In addition to the eight EFs, the Resolute Support Gender Office seeks to train, advise, and assist Afghan leadership to ensure that an appropriate gender perspective is incorporated into planning for all policies and strategies within the security ministries and through implementation at the ANA and ANP levels. Since gender issues cross all EFs, advising in this area is not restricted to one EF.

### **Indicators of effectiveness:**

- MoI and MoD/ANA implement approved strategies and plans on gender integration
- MoI and MoD provide safe training and working environment (facilities) for women
- MoI and MoD takes actions to eliminate gender-based violence and other types of violence and sexual harassment of women



## ACRONYMS AND DEFINITIONS

Acronym	Definition
AAF	Afghan Air Force
AHRIMS	Afghan Human Resource Information Management System
ANA	Afghan National Army
ANDSF	Afghan National Defense and Security Forces
ANP	Afghan National Police
ASSF	Afghan Special Security Forces
Core-IMS	Core-Information Management System
CSTC-A	Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan
DCIS	Defense Criminal Investigative Service
DoD	Department of Defense
DoD OIG	Department of Defense Office of Inspector General
DoS	Department of State
DoS OIG	Department of State Office of Inspector General
EF	Essential Function
FY	Fiscal Year
ISIL-K	Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant-Khorasan
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria

Acronym	Definition
Lead IG	Lead Inspector General
Lead IG agencies	DoD OIG, DoS OIG, and USAID OIG
MoD	Ministry of Defense
Mol	Ministry of Interior Affairs
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NDAA	National Defense Authorization Act
OCO	Overseas Contingency Operation
OFS	Operation Freedom's Sentinel
OIG	Office of Inspector General
OIR	Operation Inherent Resolve
SIGAR	Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction
<i>tashkil</i>	the official list of ANDSF personnel and equipment requirements
UN	United Nations
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
USAID OIG	U.S. Agency for International Development Office of Inspector General
USFOR-A	U.S. Forces-Afghanistan



A 451st Expeditionary Support Squadron response force member monitors his team's security sector at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan. (U.S. Air Force photo)

## ENDNOTES

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Bravo Battery, 2nd Battalion, 44th Air Defense Artillery Regiment, boresights a Counter Rocket, Artillery and Mortar (C-RAM) weapon as part of their normally scheduled system check at Bagram Airfield. (USFOR-A public affairs photo)

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