



SIGAR

Office of the Special Inspector General
for Afghanistan Reconstruction

February 19, 2015

Major General Mike Murray
Deputy Commander, U.S. Forces Afghanistan

Dear Major General Murray:

I am writing to alert you to what appears to be a significant amount of wasteful construction at current and former U.S. military bases in Afghanistan. Initial research conducted by my staff indicates that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) spent \$36 million to construct three tank truck offload facilities (TTOFs) that were significantly underused or never used at all. I am referring this issue to you because these were not Afghanistan reconstruction projects, but projects supporting the U.S. military.

As you may know, the U.S. military uses TTOFs to quickly and safely load and unload trucks delivering fuel to U.S. bases. The fuel is pumped from the trucks into large, permanent storage tanks located a safe distance away. TTOFs use meters to track the amount of fuel offloaded by the trucks. These meters help prevent fuel theft, a problem that has already resulted in the loss of tens of millions of dollars in Afghanistan.¹ In addition, failing to utilize TTOFs increases the costs of providing fuel to support U.S. operations. For example, because Bagram Airfield (BAF) could not initially use its TTOF, base officials had to use fuel storage bladders that require more personnel and are more expensive to operate.

Even though TTOFs can improve safety, enhance accountability, and reduce operating costs, SIGAR special agents have obtained information from U.S. military fuel experts indicating that the facilities at the following three locations were either significantly underused or never used at all:

- **Forward Operating Base (FOB) Sharana and FOB Shank.** In September 2009, the U.S. military awarded a \$22.5 million contract to build TTOFs at FOB Sharana and FOB Shank.
 - According to U.S. Air Force fuel experts, the TTOF at FOB Sharana was not used due to problems with the equipment, and when U.S. forces left the FOB in October 2013, the U.S. military bulldozed the facility.
 - According to individuals interviewed by SIGAR, the main fuel supplier at FOB Shank could not make the TTOF functional because its personnel lacked the expertise needed to operate the TTOF equipment. This forced the U.S. Army to bring in its own personnel specifically trained to use the system.

¹ Report on DoD Reconstruction Spending in Afghanistan Before the Subcomm. on Nat'l Sec., Homeland Def., and Foreign Operations of the H. Comm. on Oversight and Gov't Reform, 112th Cong. (2012) (statement of John F. Sopko, Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction).

- **BAF.** In 2007, USACE awarded a \$13.4 million contract to construct a TTOF at BAF that the U.S. military did not fully use until recently. Despite paying the prime contractor in full, even as late as September of 2013 military personnel apparently had not used the facility and needed to make repairs before it could be used. To make the TTOF fully operational, the U.S. military may have spent as much as \$400,000 in repairs not covered under the facility's operation and maintenance contract.

During my latest visit to Afghanistan, I learned that a number of soldiers who currently serve under your command quickly worked to make the necessary repairs to the BAF TTOF once they learned about this problem. They should be commended for taking the initiative to protect the U.S. taxpayer.

Nevertheless, I encourage you to conduct a review to determine the status of all TTOFs in Afghanistan and take any action needed to protect the taxpayer and hold individuals accountable. In addition, I urge you to examine the specific allegations regarding the three TTOFs mentioned above in greater detail to identify any potential lessons learned that could be used to protect the taxpayer in future conflicts. I believe your review may help prevent this from happening again.

We are ready to share any information we have and provide whatever support you need. Please have your staff contact Jack Mitchell, Director of Special Projects at [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] should you have any questions.

Sincerely,



John F. Sopko
Special Inspector General
for Afghanistan Reconstruction

cc: USCENTCOM Inspector General
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

ENCLOSURE: PHOTOS OF BAF TTOF SITE





HEADQUARTERS
UNITED STATES FORCES-AFGHANISTAN
BAGRAM, AFGHANISTAN
APO AE 09354

February 24, 2015

Deputy Commander, Support

Mr. John Sopko
Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction
2530 Crystal Drive
Arlington, Virginia 22202-3940

Dear Mr. Sopko:

Thank you for your letter encouraging this command to conduct a review of the history of tank trucks offload facilities (TTOFs); specifically, examining the underuse of TTOFs at three locations in Afghanistan.

I wholeheartedly share your concern for eliminating wasteful expenditure of U.S. taxpayer's monies in Afghanistan. One of my goals is to develop and implement the procedures necessary for this command to readily identify areas where we can further emphasize fiscal responsibility in acquisition and utilization. To that end, I intend to conduct a review to develop the "lessons learned" from the TTOFs in the three bases you mention in your letter, and share them with both ARCENT and CENTCOM for use in future contingency operations.

I have directed my Staff Judge Advocate, Colonel Luis Rodriguez, to contact Mr. Jack Mitchell in order to obtain any information you can share with us to properly scope our review.

Thank you again for bringing this matter to my attention.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John M. Murray".

John M. Murray
Major General, U.S. Army
Deputy Commander, Support
United States Forces-Afghanistan