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SECURITY

KEY ISSUES & EVENTS

According to United States Forces-Afghanistan (USFOR-A), average daily enemy-initiated attacks this quarter were 50% higher compared to last quarter. Overall enemy-initiated attacks were also “above seasonal norms.”

On October 12, NATO Resolute Support (RS) and USFOR-A commander General Austin Scott Miller said the high level of Taliban violence around the country “is not consistent with the U.S.-Taliban agreement and undermines the ongoing Afghan peace talks.”

USFOR-A and RS reported that Afghan casualties among both civilians and security forces increased this quarter compared to last quarter.

The United States is executing a troop reduction to a level of 4,000–5,000 by the end of November while U.S. officials cite the lack of Taliban progress on meeting certain commitments in, or related to, the U.S.-Taliban agreement.

Peace negotiations between the Afghan government and the Taliban began on September 12 amid continued high levels of violence in Afghanistan. U.S. Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation Zalmay Khalilzad called the initiation of negotiations “a truly historic moment” and said the parties to the talks “have the opportunity to bring an end to more than 40 years of war in their country.”⁵⁵ The Taliban’s participation in the negotiations fulfills a commitment made in its agreement with the United States signed on February 29. The talks also provide a vehicle for the Taliban to fulfill another commitment, to discuss the date and modalities of a permanent and comprehensive cease-fire and come to an agreement over the political future of Afghanistan.⁵⁶

However, U.S. officials have recently indicated that the Taliban is not fully meeting other commitments stipulated in or broadly part of the U.S.-Taliban agreement—in particular those regarding counterterrorism guarantees and reduced Taliban violence—whose importance U.S. officials have stressed repeatedly.⁵⁷

According to the Department of Defense (DOD), the Taliban lowering violence levels “is a component of the Taliban’s broader commitments in

the [U.S.-Taliban] agreement,” although it does not appear in the published text.⁵⁸ Following increased attacks during a Taliban offensive against the provincial capital of Helmand Province in October, RS commander General Austin Scott Miller said the high level of Taliban violence around the country “is not consistent with the U.S.-Taliban agreement and undermines the ongoing Afghan peace talks.”⁵⁹ The attacks and Taliban accusations that the United States violated the agreement (which U.S. officials denied) led General Miller and Ambassador Khalilzad to meet with Taliban representatives in Doha in mid-October.⁶⁰ After these meetings, Ambassador Khalilzad announced that “all sides agreed to decrease attacks and strikes and reduce violence and casualties,” and also “agreed to re-set actions by strictly adhering to implementation of all elements of the U.S.-Taliban agreement and all commitments made.”⁶¹

The key Taliban commitment in the U.S.-Taliban agreement stipulates that the group will take specific actions relating to counterterrorism to “prevent any group or individual, including al Qaeda, from using the soil of Afghanistan to threaten the security of the United States and its allies.”⁶² Testifying to Congress on September 22, David Helvey, Performing the Duties of Assistant Secretary of Defense for Indo-Pacific Security Affairs, said “We are looking to make sure that the Taliban lives up to its obligations and its commitments to us with respect to counterterrorism. And so far, they are not fully compliant.”⁶³

Part of the Taliban’s commitment not to threaten the security of the United States and its allies includes a prohibition on attacking U.S. and Coalition personnel in Afghanistan.⁶⁴ The *New York Times* quoted unnamed U.S. military officials saying the Taliban conducted two attacks on U.S. military installations this quarter, but reportedly neither caused casualties. RS declined to comment on the *New York Times* report.⁶⁵ SIGAR also asked USFOR-A whether there have been any confirmed or suspected Taliban attacks on U.S. personnel or facilities since the beginning of the Afghan peace negotiations, and whether any attacks were in violation of the agreement. The question drew a classified response.⁶⁶ DOD did confirm that as of October 11, no U.S. service members have been killed by hostile action in Afghanistan since the signing of the agreement.⁶⁷

American officials have consistently said U.S. troop reductions in Afghanistan are conditions-based on whether the Taliban meet their commitments in the U.S.-Taliban deal. If the Taliban fails to do so, it could impact whether the United States executes the planned full withdrawal of U.S. forces by May 2021, and how the United States determines the size and scope of U.S. financial assistance to a future Afghan government if it includes the Taliban.⁶⁸

Meanwhile, troop reductions are ongoing. On August 8, Secretary of Defense Mark Esper announced in an interview that he would execute a reduction to below 5,000 troops by the end of November, a troop-level

benchmark not specified in the agreement.⁶⁹ Helvey said on September 22 that in August President Donald J. Trump “made a determination that the conditions in Afghanistan were sufficient” to reduce the U.S. force presence to this lower level.⁷⁰ On October 6, President Trump announced on Twitter, “We should have the small remaining number of our BRAVE Men and Women serving in Afghanistan home by Christmas!”⁷¹ Following the tweet, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Mark Milley said, “That was the decision of the President on a conditions-based withdrawal. ... We, the military, are giving our best military advice on those conditions so that the president can make an informed, deliberate, responsible decision.”⁷²

DOD’s Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (OUSD-P) told SIGAR on October 18 that “DOD does not have orders to change our current drawdown plan, which directs a reduction in forces to between 4,000 and 5,000 by the end of November 2020.”⁷³

DOD said in June that Afghanistan remains vital for protecting American national-security interests, but also said the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF) are unlikely to gain self-sufficiency by 2024 “even if levels of violence and, with it, the ANDSF force structure, reduce significantly.”⁷⁴ OUSD-P told SIGAR this quarter:

On July 15, upon completion of the drawdown to 8,600 U.S. military personnel in accordance with the U.S.-Taliban agreement, [OUSD-P] began planning for continuing to provide support to the ANDSF, including continued efforts to build institutional viability and manage and oversee security assistance funding, should there be a full withdrawal of troops in accordance with a potential peace agreement. [OUSD-P] notes that supporting the ANDSF will remain critical to ensuring the viability of the Afghan government, even in a post-peace environment.⁷⁵

Further troop reductions in the current security environment, when the timeline for a concluded peace settlement is also unknown, could impact continued U.S. support to and development of Afghanistan’s security institutions. Particularly important will be how DOD continues to provide adequate oversight of the billions of dollars per year it executes to pay, equip, train, and sustain the ANDSF in the years ahead, and whether it can continue contract oversight and an effective level of train, advise, and assist support for the force.⁷⁶

Data Classified or Not Publicly Releasable

This quarter, USFOR-A newly classified or restricted from public release the following data:

- Some Afghan civilian casualty data
- A description of the Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan’s (CSTC-A) method for determining the reliability of its Afghan partners as part of its conditionality approach

USFOR-A continued to classify or otherwise restrict from public release the following types of data due to Afghan government classification guidelines or other restrictions (mostly since October 2017):⁷⁷

- enemy-initiated attacks and effective enemy-initiated attacks
- ANDSF casualties, by force element and total
- unit-level Afghan National Army (ANA) and Afghan National Police (ANP) authorized and assigned strength
- detailed ANDSF performance assessments
- some Special Mission Wing (SMW) information, including the number of pilots and aircrew, aircraft inventory, the operational readiness (and associated benchmarks) of SMW airframes, and the cost of the SMW's aircraft maintenance being paid by the United States or other countries

Because public-health measures imposed to combat the COVID-19 pandemic inhibit the use of secure facilities necessary for accessing and processing classified information, SIGAR will not issue a classified annex to this quarterly report.

U.S. Reconstruction Funding for Security

As of September 30, 2020, the U.S. Congress had appropriated nearly \$86.4 billion to help the Afghan government provide security in Afghanistan. This accounts for about 61% of all U.S. reconstruction funding for Afghanistan since fiscal year (FY) 2002. Of the nearly \$4.2 billion appropriated for the Afghanistan Security Forces Fund (ASFF) in FY 2020, only about \$0.8 billion had been obligated and nearly \$0.7 billion disbursed, as of September 30, 2020.⁷⁸

Congress established the ASFF in 2005 to build, equip, train, and sustain the ANDSF, which comprises all forces under the Ministry of Defense (MOD) and Ministry of Interior (MOI). A significant portion of ASFF money is used for Afghan Air Force (AAF) aircraft maintenance, and for ANA, AAF, Afghan Special Security Forces (ASSF), and Afghan Local Police (ALP) salaries. The ALP falls under the authority of the MOI, but is not included in the authorized ANDSF force level that donor nations have agreed to fund; only the United States and Afghanistan fund the ALP. U.S. funding for the ALP expired September 30, 2020.⁷⁹ The rest of ASFF is used for fuel, ammunition, vehicle, facility and equipment maintenance, and various communications and intelligence infrastructure. Detailed ASFF budget breakdowns are presented in tables on pages 52–53.⁸⁰

ASFF monies are obligated by either CSTC-A or the Defense Security Cooperation Agency. Funds that CSTC-A provides to the Afghan government to manage (on-budget) are provided directly to the Ministry of Finance. The Ministry of Finance then transfers those funds to the MOD and MOI based on submitted funding requests.⁸¹ While the United States funds most ANA salaries, a significant share of ANP personnel costs is paid by



A meeting at the Arg, the presidential palace in Kabul, features from left, RS and USFOR-A Commander Austin Scott Miller, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Mark Milley, Chairman Abdullah Abdullah, and President Ashraf Ghani. (Joint Chiefs of Staff photo)

international donors through the United Nations Development Programme’s multidonor Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan (LOTFA). According to DOD, the United States stopped donating to LOTFA in 2017 and since then has provided about \$1 million annually as a “subscription fee” to participate in LOTFA deliberations.⁸² A discussion of on-budget (Afghan-managed) and off-budget (U.S.-managed) expenditures of ASFF is found on pages 114–115.

U.S. Officials: Taliban’s High Violence Levels Inconsistent with U.S.-Taliban Agreement

On October 12, USFOR-A and RS Commander General Austin Scott Miller said “The Taliban need to immediately ... reduce their violence around the country. It is not consistent with the U.S.-Taliban agreement and undermines the ongoing Afghan peace talks.”⁸³ The sentiment was echoed by U.S. Chargé d’Affaires to Afghanistan Ross Wilson the next day.⁸⁴ These statements followed a Taliban offensive against Helmand Province’s capital city, Lashkar Gah. USFOR-A announced on October 12 that the offensive led it to conduct in the preceding two days “several targeted strikes in Helmand to defend ANDSF forces under attack by Taliban fighters, consistent with the U.S.-Taliban [agreement].”⁸⁵

The Taliban attacks, and Taliban accusations that U.S. air strikes had violated the agreement (claims U.S. officials said were unfounded), led General Miller and Ambassador Khalilzad to meet with Taliban representatives in Doha in mid-October.⁸⁶ USFOR-A reported in early October that U.S. air strikes increased this quarter compared to last quarter to help defend Afghan security forces, which is permitted under the agreement.⁸⁷ Additionally, NATO Special Operations Component Command-Afghanistan (NSOCC-A) reported that the Afghan Special Security Forces (ASSF), the

ANDSF's primary offensive forces, conducted the highest number of ground operations this quarter (July–September 2020) than it has in over a year (since April–June 2019).⁸⁸

Ambassador Khalilzad said on October 18 that the recent meetings with the Taliban resulted in “all sides agree[ing] to decrease attacks and strikes and reduce violence and casualties,” and “to re-set actions by strictly adhering to implementation of all elements of the U.S.-Taliban Agreement and all commitments made.”⁸⁹ He also said “Although violence in Helmand has decreased, violence overall in the country remains high,” and warned that “continued high levels of violence can threaten the peace process and the agreement and the core understanding that there is no military solution” to the Afghan conflict.⁹⁰

The uptick in Taliban violence in October continued the high enemy-violence trends seen this quarter. According to USFOR-A, average daily enemy-initiated attacks were 50% higher this quarter (July–September) than last quarter (April–June). Overall enemy-initiated attacks this quarter were also characterized as “above seasonal norms.”⁹¹ Several American officials including Secretary of State Michael Pompeo, Secretary of Defense Mark Esper, and Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad have said over the last few months that the level of Taliban violence was “too high,” contrary with the Taliban’s broader commitments in the [U.S.-Taliban] agreement to reduce violence.⁹²

The one exception was the Taliban and Afghan government observance of a mutual, three-day cease-fire during Eid al-Adha holiday July 28–30. This was the second such cease-fire since the signing of the U.S.-Taliban agreement on February 29, when violence fell to low levels similar to the first cease-fire in May.⁹³ RS has said the Taliban’s ability to reduce violence during temporary cease-fires “demonstrat[es] the Taliban’s ability to exert command and control of their fighters.”⁹⁴

According to DOD, the Taliban lowering violence levels “is a component of the Taliban’s broader commitments in the [U.S.-Taliban] agreement.”⁹⁵ Secretary Pompeo said on August 6 that the Taliban had “committed to significantly reduce violence and casualties during the [Afghan peace] talks” and that “The United States intends to hold the Taliban to these commitments.”⁹⁶ However, Taliban attacks since Afghan peace talks began in Doha on September 12 have only continued at high levels causing increased Afghan security forces and civilian casualties, from mid- to late-September.⁹⁷

Afghan officials have spoken out. On October 14, Nader Nadery, a member of the Afghan government’s negotiating team, said “It is unacceptable for our people to be suffering the way they have suffered these past three weeks with increased violence,” and questioned whether “the path of talking and fighting would work or not.”⁹⁸ At the UN General Assembly on September 22, Afghan President Ashraf Ghani called for a permanent cease-fire, saying it is the “clear and urgent priority” of the Afghan people.

President Ghani also said a cease-fire would give the Afghan government and Taliban peace negotiators “a chance to progress” in Doha.⁹⁹

Ambassador Khalilzad said in an interview on September 25 that “The Talibs will not accept a cease-fire, comprehensive and permanent, until there’s a political settlement. And that’s not unprecedented in similar conflicts elsewhere.”¹⁰⁰ According to DOD, “The Taliban is calibrating its use of violence to harass and undermine the ANDSF and [the Afghan government], but [to] remain at a level it perceives is within the bounds of the agreement, probably to encourage a U.S. troop withdrawal and set favorable conditions for a post-withdrawal Afghanistan.”¹⁰¹

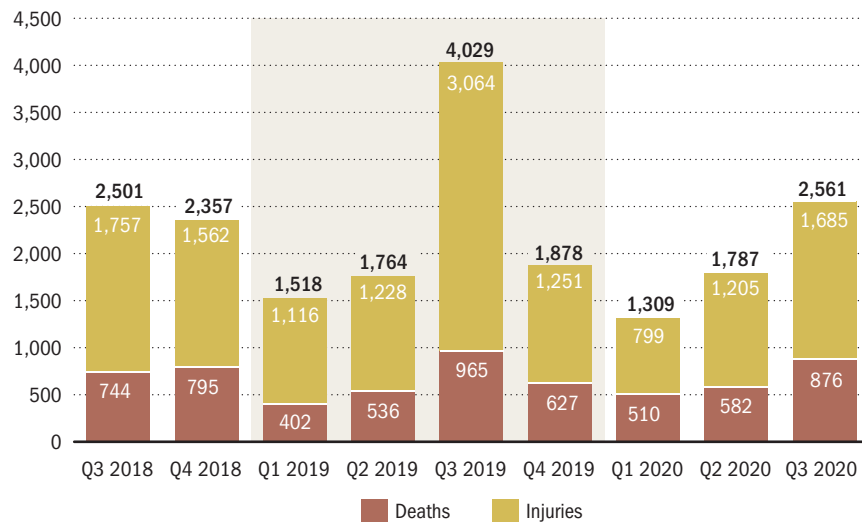
DOD reports that the U.S. government continues to closely monitor violence levels in Afghanistan to assess whether the Taliban “is sufficiently complying with its commitments under the U.S.-Taliban Agreement.”¹⁰² DOD also told SIGAR on October 13 that if Taliban violence continues at its “unacceptably high” rate, “it could undermine the agreement.”¹⁰³

Civilian Casualties

RS reported 2,561 civilian casualties this quarter (July 1–September 30, 2020), which included 876 deaths and 1,685 injuries. In line with the continued rise in violence, this quarter’s casualties increased by 43% compared to last quarter (April 1–June 30, 2020).¹⁰⁴ Though casualties are typically

FIGURE 3.28

RS-REPORTED CIVILIAN CASUALTIES BY QUARTER

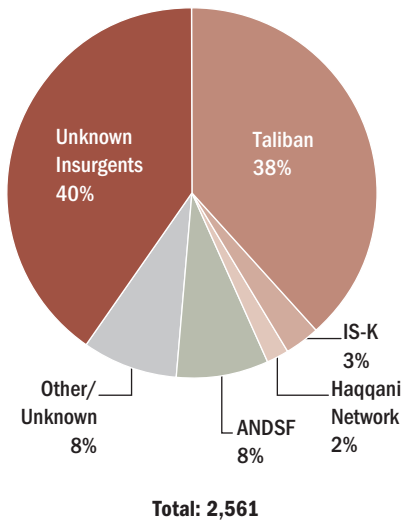


Note: This quarter’s data covers the period from July 1–September 30, 2020. Figures for last quarter were updated by RS this quarter.

Source: RS, response to SIGAR data call 10/21/2020, 1/7/2020, and 10/7/2019; SIGAR, analysis of RS-provided data, 10/2020.

FIGURE 3.29

RS-REPORTED CIVILIAN CASUALTIES BY PARTY ATTRIBUTION



Note: The data covers the period from July 1–September 30, 2020. Casualties include dead and wounded. “Other/unknown” for RS data civilian casualties caused by undetermined elements, local militia, and the Pakistani military. Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding. Source: RS, response to SIGAR data call, 10/21/2020; SIGAR, analysis of RS-provided data, 10/2020.

UNAMA issued its civilian casualty report covering July–September 2020 too late to be included in this report.

high in the third quarter of any year, this quarter’s high figures are notable because they occurred during an ongoing peace process and despite Taliban commitments to reduce violence.¹⁰⁵ Figure 3.28 on the previous page shows that while this quarter’s casualties are 36% lower than the especially high casualties seen during the same period last year, they are about the same level as the third quarter of 2018.¹⁰⁶

Seen in Figure 3.29, RS attributed about 83% of this quarter’s civilian casualties to antigovernment forces (40% to unknown insurgents, 38% to the Taliban, 3% to Islamic State-Khorasan, and 2% to the Haqqani Network), roughly the same as last quarter’s breakdown. Another 8% were attributed to progovernment forces (8% to ANDSF and no incidents attributed to Coalition forces), and about 8% to other or unknown forces.¹⁰⁷

Therefore, most of the increase in civilian casualties compared to last quarter was attributed to unknown insurgent- (55% increase) and Taliban-caused casualties (42% increase). However, casualties attributed to the ANDSF also more than doubled compared to last quarter (to 212 casualties).¹⁰⁸

Improvised-explosive device incidents continued to account for the majority of civilian casualties (41%), followed by direct fire (29%), and indirect fire (12%). While the 117 civilian casualties from AAF air strikes accounted for only 5% of the total number of casualties this quarter, it reflects a 457% increase compared to last quarter. The AAF had a high operational tempo this quarter. For more information, see page 98. U.S. and Coalition forces reported increased air strikes this quarter in support of Afghan forces, but zero casualties from their strikes.¹⁰⁹

The data here includes most, but not all, of the civilian casualties recorded this quarter. RS noted that these figures omit classified civilian casualty reports that were provided by non-U.S. sources or were incidents enclosed in otherwise classified reports.¹¹⁰

UNITED STATES FORCES-AFGHANISTAN

U.S. Forces Commence Another Troop Reduction

Following the United States meeting its commitment in the U.S.-Taliban agreement to reduce its force level to 8,600 ahead of schedule in June, Secretary Esper announced on August 8 that he would order an additional force reduction to below 5,000 troops by the end of November 2020.¹¹¹ The U.S.-Taliban agreement lays out only two U.S. force-reduction benchmarks to be conducted if the Taliban meet their commitments in the agreement. The first benchmark is to draw down to 8,600 troops within 135 days of the agreement’s signing (i.e., by mid-July 2020), and the second is the withdrawal of all troops within 14 months (by May 2021).¹¹²



U.S. and Coalition personnel stand outside Resolute Support Headquarters in Kabul. (Resolute Support photo)

David Helvey, Performing the Duties of Assistant Secretary of Defense for Indo-Pacific Security Affairs, testified to Congress on September 22 that President Trump decided in August to reduce the U.S. force presence in Afghanistan to 4,000–5,000 troops by the end of November after he “made a determination that the conditions in Afghanistan were sufficient” for the move.¹¹³

U.S. Force Reduction Impact on Capabilities and the Train, Advise, and Assist Mission

Helvey also told Congress that at the 4,000–5,000 force level, the United States can maintain the “core aspects” of its train, advise, and assist mission, as well as its counterterrorism mission, while ensuring the protection of U.S. forces on the ground.¹¹⁴

According to DOD and USFOR-A, U.S. forces remaining in Afghanistan will have the capabilities to: (1) provide support to other NATO countries; (2) train, advise, and assist the ANDSF, with COVID mitigation, at echelon and when required at the tactical points of need; and (3) protect the U.S. force. USFOR-A explained that the remaining U.S. force is a fighting formation with necessary authorities, mobility, fires, logistics, and medical capability, and continues to administer security assistance with the appropriate oversight. “Most” of the personnel being withdrawn, DOD said, are serving in “support and staff functions ... [that are] being consolidated as bases consolidate,” and “General Miller assesses he can provide required advising and assistance at the ‘point of need’ while ... ensur[ing] required enabler support is provided.”¹¹⁵

However, the reduction of forces introduces challenges for capabilities and the TAA mission. CSTC-A reported this quarter that the decrease in their strength “has made it more difficult to assess, monitor, and evaluate

the ANDSF.”¹¹⁶ The command is still providing TAA, but “with a smaller military force, individual advisors are responsible for a broader spectrum of TAA. Verification of data and monitoring below the [ANA] Corps and [ANP Provincial Chief of Police] level is a challenge. Previously, advisors were assigned to provide TAA coverage at lower echelons of the ANDSF and were able to gather information first-hand. Now, advisors must depend on ANDSF self-reporting to assess, monitor, and evaluate.”¹¹⁷

Asked whether the United States can achieve its primary goal of ensuring terror cells threatening the homeland cannot operate in Afghanistan without American troops on the ground, Helvey said the United States can do this by “build[ing] up the capabilities of the [ANDSF] ... so that Afghans themselves are able to pursue shared counterterrorism objectives.”¹¹⁸

DOD said this quarter that some units of the Afghan Special Security Forces (ASSF), the primary ANDSF components charged with counterterrorism missions “have proven highly capable of conducting independent operations.”¹¹⁹ However, because targeting potential terrorist threats in Afghanistan’s remote areas is difficult, DOD said the forces “would benefit from continued partnership with U.S. and Coalition forces” and that “they rely on ASFF funding as well as contracted logistics support for their aircraft and ground vehicles, [U.S.] procurement of supplies such as weapons, [ammunition], and [communications equipment], and [U.S.] contracted training to generate commandos.”¹²⁰

As this indicates, U.S. military missions in Afghanistan involve more than developing the ANDSF and the security ministries’ capabilities. U.S. forces also execute and/or oversee costly and necessary taxpayer-funded contracts to train and sustain the ANDSF, and to provide them hundreds of millions of dollars’ worth of equipment and direct-assistance funds, as detailed later in this report.

U.S. and Coalition Forces’ Advising Efforts

Train, Advise, and Assist Efforts during the COVID-19 Pandemic

RS commander General Austin Scott Miller directed on March 14 that, due to the danger of the COVID-19 pandemic, Coalition personnel would conduct only limited, mission-essential, face-to-face advising with their Afghan counterparts. This order remains in effect.¹²¹ CSTC-A said this quarter that COVID-19 continued to impact their train, advise, and assist (TAA) efforts by reducing the number of face-to-face interactions between advisors and Afghan partners, and forcing both the MOD and MOI Ministry Advisory Groups (MAG-D and MAG-I) to use DASNET (a videoconferencing system), e-mail, telephone, WhatsApp messaging application, and other remote methods to carry out their mission. One particular challenge CSTC-A identified was the need for newly arrived personnel to establish relationships with their Afghan counterparts using remote communication.¹²²



German Brigadier General Ansgar Meyer (right), commander of TAAC-North, oversees a training exercise at the ANA's Regional Military Training Center in Mazar-e Sharif. (Resolute Support photo)

CSTC-A assessed that these alternative ways of providing TAA have been “effective,” but not as effective as conducting in-person engagements. Regular video and phone conferences with ANDSF and ministry partners on the Afghan Personnel and Pay System, the CoreIMS inventory-management system, recruiting, training, and other areas important for Afghan security institutional viability, continue to increase ANDSF proficiency in these areas.¹²³ While CSTC-A said the ANDSF’s COVID-19 mitigation strategies have stressed the ANDSF’s other capabilities and reduced advisor contact, they have also required MOD and MOI to operate more independently.¹²⁴

In contrast, NATO Special Operations Component Command-Afghanistan (NSOCC-A), charged with advising the ASSF, said the pandemic in the short term “has not had a substantial impact on ANDSF counterterrorism operational output” from lost experience or disruption to the continuity of long-term ASSF TAA efforts. NSOCC-A reported this quarter that the Afghan National Army Special Operations Corps (ANASOC) and the General Command of Police Special Units performed “independent, coherent, and well-coordinated operations” with the Special Mission Wing’s support. Limited direct TAA engagement fostered more independent Special Mission Wing-conducted operations, with the exception of aircraft maintenance, according to NSOCC-A.¹²⁵ For more information about the ASSF’s operations and performance, see pages 83–86.

To continue providing prompt assistance to the ANDSF in fighting the pandemic, CSTC-A approved 13 COVID-19 funding packages totaling \$272,603 this quarter for the MOI Office of the Surgeon General, ANP provincial headquarters, the General Command Police Special Units (GCPSU),

the MOI Director of Logistics, Training General Command, and the Counter Narcotics department. Items provided included oxygen, medical gases, and medical personal protective equipment. Also during the quarter, MAG-D ordered 2,000 personal protective equipment kits, 1,370 N95 masks, 105,300 surgical masks, 119,450 gloves, 300 gowns, 3,784 hand-sanitizer units, and 67,862 units of Dettol antibacterial soap for the ANA (a contribution valued at roughly \$2.5 million).¹²⁶

CSTC-A reported that the impact of the pandemic on its contract oversight varied depending on accessibility issues. When contractors were collocated with RS personnel, such as at RS Headquarters with MAG-D, CSTC-A was able to monitor their performance directly. For other contracts, such as aircraft training or linguistic support, CSTC-A sought to mitigate accessibility issues through increased use of remote communication methods. According to CSTC-A, these mitigations allowed them to ensure proper contract oversight despite the limitations on face-to-face interactions.¹²⁷

U.S. and Coalition Forces Casualties and Insider Attacks

From October 7, 2001, through October 16, 2020, 1,909 U.S. military personnel were killed in action, a toll unchanged since last quarter. Another 533 personnel died as a result of non-hostile causes. A total of 20,772 military personnel have been wounded in action, an increase of 53 since last quarter.¹²⁸

USFOR-A reported no insider attacks, nor casualties resulting from insider attacks, among U.S. and Coalition forces this quarter. There has only been one insider attack so far in 2020, on February 8. In 2019, six insider attacks had occurred by the end of the third quarter.¹²⁹

AFGHAN NATIONAL DEFENSE AND SECURITY FORCES

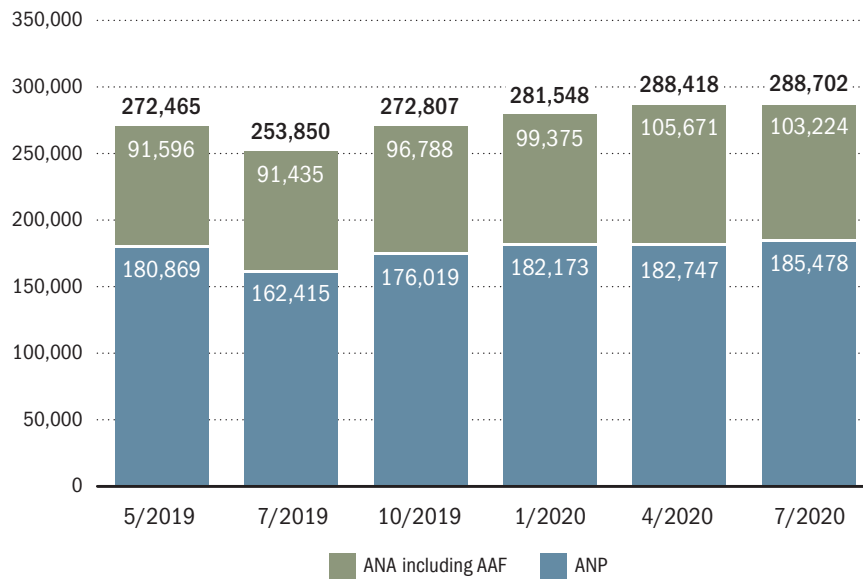
ANDSF Strength

This quarter, the ANDSF continued to report its highest strength since it began using the Afghan Personnel and Pay System (APPS) in July 2019, which leverages biometric enrollment and Afghan self-reporting for more accurate accounting compared to the prior system that relied only on self-reporting.¹³⁰

As of July 25, 2020, CSTC-A reported 288,702 ANDSF personnel (185,478 MOD and 103,224 MOI) biometrically enrolled and eligible for pay in APPS. There were an additional 10,741 civilians (6,576 MOD and 4,165 MOI) and 18,266 Afghan Local Police (ALP). Figures 3.30 and 3.31 show changes in ANDSF by quarter and over the last several years. This quarter's total strength reflects an increase of 284 personnel since last quarter (data as of April). Although total force strength did not change significantly since last quarter, the MOI lost 2,447 personnel since last quarter and MOD gained

FIGURE 3.30

REPORTED ANDSF ASSIGNED STRENGTH FROM APPS

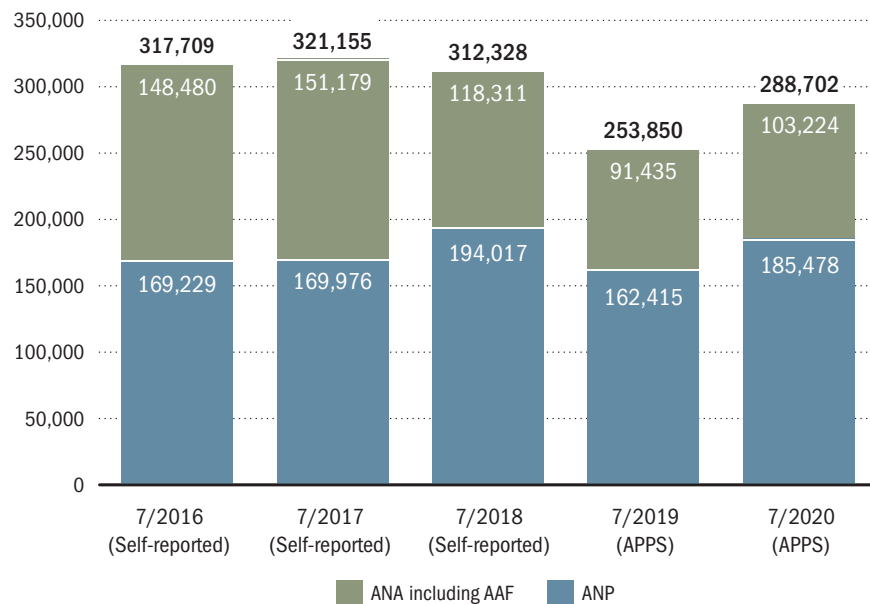


Note: This quarter's data is as of July 25, 2020. The "as of" date of the data each quarter is between the 25th and 31st of the indicated month. ANA = Afghan National Army; AAF = Afghan Air Force; ANP = Afghan National Police; ANDSF = Afghan National Defense and Security Forces. No civilians are included in the strength numbers.

Source: CSTC-A response to SIGAR data call, 9/22/2020, 6/18/2020, 3/17/2020, 12/19/2019, and 9/18/2019; SIGAR, analysis of CSTC-A-provided data, 9/2020.

FIGURE 3.31

REPORTED ANDSF ASSIGNED STRENGTH SINCE 2016



Note: This quarter's data is as of July 25, 2020. ANA = Afghan National Army; AAF = Afghan Air Force; ANP = Afghan National Police; ANDSF = Afghan National Defense and Security Forces. No civilians are included in strength numbers. ANA strength numbers include the AAF and trainees, transfers, holdees, and student personnel. ANP strength numbers do not include "standby" personnel, generally reservists, or personnel not in service while completing training. The change in strength numbers from 2018 to 2019/2020 is due to the transition of strength reporting from ANDSF-reported figures to reporting from the Afghan Personnel and Pay System (APPS). The strength numbers reported here should not be viewed as exact: CSTC-A and SIGAR have long noted many data-consistency issues with ANDSF strength numbers.

Source: CSTC-A response to SIGAR data call, 9/22/2020; SIGAR, Quarterly Report to the United States Congress, 10/30/2016, 10/30/2017, 10/30/2018, 10/30/2019; SIGAR, analysis of CSTC-A-provided data, 9/2020.

2,731.¹³¹ CSTC-A reported that these MOI losses were due to reduced operations at recruiting and training centers as part of the pandemic response measures. MOD's increase was because travel restrictions in place last quarter were lifted, allowing personnel who would have joined the ANDSF during those months to enlist, and because the ANA corps were granted authorization to conduct local recruitment.¹³²

The authorized strength of the ANDSF, the force level that the international community is willing to fund, remains at 352,000 MOD and MOI personnel. This puts the ANDSF's current assigned strength at 82%, or 63,298 personnel short, of its authorized strength.¹³³

Afghan Personnel and Pay System

CSTC-A reported this quarter that it continues its efforts to transition the full ownership and management of the Afghan Personnel and Pay System (APPS), which accounts for ANDSF personnel and manages payroll for the force, to the Afghan government. As of October 2020, the United States has spent \$35.8 million to build and sustain this system since it was created in 2016, about \$10 million of which having been spent since December 2018.¹³⁴

CSTC-A has spent years developing and overseeing APPS and helping the ANDSF implement the system. This quarter SIGAR asked CSTC-A for a timeline and the goals associated with transitioning APPS sustainment and management to the Afghan government. CSTC-A said because the transition is contingent on several factors, a specific timeline for achieving it has not been established. So far, factors for transition include:¹³⁵

- establishment of an Afghan APPS Program Management Office (PMO), which will first require the ministries to establish and approve authorized positions in APPS for personnel assigned to the office
- an Afghan government budget for an APPS sustainment contract using Afghan funds (it is expected APPS sustainment will cost roughly \$9.6 million per year)
- full MOI implementation of APPS to inform pay, as the MOD currently does
- advancement in APPS proficiency, with training provided to each of the ministries in the areas of user functions, help desk, and “train the trainers”

Last quarter, the ministries took full ownership of the APPS ID-card management and distribution process and of their “Tier One Help Desk,” the front-line support resource for ANDSF APPS users across Afghanistan. This quarter, CSTC-A said MOI is waiting for approval to create 25 new civilian positions to establish its APPS PMO. MOD recently established a five-person APPS PMO and continues the hiring process to staff the office. MOD is working closely with CSTC-A to learn roles and responsibilities associated with running an APPS PMO. Both MOD and MOI have made no progress on creating a budget for an APPS sustainment contract.¹³⁶

CSTC-A says until MOD and MOI accomplish these goals, U.S.-provided ASFF funds will continue to pay for APPS, and CSTC-A's APPS PMO will maintain oversight of the system. The current APPS sustainment contract ends April 30, 2021, but a follow-on ASFF-funded contract is pending solicitation and award, and could run up to five more years. Meanwhile, the U.S. government will maintain **configuration control** of APPS, as it has since APPS was established, to maintain transparency until the system is fully transitioned.¹³⁷

ANDSF Attrition – Some Data Classified

USFOR-A continued to classify detailed ANDSF attrition information this quarter because the Afghan government classifies it.¹³⁸ SIGAR's questions about ANDSF attrition can be found in Appendix E.

ANDSF Casualties

USFOR-A classified all ANDSF casualty information this quarter because the Afghan government classifies it.¹³⁹ SIGAR's questions about ANDSF casualties can be found in Appendix E.

SIGAR asked USFOR-A to provide an unclassified description of the data's trends. USFOR-A said "ANDSF casualties have increased this quarter compared to last and are slightly higher than the same period in 2019."¹⁴⁰

In an August 14 op-ed in the *Washington Post*, President Ashraf Ghani wrote that 12,279 Afghan security forces and civilians had been killed or wounded in the preceding five months since the U.S.-Taliban agreement was signed, according to Afghan government figures.¹⁴¹

ANDSF Insider Attacks

USFOR-A reported 35 insider attacks targeting ANDSF personnel this quarter. MOD had 10 such attacks with 30 personnel killed and seven wounded; MOI had 25 attacks with 114 killed and 28 wounded. These attacks reflect a 6% increase for the ANDSF since last quarter and a 46% increase compared to the same period last year. The killed-in-action rate for this quarter's attacks is 4.1 killed per attack, about the same as last quarter, but an increase from the 2.9 killed per attack reported during the same quarter last year.¹⁴²

Afghan Special Security Forces

The Afghan Special Security Forces (ASSF) are the ANDSF's primary offensive forces. The ASSF include a number of elements, such as the ANA Special Operations Corps (ANASOC), the General Command Police Special Units (GCPSU), and the Special Mission Wing (SMW). SIGAR tracks ASSF operations data because DOD has said the ASSF's growing size and capabilities are important both for the ANDSF's overall performance and for the United States to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of its

Configuration control: applying technical and administrative direction and surveillance to: (1) identify and document the functional and physical characteristics of the software; (2) control changes to those characteristics; and (3) record and report changes to processing and implementation status

Source: CSTC-A, response to SIGAR vetting, 10/11/2020.



ANASOC commandos stand in formation. (U.S. Army Reserve photo)

small-footprint military campaign in Afghanistan.¹⁴³ DOD reported in June 2020 that ASSF elements have nearly doubled in size since that reform goal was laid out in President Ashraf Ghani's 2017 four-year ANDSF Road Map for developing the force.¹⁴⁴

ASSF Operations Increasingly Independent

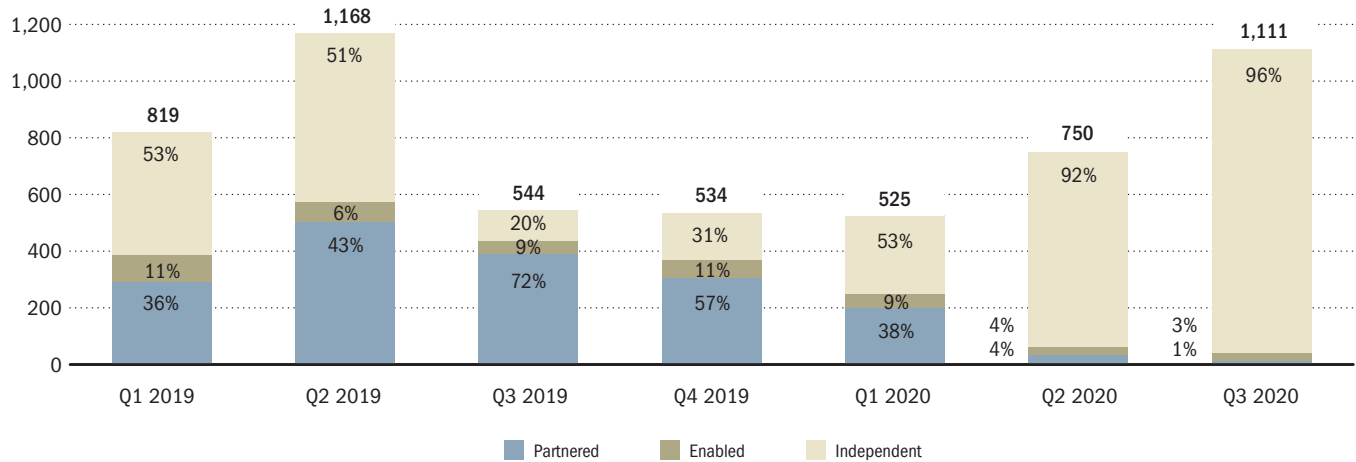
NSOCC-A reported that the ASSF conducted the highest number of ground operations this quarter (July–September 2020) than it has in over a year (since April–June 2019). NSOCC-A attributed this to more ASSF operational responsibility due to the decline in U.S.- and Coalition-partnered and -enabled ASSF operations because of COVID-19, and U.S. commitments in the U.S.-Taliban agreement to conduct only defensive strikes against the Taliban.¹⁴⁵

The 1,111 ASSF ground operations conducted this quarter were more than double the number the ASSF conducted during the same period last year (544), and reflect a 48% increase compared to last quarter (April–June 2020). July saw the highest number of operations (441) during the quarter compared to August (363) and September (307). As seen in Figure 3.32, the number of operations the ASSF conducted independently this quarter is the highest since January 2019 when SIGAR first began obtaining complete records.¹⁴⁶

Coalition advisors reported this quarter that while the pandemic environment posed challenges to TAA efforts, it also provided an opportunity to increase ASSF independence. Except for aircraft maintenance, daily operations are conducted independent of advisors, as in-person TAA restrictions have remained in place.¹⁴⁷

FIGURE 3.32

ASSF GROUND OPERATIONS BY QUARTER



Note: Partnered = operations conducted by ASSF in which U.S. or Coalition forces accompany ASSF to the target; Enabled = operations planned and executed by ASSF in which U.S./Coalition forces supply intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance, or other support but do not accompany ASSF to the target; Independent = operations planned and executed by ASSF without any U.S./Coalition assistance. Percentages may sum to more than 100% due to rounding.

Source: NSOCC-A, response to SIGAR data call, 10/19/2020 and 7/8/2020; NSOCC-A, response to SIGAR vetting, 7/17/2020; SIGAR, analysis of NSOCC-A-provided data, 10/2020.

GCPSU forces continued to operate at a high tempo and independently during the quarter, despite the pandemic. NSOCC-A reported nearly two-times more independent operations than last quarter.¹⁴⁸

Although ANASOC had TAA and force-generation issues due to the pandemic, they conducted 98% of their offensive operations completely independent of U.S. or Coalition forces’ enablers or advisors. NSOCC-A reported that ANASOC demonstrated strong coordination with the ANA this quarter on route-clearance operations that involved disarming improvised explosive devices. These missions, NSOCC-A said, successfully integrated SMW intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance support, as well as AAF strike capabilities.¹⁴⁹

ASSF Misuse Persists

According to NSOCC-A, 10% of ANASOC’s available force remains committed to operations outside of their core mission (misuse), the same as last quarter. ANASOC misuse continues to occur when the Afghan government deploys some ANASOC commandos to static positions or commits commandos to support other elements’ missions for extended periods. NSOCC-A said “advisors continue to monitor the issue closely in an effort to avoid needless employment of commandos in such roles.”¹⁵⁰

Misuse of GCPSU forces also has not improved this quarter, with 10 of 33 provincial special units reporting misuse. NSOCC-A said provincial chiefs of police predominantly misuse provincial special units (PSUs) for

personal-protection details or static defense of district centers. PSUs are the preferred option because they are seen as more competent, reliable, and capable compared to other provincial-level units. Advisors at the operational and strategic levels are seeking to change the command relationship between the provincial chiefs of police and PSUs to afford PSUs more autonomy, and to minimize future levels of misuse.¹⁵¹

Similarly, the SMW still conducts a number of missions that fall outside of their core mission. NSOCC-A said Afghan government leaders seek out SMW assets and crews to support non-special operations units when conditions are suboptimal, risk is high, or AAF units do not have, or are perceived not to have, the capacity to execute a certain mission. The reduced volume of offensive operations following the reduction in violence (RIV) period in late February has made SMW more susceptible to be tasked on general support missions. This trend has decreased slightly compared to last quarter, with approximately 28% of SMW missions falling into the general support or misuse categories (down from 33% last quarter).¹⁵²

Afghan Local Police

On June 16, 2020, President Ghani issued a decree directing the dissolution of the ALP. The decree stipulated that all eligible ALP members should be provided the opportunity to transition into other ANDSF elements, primarily the ANP or the Afghan National Army-Territorial Force (ANA-TF). The stated purpose of this decree was to ensure the local security of Afghanistan was maintained, to provide employment opportunities for eligible ALP members, and to prevent them from joining the Taliban.¹⁵³

This quarter, the MOI developed an ALP transition plan in coordination with the MOD. The plan identified 11,600 ALP for transition to ANP and 10,900 ALP for transition to the ANA-TF. Both MOI and MOD have published orders directing the key tasks associated with the ALP transition. CSTC-A said MOI training to support the transition began in October. The MOI screened all current ALP members for age, drug use, corruption, gross violations of human rights, and MOI criminal records during the planning phase. As a result, 7,500 members were deemed ineligible to join other elements of the ANDSF. Both ministries will do additional screening during the training phase of the transition to identify other ALP ineligible for transition.¹⁵⁴

The MOD initiated the recruitment of over 10,000 eligible former ALP officers on September 12.¹⁵⁵ As of October 7, 2,799 personnel were separated from service due to ineligibility to transition to either the ANP or the ANA Territorial Force (ANA-TF); 10,052 personnel were in districts designated to transition to the ANP; and 10,388 were in districts designated to transition to the ANA-TF (see next section for more information about the transition to the ANA-TF).¹⁵⁶

As with the other ANDSF elements paid with ASFF (primarily the ANA), only those ALP personnel enrolled in APPS could, by law, be paid with

ASFF through September 30, 2020, after which they must be transitioned into other positions in APPS to continue receiving pay. There were 20,239 ALP were enrolled in APPS, as of September 21, 2020. CSTC-A advisors informed the MOI that only ALP enrolled in APPS were eligible for transition.¹⁵⁷ CSTC-A said thus far, reslotting ALP personnel into ANA-TF and ANP positions in APPS has not caused any problems in the system.¹⁵⁸

The dissolution decree also states that the MOI must refer those ALP who are not qualified for transition to other security elements to the Ministries of Rural Rehabilitation and Development, Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock, National Administration of Water Management Affairs, and other organizations for placement. The Afghan government has not made progress in transitioning some ALP to non-ANDSF employment because many ALP are unwilling to leave their home districts or villages.¹⁵⁹

To mitigate the potential of ALP members joining the Taliban, CSTC-A stressed to the Afghan government the importance of communication and recommended an Afghan government leadership presence in certain high-risk districts and provinces. As of October 19, CSTC-A said they have not received reports of ALP joining the Taliban during the transition.¹⁶⁰

ANA Territorial Force

The Afghan National Army Territorial Force (ANA-TF) is the newest ANDSF force element. It is responsible for holding terrain in permissive (less violent) security environments. Falling directly under the command of the regular ANA corps, the ANA-TF is designed to be a lightly armed local security force that is more accountable to the central government than local forces like the ALP. DOD says that some of the ANA-TF companies may replace conventional ANA companies, where authorized positions exist, in areas where conditions are appropriate for the units to thrive. Following a final Afghan peace deal, DOD assesses that the ANA-TF or a similar force may serve as a vehicle to reintegrate insurgent fighters.¹⁶¹

The locations of the ANA-TF's operational and planned *tolays* (companies, with a strength of up to 121 soldiers) are intended to deny the Taliban freedom of maneuver, and keep the Taliban away from urban areas and key lines of communication and transportation.¹⁶² These tolays are currently providing local security in their areas of responsibility, so that the regular ANA forces are free to conduct other operations.¹⁶³

This quarter USFOR-A reported continued progress on recruiting and establishing the ANA-TF. As of September 18, there were 100 operational ANA-TF tolays, with four more in training. This is an increase of 17 operational tolays since February 25. One additional tolay is currently being planned. The ANA-TF's expansion has been rapid: in July 2019, the ANA had only 26 operational companies across Afghanistan.¹⁶⁴

According to CSTC-A, recruiting efforts continued for the ANA-TF to reach its current goal of 105 authorized tolays. However, in preparation for the ALP transition in autumn and winter of 2020, CTSC-A recently endorsed

SIGAR RELEASES AUDIT ON USE OF ANDSF WOMEN'S INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

From July 2015 through December 2017, CSTC-A funded the construction or renovation of 29 facilities and compounds, costing \$44.6 million, including barracks, administration buildings, and childcare and fitness centers. During the course of its audit, SIGAR selected 17 of 29 projects for site visits and found that only three projects were mostly being used as intended. Of the remaining 14 projects, six were completely unused, five were mostly unused, and three were not used as intended. Men in the ANDSF, rather than women, were using the facilities for the three projects that were not being used as intended. For more information about this audit, SIGAR's recommendations, and CSTC-A and DOD's responses, see Section 2 of this report.

the authorization of an additional 81 ANA-TF tolays for a total of 186. The increase enables up to 10,851 ALP members to transition to the ANA-TF.¹⁶⁵

CSTC-A also reported this quarter that there have been indications of ANA-TF progress, which included close cooperation with parent ANA corps in executing ANA-TF tolays' local security mission. The 201st, 205th, and 209th ANA Corps each supported ANA-TF tolays through quick-reaction-force support, regular ANA augmentation, and enabling capabilities such as artillery. With this support, ANA-TF tolays continued to execute their local security mission and suffered few casualties. The ANA-TF continues to experience shortcomings in some of the same areas as the ANA corps such as managing pay, food, and facilities for soldiers, all of which remain advisory focal points.¹⁶⁶

Women in the ANDSF

According to CSTC-A, 5,859 female personnel, including 434 civilians, were enrolled in APPS as of July 25, 2020. This reported strength figure reflects an increase of 608 (nearly 12%) since April 30. The majority of ANDSF women continue to serve in the MOI (4,070 personnel), with the other 1,789 in the MOD. CSTC-A also reported that in addition to the number of females reported in APPS, there are 32 female cadets enrolled at the National Military Academy (up two since last quarter) and 15 students at Kabul Medical University (one less than last quarter).¹⁶⁷

Ministry Performance Assessments – Most Data Classified

USFOR-A continued to classify most information about MOD and MOI performance because it is classified by the Afghan government.¹⁶⁸ SIGAR's questions about the ministries' performance can be found in Appendix E of this report.

This quarter, CSTC-A said MOD and MOI capacities continue to improve, but both ministries require ongoing assistance in developing the leadership and the organizational processes necessary to remain institutionally viable. Despite several challenges this quarter, including the current contentious environment, political maneuvering, Taliban violence, a global pandemic, and the start of Afghan peace negotiations, CSTC-A said the ministries' leadership remained stable this quarter. Even though COVID-19 has reduced in-person U.S. and Coalition TAA, CSTC-A said it has enabled MOI and MOD to operate more independently.¹⁶⁹

CSTC-A reported that it was noteworthy that the ministries were able to cooperate successfully in preparing and executing a *loya jirga*, or grand assembly, in August. The event brought together thousands of Afghan citizens to develop a consensus about the government's release of Taliban prisoners ahead of peace talks. While minimal violence did occur, CSTC-A said the ministries' efforts prevented any possible mass-casualty incident and "resulted in a secure and successful national event."¹⁷⁰



Female police officers receive training at a Bamyan police facility in September. (Afghan Ministry of Interior photo)

On MOI performance, CSTC-A highlighted that since early August the MOI has improved in processing procurement packages, executing contracts, and paying invoices, after a few months of struggling to adapt to circumstances changed by the COVID-19 pandemic. MOI is also working to increase fuel accountability and management by emphasizing the need for accurate requirements determination and consumption reporting. These reform efforts are being led by the Deputy Minister for Support and accomplished through effective leadership, and continuous communication with ANP provincial headquarters. CSTC-A said these changes have resulted in improved transparency and cost savings of approximately \$4.8 million over the last nine months.¹⁷¹

CoreIMS Implementation

In 2008, CSTC-A began limited use of the Core Inventory Management System (CoreIMS), then a laptop-based, off-the-shelf software package, at a CSTC-A-managed warehouse to manually track inventory. Since then, it has evolved into as a network-accessible system of record to manage and track DOD-provided equipment, weapons, and vehicles to the Afghan government.¹⁷²

After years of developing and implementing CoreIMS, the ANDSF is still far from fully implementing and utilizing it in all planned locations across Afghanistan. According to DOD, although CoreIMS is being used as a logistics automation system, the ANDSF has not yet been able to fully implement CoreIMS across the force. For example, the ANDSF are able to use CoreIMS at all national warehouses and regional depots, but not at all local sites.¹⁷³ DOD told SIGAR this quarter that “CoreIMS is intended to manage ANDSF materiel inventory at the warehouse level and enhance asset visibility and tracking at the national level. Once warehouses issue stocks, [such as] weapons and vehicles to the lower echelons, then these

activities ensure the accountability of the item using established manual ANA and ANP accountability policies.”¹⁷⁴

According to CSTC-A, the ANDSF also has persistent internet-connectivity issues that hinder the system’s function, and will need long-term training and technical support before it can take full responsibility for operating and sustaining the system.¹⁷⁵

CSTC-A said advisors look at several “measures of effectiveness” for MOD and MOI use of CoreIMS:¹⁷⁶

- completion of equipment inventories (10% monthly and 100% annual)
- inventory accuracy
- number of sites actively using CoreIMS
- number of sites actively using the Property Book Management (PBM) and Military Maintenance Management (M3) modules. (PBM allows for a much closer tracking of assets below the kandak level, even to individuals. M3 allows the visibility and oversight of repairable assets.)

According to CSTC-A, as of September 18, 109 of 191 possible ANDSF sites are active in CoreIMS: 71 ANA sites and 38 ANP sites. In June, DOD reported CoreIMS being used at only 78 of 191 possible sites. MOI and MOD are implementing CoreIMS at the Provincial Headquarters (PHQ) and Brigades with separate plans to implement and begin training at all sites by December 2020. MOI is training at 19 of the 34 provincial police headquarters, and MOD is training at 10 of its 29 brigades.¹⁷⁷

CSTC-A said inventories for the PBM module have been uploaded at seven ANA corps, 10 brigades, 12 battalions and six special forces units. PBM is currently not used at any national sites for the ANA and not utilized at the national, regional, or local sites for ANP. Currently, no ANDSF sites use M3, as PBM requires fielding to support M3 usage.¹⁷⁸

CSTC-A acknowledges that the ANDSF is far from ready for full independent use of CoreIMS. The ANDSF is not scheduled to achieve this until 2024. The ANDSF will continue to contract out the technical maintenance of the system, which the United States is expected to fund through FY 2026.¹⁷⁹

Checkpoint Reduction

Coalition TAA this quarter assisted the ANDSF in reducing the number of **checkpoints** it mans, which RS has long identified as a priority for improving performance. Dispersing troops among scattered, static checkpoints reduces overall combat power and offers targets for insurgent attacks. The goal is to reduce or eliminate the most vulnerable checkpoints (minimally manned or unsupportable checkpoints) as well as to consolidate personnel into **patrol bases** (the new standard fighting structures for the ANA).¹⁸⁰ CSTC-A estimates that the ANDSF have over 10,000 checkpoints nationwide, with an average of 10–20 personnel at each.¹⁸¹ CSTC-A reported

Checkpoints: nonpermanent positions manned by or housing 10–20 soldiers or police without logistics support or officer leadership.

Patrol bases: a fortified platoon or company position with towers, concertina wire, and other reinforcements, with a limited logistical capability for the care and feeding of soldiers assigned to the position. The construction of patrol bases is now ordered by MOD to be the standard field fortification for the ANA.

Source: CSTC-A, response to DOD OIG data call, 4/7/2020.

that USFOR-A efforts this quarter helped the ANA develop its Checkpoint Reduction and Base Development Plan (CPRBD) for this year.¹⁸² The ANA nonetheless had a net increase of nine checkpoints this quarter.¹⁸³

According to CSTC-A, the ANA is implementing checkpoint reduction through the CPRBD plan that covers efforts from June 21, 2020, through March 20, 2021. The goal is to eliminate 9% of the approximately 2,000 reported ANA checkpoints. From June 21 through August 21, 2020, the ANA eliminated 29 checkpoints, but constructed 38 new checkpoints.¹⁸⁴ Similarly, the ANP have identified 1,054 checkpoints to eliminate or consolidate from more than 5,000 ANP checkpoints that currently exist.¹⁸⁵ Since the beginning of this year, the MOI has eliminated 94 and reinforced an additional 196 checkpoints, without any new checkpoints reported for this quarter.¹⁸⁶ In total, the ANDSF still had approximately 95,000 personnel (29,000 ANA and 66,000 ANP personnel) manning checkpoints as of August 21, 2020.¹⁸⁷

CSTC-A reported that ongoing challenges to checkpoint reduction include ANDSF coordination amongst different security institutions and the proper use of enemy threat assessments to identify critical checkpoints. Further, ANA checkpoint reduction and reinforcement remains decentralized, with decisions made at the provincial level or below, rather than at MOD. According to CSTC-A, provincial governors in particular strongly believe that checkpoints are the best way to protect the population. To improve coordination, leaders from MOD, MOI, and the National Directorate of Security (NDS), among others, are planning meetings during the coming months to discuss checkpoint reductions.¹⁸⁸

CSTC-A noted that much effort is still required to reduce checkpoints across the country.¹⁸⁹

Ground-Vehicle Maintenance

DOD contractors provide maintenance services for ANDSF ground vehicles and train ANDSF technicians under the 2018 National Maintenance Strategy-Ground Vehicle Support (NMS-GVS) contract. The contractors also develop ANA and ANP maintenance capacity through a workshare plan intended to have the ANA and ANP performing 90% and 65%, respectively, of their maintenance by the end of the five-year contract in 2023.¹⁹⁰ As of October 2020, the United States has obligated \$787.5 million for ANA and ANP training, mentoring, and contract logistics-support services through the NMS-GVS contract.¹⁹¹

CSTC-A reported this quarter that the pandemic significantly impacted the ANDSF's ability to achieve their maintenance workshare benchmarks. According to CSTC-A, the ANA filled on average slightly more than 21% of maintenance work orders from July through September 2020, far below its 80% benchmark for the period. Similarly, the ANP filled on average slightly more than 11% of maintenance work orders during this same time period, also well below its 35% benchmark.¹⁹² CSTC-A said the final objective of the



ANA 215th Corps soldiers graduate from their training program in Helmand Province in October. (Afghan Ministry of Defense photo)

NMS-GVS workshare is to ensure sufficient ANDSF maintenance capacity. Nonetheless, the uncertainty of the security environment, the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, and the Coalition withdrawal timeline affect CSTC-A's ability to measure ANDSF workshare progress.¹⁹³

AFGHAN NATIONAL ARMY

As of September 30, 2020, the United States had obligated and disbursed roughly \$47.5 billion of ASFF appropriated from FY 2005 through FY 2018 to build, train, equip, and sustain the ANA, AAF, and parts of the Afghan Special Security Forces (ASSF). These force elements constituted the ANA budget activity group (BAG) for reporting purposes through the FY 2018 appropriation.¹⁹⁴

ANA Sustainment Funding

As of September 30, 2020, the United States had obligated \$23.6 billion and disbursed \$23.5 billion from FY 2005 through FY 2018 ASFF appropriations for ANA, AAF, and some ASSF sustainment. These costs include salary and incentive pay, fuel, transportation services, and equipment-maintenance costs, including aircraft, and other expenses.¹⁹⁵ For more details and the amount U.S. funds appropriated for ANA sustainment in FY 2019 and FY 2020, see page 53 of this report.

For Afghan fiscal year (FY) 1399 (December 2019–December 2020), CSTC-A plans to provide the Afghan government the equivalent of up to \$725.3 million to support the MOD. Of this amount, approximately \$636.7 million (88%) is slated for salaries.¹⁹⁶

TABLE 3.7

MAJOR EQUIPMENT ITEMS PROVIDED TO THE ANA				
Equipment Type	Equipment Description	Units Issued in Quarter	Unit Cost	Total Cost
Vehicle	Mobile Strike Force Vehicle	31	\$1,172,739	\$36,354,909
Vehicle	M1151 HMMWV (Utility Truck)	46	199,487	9,176,402
Ammunition	40 mm Grenade	191,360	16	2,990,957
Ammunition	81 mm High-Explosive Mortar Rounds	2,991	600	1,793,763
Parts	Harris Radio Headset	7	232,500	1,627,500
Ammunition	7.62 mm Cartridge	1,792,000	1	1,128,960
Weapon	M9 9 mm Pistol	1,000	636	636,000
Parts	Fast Tune Automatic Antenna Coupler	4	139,537	558,148
Parts	Harris Falcon III Radio Spares	30	17,510	525,315
Parts	Electric Panel Control	79	5,789	457,325
Total				\$55,249,279

Note: The above list reflects only the 10 highest-value equipment provided to the ANA this quarter (May 1–July 31, 2020). The “unit costs” listed reflect the average costs paid for items procured under multiple Foreign Military Sales cases. Costs are rounded to the nearest dollar.

Source: CSTC-A, response to SIGAR data call, 9/22/2020.

As of August 20, 2020, CSTC-A had provided the Afghan government the equivalent of \$414.1 million to support the MOD for FY 1399. Almost all of these funds (98%) paid for salaries.¹⁹⁷

ANA Equipment and Transportation

As of September 30, 2020, the United States had obligated and disbursed approximately \$13.6 billion from FY 2005 through FY 2018 ASFF appropriations for ANA, AAF, and some ASSF equipment and transportation costs.¹⁹⁸

Although CSTC-A has moved away from procuring major equipment and systems like High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicles (HMMWVs, commonly known as “Humvees”), items already procured are still being delivered to the ANA.¹⁹⁹ Table 3.7, lists the highest-cost items of equipment provided to the ANA this quarter (May 1 through July 31, 2020). CSTC-A reported that these items were purchased in 2017 and 2018, respectively, and more deliveries are pending. These included 31 Mobile Strike Force Vehicles (valued at \$36.4 million), 46 refurbished, excess U.S. Army HMMWVs (valued at \$9.2 million), and nearly 200,000 40 mm grenades (valued at about \$3 million, for use in grenade launchers, as distinct from hand grenades). DOD says they realized a cost avoidance by not procuring new HMMWVs (which cost around \$80,000 more per vehicle).²⁰⁰

Last quarter, when asked whether ANDSF replenishment requests are consistent with the observed or reported tempo and duration of ANA training and operations, CSTC-A said it “manages ammunition holistically,” tracking all aspects of inventory levels, projections and consumption, and tracking for in-transit and lead times for replenishing stock levels.

ONGOING SIGAR AUDIT

From FY 2002 through FY 2017—the most recent year for which there is publicly available data—the U.S. government provided more than \$28 billion in defense articles (such as HMMWVs, aircraft, and other types of equipment) to Afghanistan. An ongoing SIGAR audit is focused on the extent to which DOD, since the beginning of FY 2017, conducted required routine and enhanced post-delivery end-use monitoring of defense articles provided to the ANDSF, and reported and investigated potential end-use violations in Afghanistan and took steps to ensure corrective actions occurred, when applicable.

CSTC-A uses the information in the ANDSF's electronic-equipment inventory system of record, CoreIMS, as well as information from its regional advising commands to monitor consumption rates used to request replenishment of ANA and ANP ammunition stocks. CSTC-A then uses the average consumption rate for each ministry and records of previous issues from national stocks to gauge ANA and ANP projections for accuracy and procure the amount of ammunition to keep the ANDSF supplied.²⁰¹ For more information about the implementation and efficacy of CoreIMS, as well as the ANDSF's challenges with independently managing the system, see page 90.

ANA Equipment Operational Readiness – Data Classified

This quarter, USFOR-A continued to classify data on ANA equipment readiness because the Afghan government classifies it. DOD notes that the U.S. military classifies similar data on equipment fielded to its formations.²⁰² SIGAR's questions about ANA equipment readiness can be found in Appendix E of this report.

ANA Infrastructure

The United States had obligated and disbursed roughly \$6 billion of ASFF appropriations from FY 2005 through FY 2018 for ANA, AAF, and some ASSF infrastructure projects as of September 30, 2020.²⁰³

As of September 18, 2020, CSTC-A was managing 14 ongoing, DOD-funded ANA infrastructure projects costing roughly \$53.9 million in total. CSTC-A also awarded two new projects, projected to cost around \$10.3 million.²⁰⁴ Of the ongoing projects, the costliest include an electrical-grid connection project for the ANA and ANP in Kunduz (\$10.7 million), a new School of Excellence for the ANASOC's Camp Commando (\$6.9 million), and a new forward operating base for the ANASOC's 8th Special Operations Kandak in Logar. The projects CSTC-A awarded this quarter were an electrical-grid connection project for the ANA in Pul-e Khumri (\$9.5 million) and a forward operating base at Marshal Fahim National Defense University in Kabul (\$755,000).²⁰⁵ Four of these projects are slated for completion on or after April 2021, shortly after which U.S. forces, depending on conditions, may leave Afghanistan.²⁰⁶

Responding to SIGAR's question about how CSTC-A could continue to oversee construction projects after a potential U.S. withdrawal, CSTC-A said:

We are keenly aware of the need to provide proper oversight of projects and protect taxpayer dollars; therefore, USFOR-A is conducting prudent planning for future force levels under several different scenarios. Final policy guidance for future force levels will be forthcoming, and will be determined by conditions on the ground. These prudent planning efforts are aligned with NATO planning guidance.²⁰⁷

CSTC-A completed two projects this quarter: the second phase of construction for the ANASOC Mobility School of Excellence at Pul-e Charkhi, costing nearly \$4 million; and a road improvement project for Camp Pratt in Mazar-e Sharif, costing around \$70,000.²⁰⁸

CSTC-A terminated two projects this quarter. One was a \$5.9 million project making enhancements to Kandahar Airfield (KAF). CSTC-A said that pending the transition of similar facilities from Coalition forces to the Afghan government, there was no longer a need to construct the facilities. They also said \$1 million has already been returned from the KAF AAF Aviation Enhancement project. USACE is currently working to close out the contract and negotiating with the contractor to determine how much they will receive, a process that will take several months to conclude. The other terminated project was a \$1.9 million entry-control point and combined situational awareness room project for the Joint Special Operations Coordination Center, which was canceled because changes to the mission made the project no longer necessary. CSTC-A said no funds were executed for this project and all \$1.9 million was returned.²⁰⁹

CSTC-A said the significant difference in the number of reported projects this quarter compared to last is due to SIGAR's request that it report only infrastructure funded by DOD. Previously, NATO ANA Trust Fund projects not funded by the United States had been included in the count.²¹⁰

SIGAR asked CSTC-A this quarter if projects completed since the beginning of this calendar year were being used for their intended purposes. CSTC-A said "Once projects are completed and handed over to the host nation, then they are the responsibility of the host nation; however, CSTC-A is unaware of any completed projects since the beginning of the calendar year that are not being used as intended." CSTC-A gave the example of completed electrical-grid projects being used for their intended purpose of providing electricity to Camp Shaheen and Kabul Military Training Center.²¹¹ SIGAR issued an audit this quarter that found 14 of 29 infrastructure projects for ANDSF women that CSTC-A funded from July 2015 through December 2017 were not being used as intended (either they were not used at all, used very little, or used by men). See Section 2 for more information.

CSTC-A reported that the estimated annual facilities-sustainment cost funded by the United States for all ANA facility-sustainment requirements continues to be \$108.8 million. Of this, \$74.7 million is provided directly to the Afghan government and \$34.1 million is spent by CSTC-A for the Afghan government.²¹² CSTC-A said it is reducing the budgeted amount for on-budget ASFF funds programmed for FY 2021 by 10%.²¹³

COVID-19 Impact on Oversight of ANDSF Facility Construction

According to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) this quarter, COVID-19 has both directly impacted construction progress and indirectly impacted some of USACE Afghanistan District's standard construction-oversight processes. Primarily, COVID-19 lockdowns and restrictions have prevented many of the Afghanistan District Construction Division's contractors from performing aspects of construction, either by outright preventing all or significant portions of the contractor workforce from accessing installations, limiting the available local workforce to a degree that reduces performance efficiency, or stopping or slowing delivery of critical materials.

Thus far, 10 contracts have had their expected completion dates formally extended by a total of 478 days due to COVID-19, USACE said. In terms of impacts to internal processes, the Afghanistan District's Construction Division had to deviate from certain standard construction-oversight processes, such as USACE construction employees making site visits or hosting in-person contractor meetings. According to CSTC-A, negative effects from these limitations have been largely mitigated thanks to help from the Local National Quality Assurance Program, a USACE-managed team of local engineers and subject-matter experts who can do some of this work independently, and increased usage of teleconferences to host the various meetings necessary to ensure construction progress.

Source: USACE, response to SIGAR data call, 9/22/2020; CSTC-A, response to SIGAR vetting, 10/11/2020.

ANA Training and Operations

As of September 30, 2020, the United States had obligated and disbursed approximately \$4.3 billion of ASFF appropriations from FY 2005 through FY 2018 for ANA, AAF, some ASSF, and MOD training and operations.²¹⁴

This quarter, CTSC-A provided SIGAR an update on current U.S.-funded ANA, AAF, and ANASOC training contracts. According to CSTC-A, ASFF funds currently pay for a number of high-cost, mission-critical training programs for these force elements. The costliest is a \$113.1 million program run outside of the United States and Afghanistan that provides initial-entry rotary-wing training, initial-entry fixed-wing training, and aircraft qualification training for AAF pilots flying UH-60 and MD-530 aircraft. Another is an \$83.8 million broad training program for the ASSF, supporting the NSOCC-A-partnered units as they further develop critical operational and institutionalized special operations training and build sufficient capacity within the ASSF. There is also a \$70.6 million contract to train AAF aircraft maintainers.²¹⁵

Table 3.8 shows that the United States could spend up to \$468.2 million on just the top-10 most costly U.S.-funded contracts to train ANA, AAF, and ANASOC personnel. Four of these contracts, including the two most expensive, are scheduled to run into the late summer or early fall of 2021.²¹⁶ This raises questions about how CSTC-A intends to continue contract oversight should U.S. forces execute their planned withdrawal on or before May 2021. CSTC-A said this is being considered as USFOR-A is conducting its prudent planning for future force levels under several different scenarios, and that final policy guidance for future force levels will be forthcoming, determined by conditions on the ground, and aligned with NATO planning guidance.²¹⁷

TABLE 3.8

TRAINING CONTRACTS FOR MOD ELEMENTS	
Contract	Total Case/Contract Value
OCONUS AAF Pilot Training	\$113,069,928
ASSF Training Program	83,829,343
AAF Aviation Maintenance Development Center	70,585,184
Contractor Logistics Support	59,000,000
ASSF Training Support Services	50,720,932
National Maintenance Strategy-Ground Vehicle Services (ANA/AAF/ASSF)	45,123,209
A-29 Pilot & Maintainer Training (AAF)	15,305,250
AAF English Language Training	11,478,932
Army Institutional Advisor Team for ANA	10,741,876
Operational Support Services Mentors (AAF)	8,346,146

Note: The above list reflects only the 10 highest-value training contracts supporting MOD force elements. OCONUS = Outside the Continental United States, ASSF = Afghan Special Security Forces, AAF = Afghan Air Force, ANA = Afghan National Army. According to DOD, some of the contracts' periods of performance go beyond May 2021. CSTC-A said this is being considered as part of its prudent planning for future force levels under several different scenarios.

Source: CSTC-A, response to SIGAR data call, 9/22/2020 and response to SIGAR vetting, 10/11/2020; OUSD-P, response to SIGAR vetting, 10/27/2020 and 10/28/2020.



Four A-29 Super Tucanos were delivered to the AAF from the United States this quarter. (NATO photo)

AFGHAN AIR FORCE

U.S. Funding

As of August 21, 2020, the United States had appropriated approximately \$8.5 billion for ASFF to build and develop the AAF and fund its combat operations from FY 2010 to FY 2020, unchanged since last quarter.²¹⁸ The amount of money authorized for the AAF for FY 2020 (roughly \$1.3 billion) also remains unchanged since last quarter. Though FY 2020 funding increased by just over \$300 million compared to FY 2019, it is similar to funding levels from FY 2017 and FY 2018.²¹⁹

As in most previous years, sustainment remains the costliest funding category for the AAF (65% of FY 2020 authorized funds). AAF sustainment costs primarily include contractor-provided maintenance, major and minor repairs, and procurement of parts and supplies for the AAF's in-country inventory of seven air platforms: UH-60, MD-530, and Mi-17 helicopters; A-29, C-208, and AC-208 fixed-wing aircraft; and C-130 transport aircraft.²²⁰

The United States has obligated \$5.9 billion of ASFF for the AAF (including about \$1.7 billion for the SMW) from FY 2010 to FY 2020, as of August 21, 2020.²²¹ U.S. funds can be obligated for up to two years, and roughly \$806.3 million in FY 2019 funds have been obligated (of the 986.8 million authorized) and roughly \$119.6 million in FY 2020 funds have been obligated (of the \$1.3 billion authorized).²²²

SIGAR ISSUES CLASSIFIED AUDIT ON AFGHAN AIR FORCE AND SPECIAL MISSION WING VETTING FOR CORRUPTION

Preventing and rooting out corruption in critical ANDSF units, such as the air forces, is important to protect the multibillion dollar U.S. investment in those units from waste, fraud, and abuse, and to ensure the forces are operationally effective and sustainable. This classified audit examined the extent to which the MOD vets AAF and SMW recruits for corruption, and identified areas for improvement. For more information, see Section 2 of this report.

AAF Inventory and Status

Seen in Table 3.9, as of September 30, 2020, the AAF currently has 159 available aircraft and 179 aircraft in its inventory, four more available aircraft and eight more total aircraft than reported last quarter. However, two Mi-17 helicopters were lost in an October crash that killed their nine ANDSF occupants.²²³

AAF Operations and Readiness

This quarter, the AAF's flight hours increased by about 35% compared to last quarter, and 10% compared to the same period last year. Train, Advise, and Assist Command-Air (TAAC-Air) said this was due to the AAF increasing its number of trained aircrews and the growing necessity to fly because of reduced Coalition support due to the troop drawdown: "The AAF have a greater operational need but also a greater capability."²²⁴ The readiness of five of seven AAF airframes increased this quarter (July–September 2020), one fewer than last quarter (April–June 2020).²²⁵ Additionally, all but one of the airframes (the MD-530) met their readiness benchmarks this quarter, the same as last quarter.²²⁶ TAAC Air said this was because COVID-19 restrictions have reduced the number of contractors available to maintain the MD-530s: only 65 of the 175 contractors authorized are performing maintenance in-country.²²⁷

TABLE 3.9

AAF AVIATION SUMMARY AS OF OCTOBER 1, 2020					
AIRCRAFT	Authorized	Total Inventory	Usable / In-Country	Authorized Aircrews	Assigned Aircrews
Fixed Wing					
A-29	28	28	18	38	24
AC-208	10	10	10	15	13
C-208	23	23	23	28	31
C-130	4	4	2	5	3
Rotary Wing					
Mi-17	0	19	15	–	–
MD-530	53	53	49	58	33
UH-60	42	42	42	49	39
Total	160	179	159	193	143

Note: These figures do not include the aircraft for the Special Mission Wing, which are classified. Some of the A-29s remain at Moody Air Force Base in the United States for AAF A-29 training. The AAF is phasing out its Russian-made Mi-17s. FY 2022 is the last year DOD will seek sustainment funding for the Mi-17s. Some will remain in the fleet to provide operational capability until the UH-60 capability matures and the transition to CH-47s is completed. TAAC-Air did not provide data for Mi-17 aircrews because it does not provide train, advise, and assist support for the AAF's Mi-17s.

Source: TAAC-Air, response to SIGAR data call, 10/7/2020 and response to SIGAR vetting, 10/19/2020; SIGAR, analysis of TAAC-Air-provided data, 10/2020.

AFGHAN NATIONAL POLICE

As of September 30, 2020, the United States had obligated nearly \$21.6 billion and disbursed more than \$21.5 billion of ASFF funds from FY 2005 through FY 2018 appropriations to build, train, equip, and sustain the ANP and the GCPSU. These force elements constituted the ANP budget activity group (BAG) for reporting purposes through FY 2018 appropriation.²²⁸ For more information about what these costs include and the amount of U.S. funds appropriated for ANP sustainment in FY 2020, see pages 52–53 of this report.

ANP Sustainment Funding

As of September 30, 2020, the United States had obligated \$9.7 billion and disbursed \$9.6 billion of ASFF from FY 2005 through FY 2018 appropriations for ANP sustainment costs.²²⁹ Unlike the ANA, a significant share of ANP personnel costs (including ANP salaries) is paid by international donors through the United Nations Development Programme’s (UNDP) multidonor Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan (LOTFA).²³⁰

To support the MOI, CSTC-A plans to provide up to \$146.6 million in FY 1399. Of these funds, approximately \$54 million (37%) is for salaries, with the remaining funds for purchase of goods, services, or assets.²³¹ As of August 19, CSTC-A has disbursed \$20.2 million to the Ministry of Interior and an additional \$1.04 million distributed to the UNDP for LOTFA.²³²

ANP Equipment and Transportation

As of September 30, 2020, the United States had obligated and disbursed approximately \$4.8 billion of ASFF from FY 2005 through FY 2018 appropriations for ANP equipment and transportation costs.²³³

Although CSTC-A has moved away from new procurements of major equipment and systems, items already procured are still being delivered to the ANP.²³⁴ Table 3.10 on the next page lists the highest-cost items of equipment provided to the ANP this quarter (May 1, 2020, through July 31, 2020). Of these items, the costliest was the delivery of 112 Humvee utility trucks (\$22.3 million).²³⁵

ANP Infrastructure

The United States had obligated and disbursed approximately \$3.2 billion of ASFF appropriations from FY 2005 through FY 2018 for ANP and some GCPSU infrastructure projects as of September 30, 2020.²³⁶

As of September 18, 2020, CSTC-A was managing two ongoing, DOD-funded ANP infrastructure projects. These projects are the joint NATF- and ASFF-funded CCTV (closed-circuit television) surveillance system in Kabul (\$34 million total, \$19 million funded by ASFF) and the ASFF-funded GCPSU project at Kabul Garrison Command (\$2.5 million).²³⁷ CSTC-A

TABLE 3.10

MAJOR EQUIPMENT PROVIDED TO THE ANP				
Equipment Type	Equipment Description	Units Issued in Quarter	Unit Cost	Total Cost
Vehicle	M1151 HMMWV (utility truck)	112	\$199,487	\$22,342,544
Ammunition	7.62 mm x 39 mm cartridge	2,492,189	1	2,143,283
Vehicle	CCM motorcycle	179	8,762	1,568,437
Ammunition	82 mm mortar rounds	14,000	96	1,340,500
Weapon	Pistol, M9 9 mm	900	636	572,400
Parts	Rifle extension, lower receiver	4,047	38	154,879
Parts	Solar power system, access nose	3	46,167	138,501
Uniform	Cap, synthetic fleece	18,600	6	102,486
Uniform	Shirt, men, medium	3,000	32	95,940
Uniform	Shirt, men, large	3,000	32	95,940
Total Cost of Equipment				\$28,554,910

Note: The above list reflects only the 10 highest-value equipment provided to the ANP this quarter (May 1–July 31, 2020). The “unit costs” listed reflect the average costs paid for items procured under multiple Foreign Military Sales cases. Costs are rounded to the nearest dollar.

Source: CSTC-A, response to SIGAR data call, 9/22/2020.

reported that no projects were completed, cancelled, or terminated this quarter, and no new projects were awarded.²³⁸

CSTC-A said the significant difference in the number of reported projects this quarter compared to last is due to SIGAR specifying that it report only infrastructure funded by DOD. Previously, NATO ANA Trust Fund projects the United States was not funding had been included in the count.²³⁹

CSTC-A continued to report this quarter that the estimated annual facilities-sustainment costs funded by the United States for all ANP facility and electrical-generator requirements will be \$68.8 million. Of this, \$42.4 million will be provided directly to the Afghan government and \$26.4 million will be spent by CSTC-A for the Afghan government.²⁴⁰

ANP Training and Operations

As of September 30, 2020, the United States had obligated \$4 billion and disbursed \$3.9 billion of ASFF appropriations from FY 2005 through FY 2018 for ANP and some GCPSU training and operations.²⁴¹

This quarter, CTSC-A provided SIGAR an update on current U.S.-funded ANP training contracts. According to CSTC-A, ASFF funds currently pay for two training contracts for the ANP. One is an \$18.5 million contract to train the ANP to maintain its ground vehicles, which will continue until August 31, 2021, with the option to continue services beyond that date if CSTC-A desires.²⁴² The other is a contract to support training MOI women in occupational skills as part of the Gender Occupational Opportunity Development Program costing roughly \$1 million that runs until May 1, 2021.²⁴³



Afghan police officers train at a Bamyan police facility in September. (Afghan Ministry of Interior photo)

According to DOD, the MOI continued to focus on the ANP’s future role in a stabilized security environment. This includes an evidence-based assessment intended to understand how the ANP should be structured and equipped in a stable environment. This is part of a continuing plan to transition the ANP away from its current organization as a paramilitary security force and toward a more traditional police force focusing on “community policing” and the rule of law.²⁴⁴

Efforts in that direction include reducing the numbers of the most dangerous checkpoints and re-evaluating the training pipeline and training curriculum for police personnel. Specifically, MOI reviewed the curriculum of initial-entry police training to better align with a civil law-enforcement mission. Nonetheless, MOI continues to lack institutional training that reinforces civil law enforcement. Furthermore, beyond early training, the ANP also lacks an institutionalized leadership-development program at the district and local levels.²⁴⁵

REMOVING UNEXPLODED ORDNANCE

Afghanistan is riddled with land mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) such as live shells and bombs, according to the United Nations (UN).²⁴⁶ Although contamination includes legacy mines laid before 2001, most casualties today are caused by mines and other ERW that have accumulated since 2002.²⁴⁷ In recent years, casualties have been reported from ordnance exploding in areas formerly used as firing ranges by Coalition forces. The UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) also has documented a direct correlation between civilian casualties and ERW in areas following heavy fighting.²⁴⁸ According to UN reporting from March 2020, approximately 2.5 million Afghans live within one kilometer of areas contaminated with explosive hazards that need immediate clearance.²⁴⁹

SECURITY

State's Bureau of Political-Military Affairs' Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement (PM/WRA) manages the conventional-weapons destruction program in Afghanistan. Since FY 2002, State has allocated \$419.9 million in weapons-destruction and humanitarian mine-action assistance to Afghanistan (an additional \$11.6 million was obligated between 1997 and 2001 before the start of the U.S. reconstruction effort). As of August 31, 2020, PM/WRA had released \$19.9 million in FY 2019 funds.²⁵⁰

State directly funds seven Afghan nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), four international NGOs, and one Afghan government organization to help clear areas in Afghanistan contaminated by ERW and conventional weapons (e.g., unexploded mortar rounds), which insurgents can use to construct roadside bombs and other improvised explosive devices (IEDs).²⁵¹

From 1997 through June 30, 2020, State-funded implementing partners have cleared approximately 292 million square meters of land (113 square miles) and removed or destroyed over eight million landmines and other ERW such as unexploded ordnance (UXO), abandoned ordnance (AO), stockpiled munitions, and homemade explosives. Table 3.11 shows conventional-weapons destruction figures, FY 2010–2020.²⁵²

The estimated total area of contaminated land continues to fluctuate: clearance activities reduce the extent of hazardous areas, but ongoing surveys find new contaminated land. On April 1, 2020, there were 665.6 square kilometers (257 square miles) of contaminated minefields and battlefields. As of June 30, 2020, the total known contaminated area was 701 square kilometers (271 square miles) in 4,004 hazard areas. PM/WRA defines a

TABLE 3.11

DEMINE PROGRAM PERFORMANCE METRICS, FISCAL YEARS 2010–2020					
Fiscal Year	Minefields Cleared (m ²)	AT/AP Destroyed	UXO Destroyed	SAA Destroyed	Estimated Contaminated Area Remaining (m ²) ^a
2010	39,337,557	13,879	663,162	1,602,267	650,662,000
2011	31,644,360	10,504	345,029	2,393,725	602,000,000
2012	46,783,527	11,830	344,363	1,058,760	550,000,000
2013	25,059,918	6,431	203,024	275,697	521,000,000
2014	22,071,212	12,397	287,331	346,484	511,600,000
2015	12,101,386	2,134	33,078	88,798	570,800,000
2016	27,856,346	6,493	6,289	91,563	607,600,000
2017	31,897,313	6,646	37,632	88,261	547,000,000
2018	25,233,844	5,299	30,924	158,850	558,700,000
2019	13,104,094	3,102	26,791	162,727	657,693,033
2020	16,886,630	2,073	6,913	58,359	701,040,407
Total	291,976,187	80,788	1,984,536	6,325,491	

Note: AT/AP = antitank/antipersonnel ordnance. UXO = unexploded ordnance. SAA = small-arms ammunition. There are about 4,047 square meters (m²) to an acre.

^a Total area of contaminated land fluctuates as clearance activities reduce hazardous areas while ongoing survey work identifies and adds new contaminated land in the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) database. FY 2020 data covers October 1, 2019, through June 30, 2020.

Source: PM/WRA, response to SIGAR data call, 9/21/2020.

minefield as the area contaminated by landmines; a contaminated area can include both landmines and other ERW.²⁵³

In 2012, the Afghan government was granted an extension until 2023 to fulfill its obligations under the Ottawa Treaty to achieve mine-free status. Given the magnitude of the problem and inadequate financial support, the country is not expected to achieve this objective. According to State, the drawdown of Coalition forces in 2014 coincided with a reduction in international donor funds to the Mine Action Programme for Afghanistan (MAPA).²⁵⁴

From a peak of \$113 million in 2010, MAPA's budget decreased to \$51 million in 2018. The Afghan government is expected to request another 10-year extension to meet its treaty obligations. However, according to the State Department, the extension request cannot be initiated or acknowledged sooner than 18 months before April 2023—the end date of the current extension.²⁵⁵

CONFLICT MITIGATION ASSISTANCE FOR CIVILIANS

USAID's Conflict Mitigation Assistance for Civilians (COMAC) is a \$40 million, five-year, nationwide program that began in March 2018. It supports Afghan civilians and their families who have suffered losses from military operations against the Taliban or from insurgent attacks. COMAC provides assistance to Afghan civilians and their dependent family members who have experienced loss due to:²⁵⁶

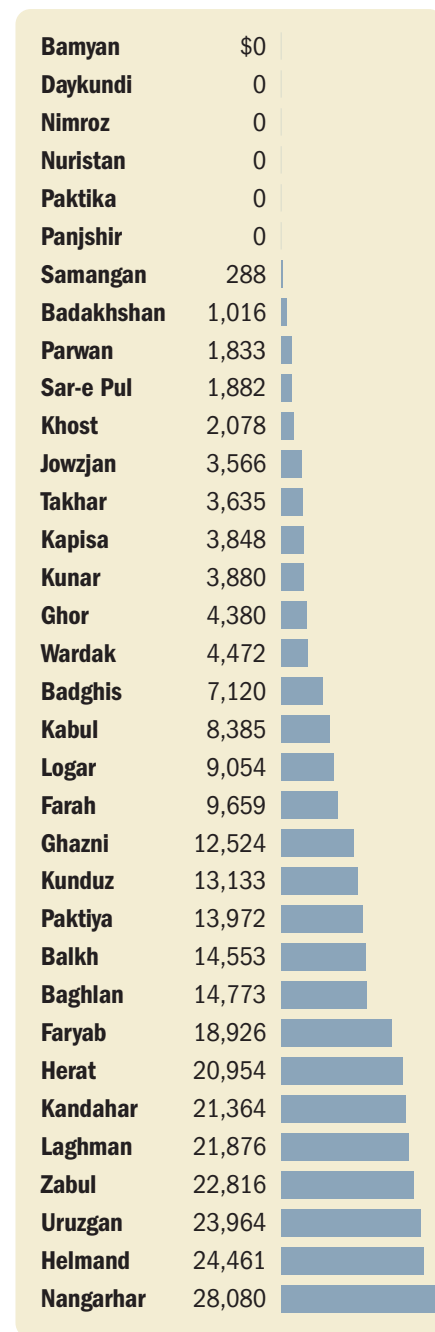
- military operations involving the U.S., Coalition, or ANDSF against insurgents, criminals, terrorists, or illegal armed groups
- landmines, improvised explosive devices (IED), unexploded ordnance, suicide attacks, public mass shootings, or other insurgent or terrorist actions
- cross-border shelling or cross-border fighting

COMAC provides in-kind goods sufficient to support families affected by conflict for 60 days. Additional assistance includes referrals for health care and livelihood service providers, and economic reintegration for families impacted by loss or injury.²⁵⁷ From April 1 through June 30, 2020, COMAC provided 1,410 immediate assistance packages, 206 tailored assistance packages, and 87 medical assistance packages, for a total program expense of \$316,492. Figure 3.33 shows the provinces receiving the most assistance included Nangarhar (\$28,080), Helmand (\$24,461), and Uruzgan (\$23,964) while the provinces receiving the least assistance included Parwan (\$1,833), Badakhshan, (\$1,016) and Samangan (\$288). Six provinces did not receive any assistance.²⁵⁸

As of June 30, 2020, USAID has disbursed \$26.3 million for this program.²⁵⁹

FIGURE 3.33

USAID'S CONFLICT-MITIGATION ASSISTANCE FOR CIVILIANS BY PROVINCE, APRIL 1–JUNE 30, 2020 (\$ USD)



Note: Total dollars vary slightly since some packages were still pending payment at the time the financial report was generated. Total assistance rounded to the nearest dollar. "Total Assistance" includes immediate assistance, tailored assistance, and medical assistance.

Source: USAID, response to SIGAR data call, 9/21/2020.