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SECURITY

KEY ISSUES & EVENTS

On April 14, 2021, President Joseph R. Biden announced his decision to withdraw all U.S. troops from Afghanistan before September 11, 2021, the 20th anniversary of the attacks that prompted the U.S. intervention in the country.

Enemy-initiated attacks from January 1 to March 31, 2021, increased nearly 37% compared to the same quarter last year, but decreased by approximately 10% compared to last quarter (October 1–December 31, 2020), according to Resolute Support.

After lower than usual civilian casualties during most of 2020, civilian casualties increased 29% this quarter (January 1–March 31, 2021) compared to the same period last year, according to the UN mission in Afghanistan.

Afghan security forces casualties occurring January 1–March 31, 2021, were substantially higher than during the same time period last year, but slightly lower than in the last quarter, according to USFOR-A.

Following his inauguration on January 20, 2021, President Joseph R. Biden and his administration began reevaluating the United States' Afghanistan policy, particularly the question of whether to withdraw remaining U.S. troops there by the May 1, 2021, date stipulated in the February 29, 2020, U.S.-Taliban agreement.⁴³ On April 14, 2021, President Biden announced his decision to withdraw all U.S. troops from Afghanistan before September 11, 2021, the 20th anniversary of the attacks that prompted the U.S. intervention in the country. President Biden said the United States would “continue to support the government of Afghanistan. We will keep providing assistance to the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces. ... And we’ll continue to support the rights of Afghan women and girls by maintaining significant humanitarian and development assistance.”⁴⁴

In line with commitments made in the U.S.-Taliban agreement, the U.S. withdrawal includes U.S. defense contractors. Commander of U.S. Central Command, General Kenneth McKenzie, testified at a House Armed Services Committee hearing on April 20, “Everyone will leave. All U.S. defense contractors will leave as part of the withdrawal.”⁴⁵

“It’s clear the Taliban have not upheld what they said they would do and reduce the violence. It is clear they took a deliberate approach and increased their violence since the peace accords were signed.”

—General Richard Clarke,
Commander, U.S. Special
Operations Command

Source: Voice of America, “US Troops May Miss Afghanistan Withdrawal Deadline, Biden Says,” 3/25/2021.

The complete withdrawal of U.S. troops and U.S. defense contractors from Afghanistan will test whether the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF) can sustain themselves and defend the Afghan government without direct U.S. and Coalition military support. Defense officials expressed concern about these issues throughout the quarter. On February 20, 2021, General Kenneth F. McKenzie, in a meeting with Pakistani officials, warned that an early U.S. pullout could risk the collapse of the Afghan government.⁴⁶ On March 13, the commander of U.S. and allied forces in Afghanistan, General Austin Scott Miller, warned that a U.S. withdrawal would leave the Afghan security forces without vital support, especially for its air force, which relies on contractors to maintain its planes and helicopters. “When you start talking about removing our presence ... certain things like air, air support, and maintenance of that air support become more and more problematic,” he added.⁴⁷ U.S. forces continued to provide close air support to the ANDSF this quarter as the Taliban conducted multiple attacks on ANDSF positions.⁴⁸

The announcement that the U.S. military and all U.S. defense contractors will fully withdraw by a set date diverges from past DOD officials’ statements that personnel reductions and an eventual withdrawal would be conditioned on Taliban compliance with their commitments in the U.S.-Taliban agreement. As recently as February 20, U.S. Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin said that an end to the U.S. military involvement in Afghanistan must be linked to a reduction in Taliban attacks. “The violence must decrease now,” he said, stressing that the level of violence was too high in Afghanistan and that more progress was needed in the Afghan peace negotiations.⁴⁹

While violence is typically low in Afghanistan in the first quarter of the calendar year (January–March), enemy-initiated attacks from January 1 to March 31, 2021, increased nearly 37% compared to the same quarter last year.⁵⁰ Both NATO Resolute Support (RS) and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) also recorded strikingly high civilian casualties during January–March 2021, compared to the same period last year.⁵¹

Removing U.S. troops from Afghanistan also impacts the United States’ primary mission there—to ensure that terrorists in the country cannot threaten the U.S. homeland. In a hearing on April 14, CIA Director William Burns told lawmakers, “Our ability to keep that threat in Afghanistan in check ... has benefitted greatly from the presence of U.S. and Coalition militaries on the ground.” He added, “When the time comes for the U.S. military to withdraw, the U.S. government’s ability to collect and act on threats will diminish. ... That is simply a fact.”⁵² Burns said the CIA will “retain a suite of capabilities” in Afghanistan once troops leave, with some already in place and others to be developed, to help provide threat warnings to U.S. officials.⁵³

The withdrawal announcement also affects the United States' NATO and non-NATO allies that contribute troops to the RS mission to train, advise, and assist the ANDSF. At a joint press conference on April 14, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said that NATO ministers “decided that we will start the withdrawal of NATO Resolute Support forces by May 1. ... We plan to complete the drawdown of all our troops within a few months.” At the same press conference, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken added, “We’ll continue to support the Government of Afghanistan, and provide assistance to the Afghan security forces who have fought and continue to fight valiantly at a great cost on behalf of their country, and we’ll keep investing in the wellbeing of the Afghan people.”⁵⁴

Negotiations between the Afghan government and Taliban to decide the political future of the country continued this quarter, in Doha, Qatar, and at a conference in Moscow on March 18, 2021.⁵⁵ However, a UN-sponsored peace summit scheduled for mid-April in Istanbul, Turkey, was postponed to an unspecified date “when conditions for making meaningful progress would be more favorable.”⁵⁶ For more information about the status of the intra-Afghan negotiations, see pages 90–95.

It is unclear how President Biden’s decision to withdraw troops by September 11 instead of May 1 will affect violence levels in Afghanistan and the Taliban’s willingness to continue negotiating with the Afghan government. On March 26, the Taliban threatened to resume hostilities against foreign troops if they remained in the country beyond the May 1 withdrawal date in the U.S.-Taliban agreement. A Taliban statement said they would be “compelled to ... continue [their] Jihad and armed struggle against foreign forces to liberate [their] country.”⁵⁷ President Biden noted in his April 14 remarks, “The Taliban should know that if they attack us as we draw down, we will defend ourselves and our partners with all the tools at our disposal.”⁵⁸

The *Annual Threat Assessment of the U.S. Intelligence Community*, issued April 9, 2021, states that prospects for a peace deal between the Afghan government and the Taliban “will remain low during the next year,” and that “the Taliban is likely to make gains on the battlefield, and the Afghan Government will struggle to hold the Taliban at bay if the Coalition withdraws support.” The assessment also concludes that the ANDSF “continues to face setbacks on the battlefield, and the Taliban is confident it can achieve military victory.”⁵⁹

Data Classified or Not Publicly Releasable

United States Forces-Afghanistan (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):⁶⁰

- enemy-initiated attacks and effective enemy-initiated attacks
- ANDSF casualties, by force element and total

Control of Afghan Territory

The FY 2021 William M. (Mac) Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) requires the Department of Defense (DOD) to restart its district-level stability assessment in its publicly available semiannual *Enhancing Security and Stability in Afghanistan* report by displaying insurgent versus Afghan government control and influence of districts to include district, population, and territorial control data. In 2018, DOD stopped producing such an assessment, which SIGAR had reported in its quarterly reports to Congress. DOD told SIGAR on April 18 that the new assessment will appear in its June 2021 report. The requirement is a modification of legislation authored by Representative Stephen Lynch (D-MA), and co-sponsored by Representatives Gerry Connolly (D-VA), Robin Kelly (D-IL), Dan Kildee (D-MI), Brenda Lawrence (D-MI), Harley Rouda (D-CA), and Peter Welch (D-VT), which was included in H. Amdt. 847, and which was adopted in the House of Representatives on July 20, 2020, during consideration of H.R. 6395, the FY 2021 NDAA.

The U.S. Intelligence Community’s April 2021 assessment reported that, “Afghan forces continue to secure major cities and other government strongholds, but they remain tied down in defensive missions and have struggled to hold recaptured territory or reestablish a presence in areas abandoned in 2020.” Additionally, Daoud Naji, senior political adviser to the Afghan National Security Council, said on April 12 that the ANDSF would be capable of holding their current territory against possible Taliban offensives if international forces leave the country, but “it would be very difficult.”

Source: U.S. Congress, H.R. 6395, William M. (Mac) Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021; H. Amdt. 847 to H.R. 6395, 7/20/2020; H. Rept. 116-457 to H.R. 6395, 7/20/2020, p. 678; Office of the Director of National Intelligence, *Annual Threat Assessment of the U.S. Intelligence Community*, 4/9/2021, p. 25; OUSD-P, response to SIGAR vetting, 4/18/2021; Deutsche Presse-Agentur, “Afghan army could hold territory without support, but ‘difficult,’” 4/12/2021.

- unit-level Afghan National Army (ANA) and Afghan National Police (ANP) authorized and assigned strength
- detailed ANDSF performance assessments
- detailed Afghan security ministry 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

U.S. RECONSTRUCTION FUNDING FOR SECURITY

As of March 31, 2021, the U.S. Congress had appropriated nearly \$88.32 billion to help the Afghan government provide security in Afghanistan. This accounts for 61% of all U.S. reconstruction funding for Afghanistan since fiscal year (FY) 2002. Of the nearly \$3.13 billion appropriated for the Afghanistan Security Forces Fund (ASFF) in FY 2020, over \$2.18 billion had been obligated and nearly \$1.59 billion disbursed, as of March 31, 2021. Only about \$26.26 million of the FY 2021 ASFF appropriation has been obligated and no funds disbursed, as of March 31, 2021.⁶¹

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, and Afghan Special Security Forces (ASSF) salaries. The rest of ASFF is used for fuel, ammunition, vehicles, facility and equipment maintenance, and various communications and intelligence infrastructure. Detailed ASFF budget breakdowns are presented in tables on pages 38–39.⁶²

ASFF monies are obligated by either the Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan (CSTC-A) or the Defense Security Cooperation Agency. Funds that CSTC-A provides to the Afghan government to manage (on-budget) go directly to the Ministry of Finance, which then transfers the funds to the MOD and MOI based on submitted funding requests.⁶³ While the United States funds most ANA salaries, a significant share of Afghan National Police (ANP) personnel costs is paid by international donors through the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) multidonor Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan (LOTFA).⁶⁴ According to the UNDP, the United States stopped making large donations to LOTFA in 2017, after which DOD provided \$1.04 million in both 2018 and 2020, and State provided \$0.95 million in 2019 and \$4.50 million in 2020.⁶⁵ A discussion of on-budget (Afghan-managed) and off-budget (U.S.-managed) expenditures of ASFF is found on page 98.

Violence Trends

SIGAR analyzes different types of data to obtain a better understanding of the violence trends in Afghanistan. These sources include RS-provided data

on enemy-initiated attacks, RS and UNAMA-provided data on civilian casualties, and USFOR-A data on ANDSF casualties and insider attacks.

According to RS, enemy-initiated attacks from January 1 to March 31, 2021, increased nearly 37% compared to the same quarter last year, but decreased by approximately 10% compared to last quarter (October 1–December 31, 2020).⁶⁶ Both RS and UNAMA reported a considerable increase in civilian casualties this quarter compared to the same period last year. This is partly because of lower than usual casualties during most of 2020 due to Taliban participation in diplomatic efforts and pressure on the Taliban to avoid urban attacks.⁶⁷ See the following section for more information on civilian casualties.

Additionally, ANDSF casualties from January 1 to March 31, 2021, were substantially higher compared to the same period last year. The number of insider attacks on ANDSF personnel also increased by 82% this quarter compared to the same period last year (resulting more than double the casualties from insider attacks).⁶⁸ SIGAR is not allowed to include full ANDSF casualty data in this report because USFOR-A classifies it at the request of the Afghan government.⁶⁹

U.S. officials have decried the violence. Pentagon Press Secretary John Kirby confirmed and condemned two Taliban attacks on U.S. and Coalition personnel this quarter, one on Forward Operating Base Chapman in Khost Province and the other on Kandahar Airfield in Kandahar Province. About the latter attack, which occurred on April 7, Kirby said, “We condemn today’s attack on Kandahar Airfield. . . . While the attack resulted in no casualties or damage, the Taliban’s decision to provoke even more violence in Afghanistan remains disruptive to the opportunity for peace presented by ongoing negotiations.”⁷⁰

Violence trends this quarter continued to include high-profile targeted killings of Afghan government officials and journalists, some suspected to have been perpetrated by the Taliban, by Islamic State-Khorasan (IS-K), or by unknown groups. A religious scholar was targeted in Kabul by IS-K on February 2 and unknown assailants killed a commercial court judge in Jalalabad on February 3.⁷¹ On March 2, three female media workers were executed by IS-K outside Jalalabad in two separate incidents.⁷² In late March 2021, gunmen killed three female polio vaccination health workers in Jalalabad.⁷³

In one 24-hour period in mid-March, at least 21 people were killed and 35 wounded in multiple attacks by various groups in at least eight Afghan provinces. One of these attacks downed an Afghan helicopter in Maidan Wardak Province, killing four crewmen and five Afghan special operations personnel.⁷⁴ Video footage appeared to show a missile hitting the aircraft, posing a new security challenge. The Afghan government moved to arrest local militia commander Abdul Ghani Alipour, whose forces they accused of firing the missile. Several Afghan government officials cautioned against a military approach to a person whom they said many, especially in the minority Hazara community, consider a local hero.⁷⁵

[The Taliban] are using violence and they are trying to put themselves in a position, if the things they want are not met . . . to force decisions in the political space.

—General Austin Scott Miller,
RS and USFOR-A Commander

Source: Los Angeles Times, “Leaving Afghanistan under Trump deal could spur chaos, U.S. commanders say,” 3/14/2021.

Citing the need to improve security, Afghan President Ashraf Ghani dismissed Interior Minister Masoud Andarabi on March 26, replacing him with Hayatullah Hayat, former governor of Kandahar and Nangahar Provinces. President Ghani also replaced Defense Minister Asadullah Khalid with Army Chief of Staff General Yasin Zia, who will reportedly serve in both roles concurrently. Khalid had been receiving medical treatment abroad for injuries suffered in a 2012 suicide attack.⁷⁶

Civilian Casualties

SIGAR analyzes Afghan civilian-casualty data from two different sources, UNAMA and RS. These organizations use different definitions of combatants (or noncombatants), and different methodologies to collect and assess civilian-casualty data, with RS often reporting fewer civilian casualties than UNAMA.⁷⁷ However, comparing both sources, including the overall increase or decrease of civilian casualties, and the breakdown of casualties by responsible party, can provide helpful insights into civilian-casualty trends over similar reporting periods.

UNAMA vs. RS Data-Collection Methodology

UNAMA says it collects data on civilian casualties through “direct site visits, physical examination of items and evidence gathered at the scene of incidents, visits to hospital and medical facilities, still and video images,” reports by UN entities, and primary, secondary, and third-party accounts. Information is obtained directly from primary accounts where possible. Civilians whose noncombatant status is in “significant doubt,” based on international humanitarian law, are not included in the figures. Ground-engagement casualties that cannot be definitively attributed to either side, such as those incurred during crossfire, are jointly attributed to both parties. UNAMA includes an “other” category to distinguish between these jointly attributed casualties and those caused by other events, such as unexploded ordnance or cross-border shelling by Pakistani forces. UNAMA’s methodology has remained largely unchanged since 2008.

The RS Civilian Casualty Management Team relies primarily upon operational reporting from RS’s Train, Advise, and Assist Commands (TAACs), other Coalition force headquarters, and ANDSF reports from the Afghan Presidential Information Command Centre to collect civilian-casualty data. DOD says that RS’s civilian-casualty data collection differs from UNAMA’s in that RS “has access to a wider range of forensic data than such civilian organizations, including full-motion video, operational summaries, aircraft mission reports, intelligence reports, digital and other imagery [...] and other sources.”

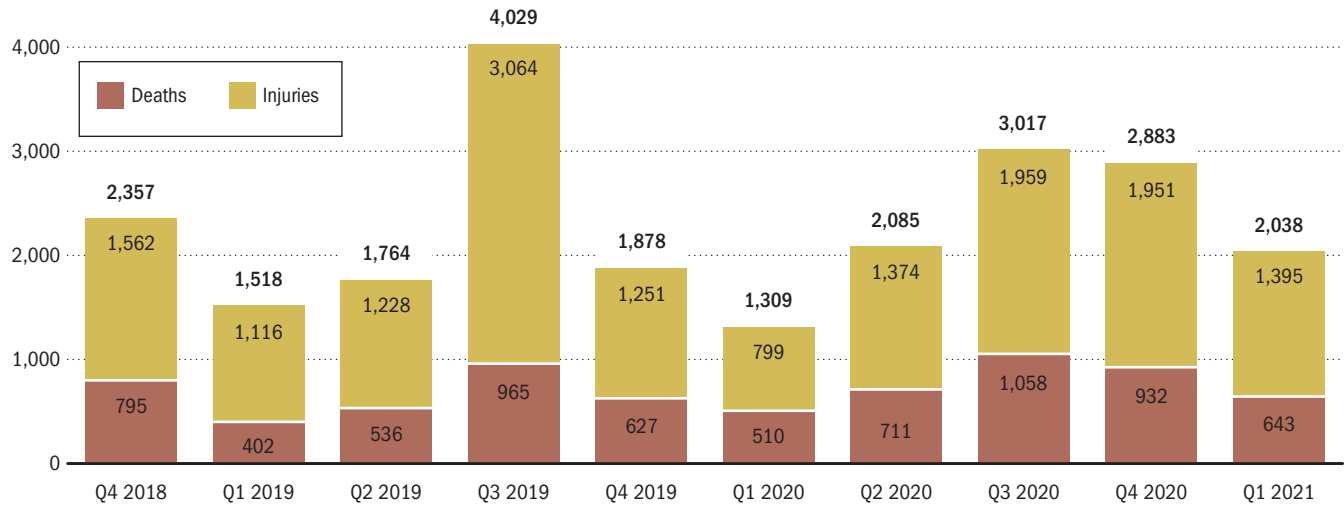
Source: UNAMA, Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, 3/6/2018, i-ii; 1/2010, p. 35; 2/11/2009, pp. 4–5; and 8/2015, p. 4; DOD, Enhancing Security and Stability in Afghanistan, 12/2017, p. 27; and 6/2019, p. 27.

RS Reports Exceptionally High Civilian Casualties in Early 2021

This quarter’s civilian casualties were high for the winter months, when fighting normally subsides, although they did decline 29% compared to last quarter (October 1–December 31, 2020).⁷⁸ As seen in Figure 2.28, this quarter’s civilian casualties were the highest since 2018 during the same period.⁷⁹ RS reported 2,038 civilian casualties this quarter (January 1–March 31, 2021), which included 643 deaths and 1,395 injuries.⁸⁰ UNAMA also reported high civilian casualties for January 1–March 31, 2021, increasing 29% compared to the same period last year. UNAMA recorded 1,748 civilian casualties this quarter (573 deaths and 1,210 injuries).⁸¹

FIGURE 2.28

RS-REPORTED CIVILIAN CASUALTIES BY QUARTER



Note: Figures for Q4 2020 have been updated by RS this quarter.

Source: RS, response to SIGAR data call 1/7/2020, 10/7/2019, 1/6/2021, and 4/6/2021; SIGAR, analysis of RS-provided data, 4/2021.

RS said the decline since last quarter is due to fewer civilian casualties attributed to unknown insurgents (588, down by 466), to the ANDSF (69, down by 368), and to IS-K (54, down by 180). However, this was tempered by Taliban-caused casualties increasing substantially (1,235, up by 114).⁸²

RS attributed about 93% of this quarter's civilian casualties to antigovernment forces (61% to the Taliban, 29% to unknown insurgents, 3% to IS-K, and less than 1% to the Haqqani Network). About 4% were attributed to progovernment forces (over 3% to ANDSF and less than 1% of incidents attributed to Coalition forces), and about 4% to other or unknown forces. These percentages are roughly equivalent to long-term trends reported by RS.⁸³

In contrast, UNAMA attributed 62% of this quarter's civilian casualties to antigovernment forces (44% to the Taliban, 13% to unknown insurgents, and 5% to IS-K) and 27% to progovernment forces (25% to the ANDSF and 2% to undetermined progovernment forces). The remaining 12% of casualties were unattributed and occurred during crossfire between warring parties.⁸⁴

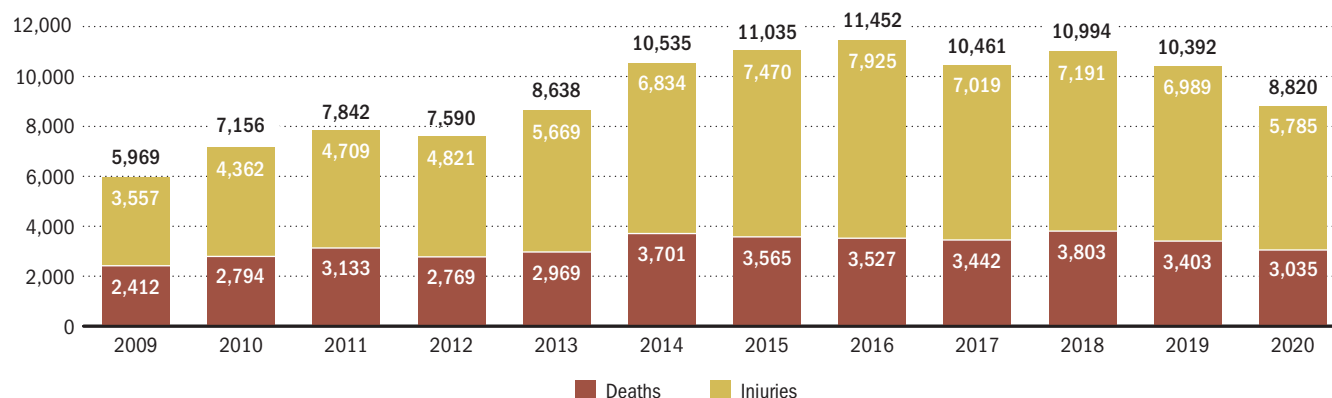
UNAMA: Total Civilian Casualties for 2020 Continued Downward Trend

Diplomacy associated with the U.S.-Taliban Agreement in February 2020—including a February reduction in violence by all major parties, two Eid holiday ceasefires during the year, and increased pressure on the Taliban to avoid attacks on urban centers—meant that during the majority of 2020 (January 1–September 30, 2020), civilians suffered fewer casualties than during any like period since 2012. Unseasonably high fourth calendar quarter casualties broke from this trend. UNAMA said it welcomes the reduction

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FIGURE 2.29

UNAMA CIVILIAN CASUALTIES, 2009-2020



Source: UNAMA, Annual Report on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict: 1 January to 31 December 2020, 2/2021, p. 12.

in civilian casualties in 2020, but regretted that for the first time since systematic documentation began in 2009, the number of civilian casualties in the fourth quarter increased from the previous quarter.⁸⁵

UNAMA documented that as a whole, total civilian casualties in 2020 continued to fall from their high point in 2016 (11,452), with 2020 registering the lowest number of civilian casualties since 2013, for a total of 8,820 civilian casualties (3,035 deaths and 5,785 injuries), as seen in Figure 2.29.⁸⁶

Civilian Casualties by Parties Responsible

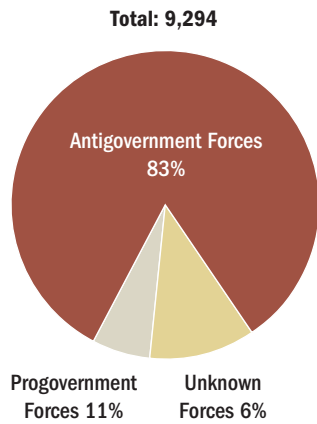
UNAMA continued to attribute the majority of 2020's civilian casualties (5,459 or 62%) to antigovernment elements (45% to the Taliban, 8% to IS-K, and 9% to undetermined and other elements). The 5,459 casualties attributed to antigovernment elements represent a 15% decrease compared to 2019, mainly due to fewer civilian casualties from suicide attacks.⁸⁷

UNAMA attributed 2,231 (25%) of civilian casualties to progovernment forces (22% to the ANDSF and 1% each to international military forces, progovernment armed groups, and undetermined or multiple progovernment forces). This is a 24% decrease in casualties caused by progovernment forces compared to 2019, driven by the near absence of international military forces' air strikes and progovernment search operations after the signing of the U.S.-Taliban Agreement on February 29, 2020.⁸⁸ The remaining civilian casualties (1,130 or 13%) were not attributed to specific actors but were instead suffered during crossfire or similar incidents.⁸⁹

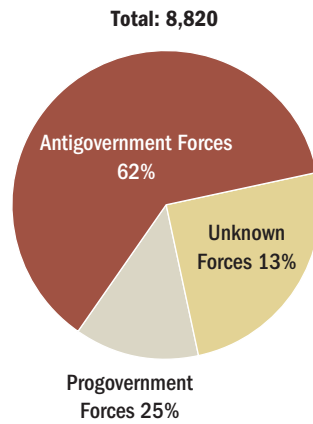
Figure 2.30 shows that UNAMA's attribution of casualties differs significantly from RS's, particularly in terms of how many casualties UNAMA attributed to antigovernment elements. RS attributed 83% of the 9,294

FIGURE 2.30

2020 RS CIVILIAN CASUALTIES BY PARTY ATTRIBUTION



2020 UNAMA CIVILIAN CASUALTIES BY PARTY ATTRIBUTION



Note: These data cover the period January 1–December 31, 2020. Casualties include dead and wounded. RS and UNAMA do not use identical categories for party attribution. For comparative purposes, RS antigovernment forces here include the Taliban, IS-K, the Haqqani Network, and unknown insurgents; progovernment forces include the ANDSF and Coalition forces; and unknown forces include the RS “Other/Unknown” category of civilian casualties caused by undetermined elements, local militia, and the Pakistani military. UNAMA antigovernment forces here include the Taliban, IS-K, and undetermined antigovernment elements; progovernment forces include the ANDSF, Coalition Forces, progovernment armed groups, and undetermined or multiple progovernment forces; unknown forces include civilian casualties caused during crossfire between warring parties or other unattributable instances.

Source: RS, response to SIGAR data call, 4/6/2021; SIGAR, analysis of RS-provided data, 4/2021; UNAMA, Afghanistan Annual Report on Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict: 2020, 2/2020, p. 17.

civilian casualties it recorded in 2020 to antigovernment forces, 11% to progovernment forces, and 6% to other and unknown parties.⁹⁰

UNITED STATES FORCES-AFGHANISTAN

Capabilities and Limitations at Current Force Levels

United States Forces-Afghanistan (USFOR-A) said that, with approximately 2,500 U.S. service members and 7,092 non-U.S. Coalition forces, they maintain “the capability to fight, protect the force, TAA [train, advise, and assist], and supply critical enablers.” This includes TAA for the ministries, Afghan Air Force, Special Mission Wing, Afghan Special Security Forces, and “point-of-need” TAA at the corps and provincial chief of police levels. USFOR-A also said that at this force level they can oversee the taxpayer funds they manage that are authorized to train and sustain the ANDSF.⁹¹

DOD Contractor Personnel

As of April 2021, there are 16,832 DOD contractor personnel supporting agency operations in Afghanistan. This includes 6,147 U.S. citizens, 6,399 third-country nationals, and 4,286 Afghan nationals. These contractors continue to provide an array of functions, including logistics and maintenance support and training for ANDSF ground vehicles and aircraft, security, base support, and transportation services.⁹² Although General McKenzie testified to Congress on April 20 that all U.S. defense contractors will also depart Afghanistan as part of the withdrawal, it is unclear who, if anyone, will replace them or perform their work after their withdrawal.⁹³

U.S. and Coalition Advising Efforts

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

As reported last quarter, continuing COVID-19 pandemic restrictions cause U.S. and Coalition personnel to conduct only limited, mission-essential, face-to-face advising with their Afghan counterparts.⁹⁴ CSTC-A said this quarter that COVID-19 continued to impact their TAA efforts by reducing the number of face-to-face interactions between advisors and Afghan partners. Instead, CSTC-A's MOD and MOI Ministry Advisory Groups (MAG-D and MAG-I) mainly used videoconferencing, e-mail, text messaging, telephone, and other remote methods to carry out their mission. At the beginning of this quarter, COVID-19 cases increased in Afghanistan, so face-to-face advising became even more limited to help reduce the spread of the virus.⁹⁵

To help maintain COVID-19 mitigation procedures, CSTC-A's MAG-I continued to increase targeted COVID-19 testing for those participating in limited face-to-face advising and advisors followed protective measures. Training support for programs like CoreIMS (the ANDSF's system of record to manage and track equipment, weapons, and vehicles) continued with Afghan contractors also utilizing personal protective equipment and social distancing in classrooms.⁹⁶

At the ministerial level, CSTC-A said reduced face-to-face advising did not negatively impact MOD performance. Advisors could still meet with their counterparts when they anticipated a possible decline in performance.⁹⁷ CSTC-A and NATO Special Operations Component Command-Afghanistan (NSOCC-A) said that a positive impact from reduced advising is that the MOD is becoming increasingly independent. For example, despite relying on videoconference, working groups at the headquarters for the MOD's Unified Training, Education and Doctrine Command reduced over 370 personnel and their related equipment from this year's *tashkil*. Additionally, advisors working remotely assisted their counterparts with creating a program of instruction for airfield security *kandaks* (battalions) to allow training to start for new recruits at Regional Military Training Centers.⁹⁸

The MOD continues to take COVID-19 prevention and containment measures such as sending new recruits to local training centers. Local recruitment has also contributed to sustaining a consistent force end strength throughout the quarter.⁹⁹

As they did last quarter, NSOCC-A said, "There was no long-term substantial impact on ANDSF counterterrorism operational output ... [due to COVID-19 restriction and] ANA Special Operations Corps (ANASOC) and General Command Police Special Units (GCPSU) remained capable of performing independent, coherent, and well-coordinated operations with support from Special Mission Wing (SMW)." However, they acknowledged

Tashkil: the document authorizing roles and equipment for the ANDSF.



Afghan soldiers stand in formation. (CENTCOM photo)

that “Afghan leadership and partner assessments became more challenging.” As with the MOD, the ASSF has reportedly increased its independence in several areas.¹⁰⁰ For more information about the ASSF’s operations and performance, see pages 80–82.

Other countries provided COVID-19 personal protective equipment through the NATO Trust Fund to both ANA and ANP medical commands, including masks, gloves, face masks, and sanitizer. Pharmaceuticals were also delivered for normal patient care and use in COVID treatment.¹⁰¹

CSTC-A said that U.S. advisors are prioritized to receive COVID-19 vaccinations as they become available, but there is still no estimated timeline for a return to prepandemic mentoring, training, and support levels.¹⁰²

U.S. and Coalition Forces Casualties and Insider Attacks

From October 7, 2001, through April 12, 2021, 1,897 U.S. military personnel were killed in action in Afghanistan. Another 415 personnel died as a result of non-hostile causes. A total of 20,666 military personnel have been wounded in action.¹⁰³ From January 1, 2021, through April 1, 2021, there were no insider attacks against U.S. and Coalition military personnel.¹⁰⁴

AFGHAN NATIONAL DEFENSE AND SECURITY FORCES

ANDSF Strength

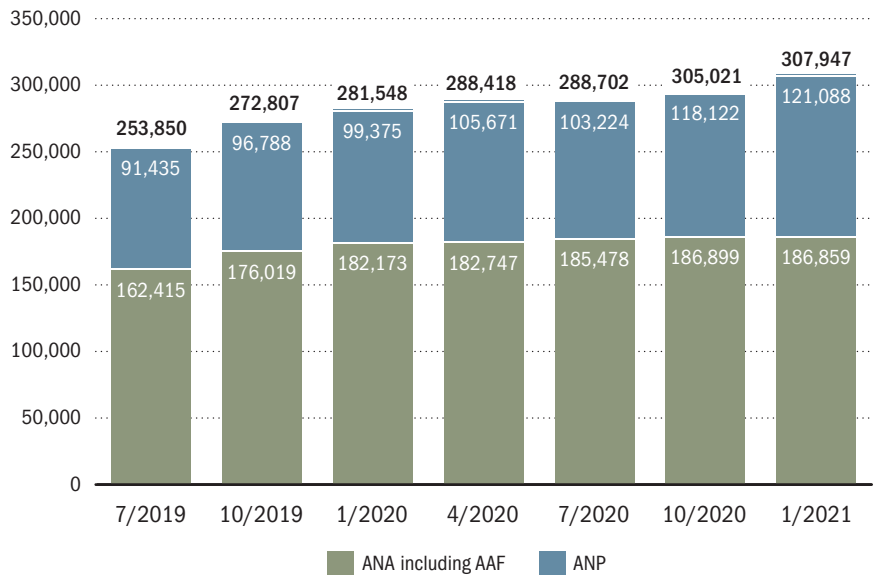
This quarter, the ANDSF continued to report its highest strength since it began using the Afghan Personnel and Pay System (APPS) in July 2019. APPS leverages biometric enrollment and Afghan self-reporting for more

accurate accounting compared to the prior system that relied only on self-reporting.¹⁰⁵

As of January 28, 2021, CSTC-A reported 307,947 ANDSF personnel (186,859 MOD and 121,088 MOI) biometrically enrolled and eligible for pay in APPS. There are an additional 7,715 civilians (3,031 MOD and 3,579 MOI). Figure 2.31 shows that ANDSF total strength increased slightly this quarter. CSTC-A told SIGAR that the 24% decrease in MOI civilians since last quarter is because civilian personnel were shifted to other positions due to the publication of a new tashkil that had not been completed by the date of this quarter's data.¹⁰⁶

FIGURE 2.31

REPORTED ANDSF ASSIGNED STRENGTH FROM APPS



Note: This quarter's data is as of January 28, 2021. 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; APPS = Afghan Personnel and Pay System. No civilians are included in the strength numbers.

Source: CSTC-A response to SIGAR data call, 3/17/2021, 12/16/2020, 9/22/2020, 6/18/2020, 3/17/2020, 12/19/2019, and 9/18/2019; SIGAR, analysis of CSTC-A-provided data, 4/2021.

These ANDSF strength figures include 5,893 female personnel enrolled in APPS as of February 25, 2021. This reflects a slight decrease of 63 female personnel since December 18, 2020. The majority of ANDSF women continue to serve in the ANP (3,831 personnel), with 1,581 in the ANA, 332 in the ASSE, and 149 in the AAF. These numbers include 390 MOD and

MOI civilians as well as 43 female cadets at the Afghan National Military Academy, 42 female cadets at the Afghan National Army Officer Academy, and 18 females at the Afghan Army Medical School.¹⁰⁷

Afghan Personnel and Pay System

CSTC-A reported this quarter that it continues to transition to the Afghan government some of the roles and responsibilities for management of the Afghan Personnel and Pay System (APPS), which accounts for and manages ANDSF payroll. The full transition of APPS ownership, management, and sustainment will be accomplished when U.S. funding is no longer being used to pay Afghan salaries.¹⁰⁸

CSTC-A developed APPS to reduce opportunities for corruption and fraud—such as fake personnel records that corrupt actors used to pocket salaries for “ghost” police—and to create better accountability, transparency, and auditability in ANDSF payroll processes. The United States initially spent \$35.8 million on the development contract for APPS in 2016. An additional \$14.4 million has been spent since 2019, when a sustainment contract for the system began. This brings the total amount spent on APPS to \$50.2 million as of January 2021.¹⁰⁹

SIGAR has been tracking MOD and MOI’s progress on CSTC-A-mandated goals the ministries must meet in order to begin the phased transition of APPS sustainment and management to the Afghan government. CSTC-A said because the phased transition is contingent on several factors, a specific timeline for achieving it has not been determined. So far, factors for transition include:¹¹⁰

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

While the phased transfer of APPS management to the Afghan MOD and MOI progresses, CSTC-A told SIGAR the MOD and MOI took several significant steps this quarter in their long march toward this goal. These included:¹¹¹

- On February 17, 2021, the MOD signed an order establishing an APPS PMO within the ministry. Tashkil positions have been approved and are either filled or in the process of being filled. In late April the MOD also plans to sign a memorandum of understanding (MOU) defining

ONGOING SIGAR AUDIT

SIGAR is reviewing DOD's efforts to ensure the accuracy of APPS records and the accountability for funds provided to the MOD. This audit will determine the extent to which DOD, since the beginning of FY 2019, has ensured: (1) the accuracy and completeness of data used in APPS; and (2) that the funds it provides to the Afghan government to pay MOD salaries are disbursed to intended recipients.

APPS roles and responsibilities between CSTC-A Human Resources Management (HRM) and the MOD APPS PMO.

- Also in February, the MOI approved APPS tashkil positions and created a draft MOI order establishing an APPS PMO within the ministry. A draft MOU between the CSTC-A HRM and the MOI APPS PMO that defines APPS roles and responsibilities is being reviewed with an expected completion date of mid-April, 2021.
- As of February 19, 2021, the MOI began using APPS to directly inform its payroll. Though not all MOI personnel are yet biometrically validated, this achievement marks the culmination of a five-year effort to cement APPS as the personnel accountability and management system of record for the entire ANDSF.
- Both the MOD and MOI conducted training consisting of help desk users, train the trainers, and advanced-level training (Tashkil, Personnel Modules, and Pay).

For both the MOD and MOI, APPS is now routinely used to complete personnel actions such as initial assignments, promotions, reassignments, and separations. ANDSF personnel that do not meet the criteria to be listed as active are not removed from APPS, but are changed to inactive status. As of March 11, 2021, 168,557 MOD personnel and 49,661 MOI personnel have been inactivated in APPS. Due to COVID travel restrictions, neither the ANDSF nor Coalition forces conducted any in-person “spot checks” at ANDSF locations to confirm whether the personnel reported in APPS are present for duty (processes called personnel asset inventories or personnel asset audits).¹¹²

CSTC-A told SIGAR the MOD and MOI are both making continuous progress toward automated biometric enrollment verification, with an expected completion date of September 2021. CSTC-A said a significant milestone toward automated verification will occur in April 2021 when APPS will be able to biometrically validate all ANDSF personnel by using a new data field found in the Afghan Automated Biometric Information System (AABIS), the database that holds ANDSF biometric information, as a requirement for pay. Commencing with the Afghan pay month ending April 19, 2021, any ANDSF personnel without this data field entered in APPS will not be paid. CSTC-A believes that this will be a significant step in the effort to reduce fraud and corruption in the ANDSF personnel system, such as “ghost” police.¹¹³

CSTC-A reported that, as of March 15, 2021, 96% of MOD personnel were biometrically enrolled and validated, up from 92% on September 15, 2020; and 90% of MOI personnel were biometrically enrolled and validated, up from 76% on September 15, 2020.¹¹⁴

CSTC-A says until MOD and MOI accomplish their APPS transition goals, CSTC-A's APPS PMO will continue to oversee the system. The current APPS sustainment contract ends April 30, 2021, but a follow-on ASFF-funded

The ANDSF's Biometric Enrollment and Validation Process

CSTC-A explained the ANDSF biometric enrollment and validation process as follows:

The biometric enrollment process begins with a soldier or policeman having their biometric data gathered using a biometric enrollment kit laptop computer, which generates a Transaction Control Number (TCN) at the time of biometric data collection. The TCN is then scanned into the soldier/policeman's APPS record, and the TCN and the actual biometric data are both uploaded from the biometric enrollment kit into AABIS. AABIS then assigns a Persistent Globally Unique Identifier (PGUID) number to that person's AABIS record (a newly created PGUID if it is the first time a person's biometric data has been uploaded into AABIS, and a previously assigned PGUID if AABIS finds matching biometric data already present in AABIS for that person). At this point, the person is considered to be biometrically "enrolled." A person can have multiple TCNs if their biometric data has been collected on multiple occasions, but will have only one PGUID number. On a weekly basis, 100% of slotted ANDSF personnel have their TCN in APPS compared to the around 7.5 million TCNs in AABIS. When a soldier's or policeman's TCN from APPS matches to a TCN in AABIS and returns an associated PGUID number, that person is considered to be biometrically "validated" or "verified."

Source: CSTC-A, response to SIGAR vetting, 4/8/2021.

contract is pending solicitation and award by April 30, 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.¹¹⁵

ANDSF Attrition – Some Data Classified

USFOR-A continued to classify detailed ANDSF attrition information this quarter because the Afghan government classifies it.¹¹⁶ SIGAR's questions about ANDSF attrition can be found in Appendix E.

This quarter, CSTC-A reported that overall MOD attrition was within normal levels (a monthly average of roughly 2% this quarter), and that MOI's monthly attrition dropped from 4% to 2.5%. CSTC-A said that to keep attrition levels low, the MOD continued to provide pay incentives, address back-pay problems, and review leave, travel, and reenlistment policies.¹¹⁷ CSTC said the reduction in the MOI attrition rate may have resulted from multiple factors, such as the completion last quarter of removing some Afghan Local Police from the rolls and improving working conditions and pay.¹¹⁸ This quarter, the MOD's attrition outpaced recruitment. However, CSTC-A said the ANA mitigated this by continuing local recruitment, retention incentives, and increasing annual recruitment from 44,000 to 47,000, without reducing standards for entry and training. CSTC-A added that an end strength of 182,000–184,000 meets current Afghan government needs for security and sustainability.¹¹⁹

The MOD shift towards local recruitment and training at the Regional Military Training Centers has helped mitigate COVID-19's impact on attrition. CSTC-A claimed that current MOD recruitment numbers returned to

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.

ANDSF casualties from January 1 to March 31, 2021, are slightly lower than in October–December 2020, but substantially higher than in January–March 2020.

pre-pandemic levels. Current recruitment figures are 30% higher than 2020 and similar to recruitment numbers from 2019.¹²⁰

ANDSF Casualties

USFOR-A continues to classify all ANDSF casualty data because the Afghan government classifies it.¹²¹ 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 from January 1 to March 31, 2021 are slightly lower than in October–December 2020, but substantially higher than January–March 2020.”¹²²

RS reported that they provide MOI leaders with detailed analysis of enemy targeted killings, including “sticky bomb” attacks using explosives with adhesives or magnets to affix them to targets. “The focus of these briefs not only provides the detailed analysis but [also] identifies force protection steps in order to protect the force,” they said. CSTC-A also reported that they provide MOD leaders with “IED training and devices to counter ongoing threats.”¹²³

ANDSF Insider Attacks

CSTC-A reported 31 insider attacks against the ANDSF from January 1, 2021, through April 1, 2021. These attacks resulted in 115 ANDSF personnel killed and 39 wounded.¹²⁴ This is an 82% increase in attacks and more than double the casualties compared to the same period last year. It is also a 25% increase in the number of attacks and a 32% increase in the number of casualties compared to last quarter.¹²⁵

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 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 now-dissolved Afghan Local Police (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 says the ANA-TF or a similar force may serve as a vehicle to reintegrate insurgent fighters.¹²⁶

The locations of the ANA-TF’s operational and planned *tolays* (companies, each 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.¹²⁷ These *tolays* are currently providing local security in their areas of responsibility, so that the regular ANA forces are freed to conduct other operations.¹²⁸

This quarter, CSTC-A reported that the ANA-TF's expansion and the transition of some ALP personnel into its ranks is complete. The ALP transition completed on February 13, 2021, with almost 6,000 enrollments out of over 10,000 available ANA-TF positions. CSTC-A said its advisors are working with MOD to reduce the remaining excess ANA-TF positions across all provinces. In the 205th and 215th Corps areas of responsibility (Daykundi, Kandahar, Zabul, Uruzgan, Nimroz, and Helmand Provinces), the transition enrolled only about 100 new ANA-TF soldiers. Advisors assessed that low enrollment in the south stemmed from a lack of support for the ANA-TF, as well as possible "ghost" (reported, but nonexistent) ALP members.¹²⁹

As of March 11, 2021, there were 186 operational ANA-TF tolays under the six ANA corps and 111th Capital Division in 32 of Afghanistan's 34 provinces. This is an increase of 60 operational tolays since December 2020. CSTC-A said 81 of the 186 total ANA-TF tolays were established to absorb former ALP members. The 215th Corps, responsible for Helmand and Nimroz Provinces, still has no ANA-TF presence.¹³⁰

CSTC-A said this quarter that ANA-TF tolays are no longer conducting Basic Warrior Training at the company level: the ANA now sends new recruits to Regional Military Training Centers (RMTTC) aligned with ANA corps or to the Combined Arms Training Center (CATC) in Kabul. Of the newly formed tolays to support ALP transition, over 1,800 new ANA-TF soldiers are in training in RMTTC or CATC for 111th Capital Division and the 201st, 203rd, 207th, 209th, and 217th Corps.¹³¹ CSTC-A said this is important because training ANA-TF at RMTTCs and the CATC by groups or individuals rather than by entire tolays allows the tolays to maintain security at reduced strength, rather than departing as a whole for three months.¹³²

CSTC-A reported that general feedback from MOD senior leaders has been positive regarding the completion of training and integration under regular ANA command of ANA-TF tolays since the ALP transition. CSTC-A sees requests from MOD to grow additional ANA-TF companies in north and eastern regions as a positive indicator of confidence.¹³³

Ministry Performance Assessments – Most Data Classified

USFOR-A continued to classify some ministry performance assessment information this quarter. SIGAR's questions about ministry performance can be found in Appendix E.

Checkpoint Reduction

RS has long identified the need for an orderly reduction or elimination of the ANDSF's most vulnerable **checkpoints** (minimally manned or unsupported checkpoints), as well as the need to consolidate personnel into **patrol bases** (the new standard fighting structures for the ANA).¹³⁴

In November 2019, the Afghan government in coordination with CSTC-A estimated that the ANDSF had over 10,000 checkpoints nationwide, with

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.

an average of 10–20 personnel at each checkpoint.¹³⁵ Ongoing Coalition TAA efforts are helping the ANA develop and implement its Checkpoint Reduction and Base Development Plan (CPRBD) for 2021.¹³⁶ Although no data was available for the ANDSF as a whole, CSTC-A estimated that the ANA now has just under 2,000 checkpoints and nearly 600 patrol bases across Afghanistan.¹³⁷

CSTC-A reported a small reduction in the number of ANA checkpoints this quarter, but no ANP checkpoints closed. CSTC-A noted that the ANP reported no data on checkpoints this quarter, but for the ANP, “There has been no progression this quarter with checkpoint consolidation.”¹³⁸ Overall, CSTC-A said the goal for both the ANA and ANP was to emphasize checkpoint reduction and consolidation in the coming quarter, but there are no specific goals on how many need to be reduced.¹³⁹

CSTC-A reported this quarter that although the ANDSF dramatically improved its share of vehicle maintenance work, it is still falling well below benchmarks for completing work orders they—rather than contractors—are supposed to perform.

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 work-share 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 2023.¹⁴⁰ CSTC-A has said the final objective of the NMS-GVS work-share plan is to ensure sufficient ANDSF maintenance capacity.¹⁴¹ As of February 26, 2021, the United States has obligated \$823.1 million for ANA and ANP training, mentoring, and contract logistics-support services through the NMS-GVS contract.¹⁴²

CSTC-A reported this quarter that although the ANDSF dramatically improved its share of the work, it is still falling well below benchmarks for its share of the maintenance work orders they—rather than contractors—are supposed to perform. According to CSTC-A, the ANA filled on average just over 46% of maintenance work orders from January through March 2021, which more than doubled the average from last quarter (20%). Their goal for the period, however, was to complete 80% of maintenance work orders. Similarly, the ANP filled an average of more than 26% of maintenance work orders during this same time period, more than double last quarter’s 12%, but also well below its 35% goal.¹⁴³

The significant improvement in the ANDSF’s share of the work is attributed to the ANDSF assuming responsibility for substantially more maintenance sites.¹⁴⁴ CSTC-A reported that as of January 1, 2021, ANDSF mechanics have assumed responsibility for nine maintenance sites within Afghanistan that were formerly maintained by NMS-GVS contract logistic support (CLS), including three sites supporting the ANA and the remainder supporting the ANP.¹⁴⁵



An Afghan commando guards an intersection (CENTCOM photo)

AFGHAN NATIONAL ARMY

U.S. Funding

As of March 31, 2021, the United States had obligated more than \$2.38 billion and disbursed nearly \$1.97 billion of ASFF appropriated from FY 2019 through FY 2021 to build, train, equip, and sustain the ANA.¹⁴⁶ Also as of March 31, 2021, the United States had finished obligating and nearly finished disbursing 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 for reporting purposes through the FY 2018 appropriation.¹⁴⁷

ANA Sustainment

As of March 31, 2021, the United States had obligated more than \$2.23 billion and disbursed nearly \$1.86 billion of ASFF appropriations from FY 2019 through FY 2021 for ANA sustainment. Also as of March 31, 2021, the United States had finished obligating \$23.6 billion and nearly finished disbursing \$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.¹⁴⁸

For Afghan fiscal year (FY) 1400 (December 2020–December 2021), CSTC-A plans to provide the Afghan government the equivalent of up to \$852.5 million to support the MOD. Of this amount, approximately \$663.0 million (78%) was for salaries.¹⁴⁹ As of March 18, CSTC-A provided the Afghan government the equivalent of \$89.7 million to support the MOD for FY 1400. The majority of these funds (57%) paid for salaries.¹⁵⁰

TABLE 2.8

MAJOR EQUIPMENT ITEMS PROVIDED TO ANA				
Equipment Type	Equipment Description	Units Issued in Quarter	Unit Cost	Total Cost
Vehicle	M1151 HMMWV	427	\$238,500	\$101,839,500
Ammunition	.50 caliber cartridge	1,727,800	3	5,528,960
Ammunition	60 mm high-explosive mortar cartridge	8,928	350	3,124,800
Parts	Engine with container	126	22,329	2,813,454
Ammunition	2.75 inch rockets	1,269	1,906	2,418,701
Uniform	Men's trousers (various sizes)	59,144	41	2,395,923
Parts	Radiator with engine coolant	300	7,697	2,390,985
Parts	Hydraulic vehicle transmissions	43	35,903	1,543,829
Uniform	Men's boots (various sizes)	11,647	108	1,254,848
Total				\$123,311,000

Note: The above list reflects only the nine highest-value equipment provided to the ANA this quarter (November 1, 2020–January 31, 2021). The “unit costs” listed reflect the average costs paid for items procured under multiple Foreign Military Sales cases. Unit costs are rounded to the nearest dollar.

Source: CSTC-A, response to SIGAR data call, 3/17/2021.

ANA Equipment and Transportation

As of March 31, 2021, the United States had obligated more than \$19.3 million and disbursed about \$19 million of ASFF appropriations from FY 2019 through FY 2021 for ANA equipment and transportation costs. Also as of March 31, 2021, the United States had finished obligating and nearly finished disbursing about \$13.6 billion from FY 2005 through FY 2018 ASFF appropriations for ANA, AAF, and some ASSF equipment and transportation costs.¹⁵¹

Table 2.8, lists the highest-cost items of equipment provided to the ANA this quarter (November 1, 2020, to January 31, 2021), which included 427 High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicles (HMMWVs, commonly known as “Humvees”) valued at about \$101.8 million); nearly two million rounds of .50 caliber ammunition valued at roughly \$5.5 million, and about 9,000 units of 60 mm mortar rounds valued at over \$3.1 million.¹⁵²

Although CSTC-A has moved away from procuring major equipment and systems like HMMWVs, items already procured are still being delivered to the ANA.¹⁵³ DOD said last quarter that as part of the revised HMMWV strategy implemented in 2017, about 1,600 excess U.S. Army armored HMMWVs have been refurbished for transfer to the ANDSF in addition to the 2015–2018 procurement of about 6,000 new HMMWVs. The refurbished vehicles cost about \$80,000 less than new vehicles. The Army reported that 49 excess HMMWVs were delivered since October 2020, with 51 left to be delivered to complete the program.¹⁵⁴

ANA Infrastructure

As of March 31, 2021, the United States had obligated more than \$30.1 million and disbursed about \$14.8 million of ASFF appropriations from FY 2019

through FY 2021 for ANA infrastructure projects. Also as of March 31, 2021, the United States had finished obligating and nearly finished disbursing about \$6 billion from FY 2005 through FY 2018 ASFF appropriations for ANA, AAF, and some ASSF infrastructure projects.¹⁵⁵ In an important development, DOD reported this quarter that it transferred Kandahar Airfield to MOD on January 10, 2021. The 100 unique **real property items** involved were valued at roughly \$9.1 million, including 45 buildings. CSTC-A said this transfer will preclude MOD from having to construct new facilities at this site.¹⁵⁶

Separate from other U.S. government efforts to transition the airport at Kandahar to the Afghan Civil Aviation Authority (see page 133–134), CSTC-A's efforts toward transferring the airfield are focused on airfield security and providing TAA for MOD on manning, equipping, and training airfield security units. CSTC-A said the duration of its TAA support will be based on advisor assessments of these security units' performance.¹⁵⁷

When asked about the timeline and planning for turning over other airfields to the Afghan government, CSTC-A said "the timeline is based on operational need." CSTC-A is mentoring a senior official in the MOD and one in the ACAA, as well as conducting TAA with personnel/units that conduct the five essential services to run an airfield at each location in an effort to ensure the Afghans have the capacity and capability to operate their airfields when U.S. troops leave Afghanistan.¹⁵⁸ No update was provided on advisor assessments of Kandahar Airfield's security units' capabilities this quarter,¹⁵⁹ but SIGAR will continue to follow up with CSTC-A on this issue.

As of March 11, 2020, CSTC-A was managing seven ongoing, DOD-funded ANA infrastructure projects costing roughly \$21.7 million in total. Two projects were being planned, costing an estimated \$5.7 million, CSTC-A awarded one new project (\$1.2 million), and completed no new projects this quarter. No DOD-funded ANA infrastructure projects were descope or terminated this quarter.¹⁶⁰

Of the ongoing and planned projects, the costliest include an ongoing electrical-grid connection project for the ANA in Baghlan Province (about \$9.5 million), one phase of an ongoing SMW facilities-expansion plan for its airbase at Hamid Karzai International Airport in Kabul (\$5.6 million), and a planned electrical-grid connection project for the ANA in Parwan Province (costing roughly \$8.5 million, of which the U.S. ASFF contribution is \$5.2 million with the rest pledged by other donor nations).¹⁶¹

Projects completed this quarter were a roughly \$7 million School of Excellence for the ANASOC's Camp Commando, and a nearly \$400,000 renovation to a Marshal Fahim National Defense University facility.¹⁶²

Six of the ongoing infrastructure projects for MOD elements are slated for completion after May 2021, when U.S. forces will begin departing Afghanistan until they withdraw before September 11.¹⁶³

CSTC-A reported that the estimated annual facilities-sustainment costs funded by the United States for all ANA facility-sustainment requirements

Real property items: includes one or more of the following: building, structure, utility system, pavement, and/or underlying land.

Source: CSTC-A, response to SIGAR vetting, 4/8/2021.

SIGAR EVALUATION: U.S.-FUNDED CAPITAL ASSETS IN AFGHANISTAN

SIGAR issued an evaluation report this quarter in response to a congressional request that determined the U.S. government spent more than \$2.4 billion on capital assets that were unused or abandoned, were not used for their intended purposes, had deteriorated, or were destroyed. For more information, see Section 1 of this report.

remain \$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.¹⁶⁴ CSTC-A said it is reducing the budgeted amount of ASFF that will be provided as a direct contribution for operations and maintenance costs for ANA infrastructure programmed for FY 2021 by 10%.¹⁶⁵

ANA Training and Operations

As of March 31, 2021, the United States had obligated nearly \$100.8 million and disbursed about \$79 million of ASFF appropriations from FY 2019 through FY 2021 for ANA training and operations. Also as of March 31, 2021, the United States had finished obligating and nearly finished disbursing about \$4.3 billion from FY 2005 through FY 2018 ASFF appropriations for ANA, AAF, and some ASSF, and MOD training and operations.¹⁶⁶

According to CSTC-A, ASFF funds currently pay for a number of high-cost, mission-critical training programs for MOD force elements. The costliest is a roughly \$110 million training program for the ASSF, supporting NSOCC-A-partnered units as they further develop critical operational and institutionalized special operations training and build sufficient capacity. This is followed by a nearly \$80 million contract to train entry-level AAF and SMW

TABLE 2.9

TRAINING CONTRACTS FOR MOD ELEMENTS	
Contract	Base/Current Period of Performance
ASSF Training Program	Base: 5/1/2020-5/1/2021 Current OY1: 5/1/2020-4/30/2021
Initial Entry Rotary Wing and Initial Entry Fixed Wing Outside Continental United States AAF Pilot Training	Current Base: 4/1/2020-10/31/2022
AAF Aviation Maintenance Development Center	Base: 4/15/2019-4/14/2020 Current OY1: 4/15/2020-9/30/2021 (No-cost extension due to COVID-19 delays)
ASSF Training Support Services	Base: 4/15/2019-4/14/2020 Current OY1: 4/15/2020-9/30/2021
National Maintenance Strategy-Ground Vehicle Services (ANA/AAF/ASSF)	Base: 5/23/2017-5/23/2018 Current OY3: 9/1/2020-8/31/2021
Initial Entry Rotary Wing and Initial Entry Fixed Wing Outside Continental United States AAF Pilot Training	Current Base: 4/1/2020-3/31/2021
A-29 Pilot and Maintenance Training (AAF)	Base: 10/1/2019-9/30/2020 Current OY1: 10/1/2020-9/30/2021
C-208 Contractor Logistics Support and Maintenance Training (AAF)	Base: 5/20/2017-1/31/2018 Current OY3: 2/1/2020-1/31/2022
A-29 Lead-In High Power Turbo Propeller Pilot Training (AAF)	Current Base: 8/15/2020-8/14/2021
AAF English Language Training	Base: 7/1/2019-6/30/2020 Current OY1: 8/15/2020-8/14/2021

Note: The above list reflects only the 10 highest-value training contracts supporting MOD force elements. The case/contract value dollar amounts were not approved for public release this quarter. ASSF = Afghan Special Security Forces, AAF = Afghan Air Force, ANA = Afghan National Army.

Source: CSTC-A, response to SIGAR data call, 3/17/2021; CSTC-A, response to SIGAR vetting, 4/8/2021; OUSD-P, response to SIGAR vetting, 4/23/2021.

aircraft maintainers, and another roughly \$80 million entry-level rotary and fixed-wing pilot training contract for the AAF and SMW. The cost of the last project increased since last quarter as three courses were added.¹⁶⁷

Just the 10 most costly U.S.-funded contracts to train ANA, AAF, and ANASOC personnel could cost more than \$480 million during their current periods of performance. Table 2.9 shows that eight of the 10 are scheduled to run past the late summer or early fall of 2021 when U.S. troops and U.S. defense contractors are scheduled to leave Afghanistan.¹⁶⁸

CSTC-A said they intend to continue contract oversight regardless of U.S. or Coalition force levels and are considering how to accomplish this as USFOR-A plans for future force levels under several different scenarios. Final policy guidance will be determined by conditions on the ground and alignment with NATO.¹⁶⁹

AFGHAN AIR FORCE

U.S. Funding

As of February 8, 2021, the United States had appropriated approximately \$8 billion for ASFF to build and develop the AAF and fund its combat operations from FY 2010 to FY 2020, roughly the same (about \$9 million less) as the amount reported last quarter.¹⁷⁰ The slight change reflects small decreases in the amount of FY 2019 funds authorized for AAF sustainment and equipment/aircraft (DOD has two years to adjust allocations of authorized ASFF funds before they expire). The authorized ASFF funds for the AAF for FY 2019 are currently \$995.95 million, \$988.83 million for FY 2020, and \$818.05 million for FY 2021, as of March 31, 2021.¹⁷¹

As in most previous years, sustainment remains the costliest funding category for the AAF (55% of FY 2020, and 69% of FY 2019 authorized funds), followed by training (32% and 24% respectively), equipment and aircraft (12% and 6%), and infrastructure (1% of both fiscal years' funds). AAF sustainment and equipment costs primarily include contractor-provided maintenance; major and minor repairs and aircraft upgrades; and procurement of parts, supplies, and training equipment for the AAF's in-country inventory of seven air platforms: UH-60, MD-530, and Mi-17 helicopters; and A-29, C-130, C-208, and AC-208 fixed-wing aircraft.¹⁷²

As of March 31, 2021, the United States had obligated nearly \$1.58 billion and disbursed more than \$1.43 billion of ASFF appropriations from FY 2019 through FY 2021 to build, train, equip, and sustain the AAF.¹⁷³ This brings total U.S. ASFF obligations for the AAF from FY 2010 to FY 2020 to more than \$6 billion.¹⁷⁴ U.S. funds can be obligated for up to two years; \$903.8 million in FY 2019 funds have been obligated (of the \$986.8 million authorized), \$278.9 million in FY 2020 funds have been obligated (of the roughly \$1.1 billion authorized), and no FY 2021 funds have yet been obligated.¹⁷⁵



An Afghan Air Force A-29 fighter-bomber is readied for a sortie in support of army ground forces. (ANA 209th Shaheen Corps photo)

AAF Inventory and Aircrew

Usable aircraft: aircraft in the AAF's inventory that are located in Afghanistan and are either operational and available for tasking or are in short-term maintenance.

Total inventory: the number of aircraft either usable or in long-term maintenance (either at a third country location or in the United States) it does not include aircraft that were destroyed and have not yet been replaced.

Authorized: the total number of aircraft approved for the force.

Source: TAAC-Air, response to SIGAR vetting, 4/16/2021.

TABLE 2.10

AIRCREW POSITIONS FILLED WITH QUALIFIED PERSONNEL, AS OF APRIL 2021

AIRCRAFT	Number of Aircrew Positions	Aircrew Positions Filled with Qualified Personnel
Fixed Wing		
A-29	4	2
AC-208	7	2
C-208	5	2
C-130	7	4
Rotary Wing		
Mi-17	6	3
MD-530	5	2
UH-60	8	3
Total	42	18

Note: These figures represent the number of positions (not personnel) that comprise an aircrew for each airframe and how many of those positions are filled with the required number of qualified personnel.

Source: TAAC-Air, response to SIGAR data call, 4/5/2021; SIGAR, analysis of TAAC-Air-provided data, 4/2021.

Inventory and Status

As of March 31, 2021, the AAF had 143 usable aircraft among the 162 aircraft in its total inventory. This reflects a net increase of seven usable aircraft this quarter. As Table 2.11 shows, four of seven of the AAF's airframes had fully usable aircraft inventories this quarter (A-29, AC-208, C-208, and Mi-17). Only one airframe (AC-208) had an entirely usable inventory last quarter. TAAC-Air reported that six A-29s arrived in Afghanistan in March from the United States (formerly located there for A-29 training for the AAF at Moody Air Force Base).¹⁷⁶

TABLE 2.11

AAF AVIATION SUMMARY AS OF MARCH 31, 2021					
AIRCRAFT	Authorized	Total Inventory	Usable / In-Country	Authorized Aircrews	Assigned Aircrews
Fixed Wing					
A-29	26	23	23	38	21
AC-208	10	10	10	15	13
C-208	24	23	23	28	31
C-130	4	4	2	5	3
Rotary Wing					
Mi-17	0	13	13	—	—
MD-530	60	47	35	58	33
UH-60	43	42	37	49	27
Total	167	162	143	193	128

Note: These figures do not include the aircraft for the Special Mission Wing, which are classified. Authorized and assigned aircrew figures have not changed since last quarter. 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, 4/5/2021 and response to SIGAR vetting, 4/16/2021; SIGAR, analysis of TAAC-Air-provided data, 4/2021.

Qualified Aircrew

TAAC-Air reported no changes this quarter to the number of authorized or assigned AAF aircrews.¹⁷⁷

TAAC-Air provided new data this quarter on qualified and trained aircrew by position and airframe. Seen in Table 2.10, as of April 5, 2021, most AAF airframes had nowhere near the number of qualified personnel (instructor pilots, copilots, mission system operators, etc.) needed to man the aircrew positions each airframe requires. Only the C-130 had more than half of its aircrew positions filled (four of seven) with the required number of qualified personnel. The AC-208 fared worst with only two of seven positions filled with the required number of qualified personnel.¹⁷⁸

When asked why so many aircrew positions lacked qualified personnel, TAAC-Air said the AAF is limited in the amount of aircrew it can train due

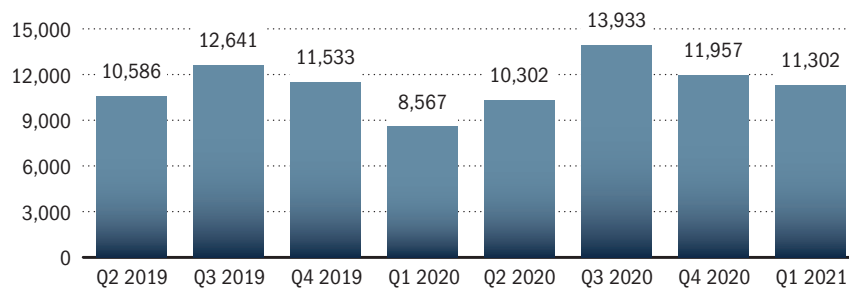
to the number of personnel in its training pipeline, a lack of qualified pilot candidates, and COVID-19 impacts throughout Afghanistan. The latter issue has caused a “bubble” of pilots who received aircraft training but have not been able to complete mission training. Additionally, they said that trained pilots have not had sufficient time to gain experience to qualify them as instructor and evaluator pilots.¹⁷⁹

AAF Operations and Readiness

The AAF’s flight hours this quarter (January–March 2021) were higher than seasonal norms, increasing by about 32% compared to the same period last year. But as Figure 2.32 shows, they are lower than the preceding two quarters.¹⁸⁰

FIGURE 2.32

AAF FLIGHT HOURS BY QUARTER SINCE 2019



Note: Flight hours have been rounded to the nearest hour. Q2 2019 is the earliest reporting period for which SIGAR has comparable flight-hour data.

Source: TAAC-Air, response to SIGAR data call 4/5/2021; SIGAR, analysis of RS-provided data, 4/2021.

The AAF’s readiness did not change markedly compared to last quarter. Three of seven AAF airframes flew over their recommended flight hours this quarter (one fewer than last quarter).¹⁸¹ Four of seven airframes met their readiness benchmarks this quarter compared to five last quarter (October–December 2020).¹⁸² The three airframes that failed to meet readiness benchmarks were the MD-530, A-29, and UH-60.¹⁸³

AAF Maintenance

TAAC-Air provided updates this quarter about developing AAF maintenance capacity, including reporting the number of qualified maintainers required for each airframe by qualification level.

Qualified Maintainers

As SIGAR highlighted in its *2021 High-Risk List* and as IG Sopko testified to Congress on March 16, building a qualified maintainer cadre is critical for the AAF’s ability to independently maintain its own aircraft and work

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TABLE 2.12

FILL PERCENTAGE FOR QUALIFIED AAF MAINTAINERS REQUIRED AND CONTRACTED MAINTAINERS				
Aircraft	Maintainer Level 3	Maintainer Level 2	Maintainer Level 1	Contracted Maintainers
A-29	78%	61%	118%	39
AC-208	233%	120%	125%	41
C-208	261%	154%	290%	–
C-130	28%	0%	33%	25
Mi-17	765%	375%	566%	–
MD-530	93%	61%	109%	106
UH-60	104%	0%	0%	198

Note: Data as of April 2021. Percentages are the percent of positions filled with the required number of qualified maintainers at each level of maintenance qualification. Maintainer levels with percentages over 100% have an excess number of qualified maintainers versus the number required.

Source: TAAC-Air, response to SIGAR data call, 4/5/2021.

TAAC-Air assessed in January 2021 that without continued contractor support, none of the AAF's airframes can be sustained as combat effective for more than a few months.

toward eventually no longer requiring costly U.S.-funded contractor logistic support for aircraft maintenance. TAAC-Air assessed in January 2021 that without continued contractor support, none of the AAF's airframes can be sustained as combat effective for more than a few months, depending on the stock of equipment parts in-country, the maintenance capability on each airframe, and when contractor support is withdrawn.¹⁸⁴

According to AAF data provided to TAAC-Air this quarter, the AAF is making progress filling its maintainer ranks with qualified maintainers at each of its three levels of certification (Level 3, basic maintenance duties, through Level 1, the most advanced maintenance duties). Table 2.12 shows that three of seven AAF airframes (C-208, AC-208, and Mi-17s) have enough qualified maintainers at all levels required to maintain their aircraft. The C-130 has the fewest personnel qualified in each maintenance level against its requirements (nine total qualified maintainers vs. 60 required).¹⁸⁵ Even airframes that have the required number of qualified maintainers (like the AC-208 and the C-208), still use DOD contractors for support. According to TAAC-Air, these contractors provide continued logistics support, mentoring, on-the-job training, and supervision to build competency and experience for the AAF maintainers. They also help restore aircraft readiness when the aircraft fall below operational readiness requirements, as the AAF is still increasing proficiency in these areas.¹⁸⁶

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 small-footprint military campaign in Afghanistan.¹⁸⁷

U.S. Funding

As of March 31, 2021, the United States had obligated roughly \$971.35 million and disbursed nearly \$816.80 million of ASFF appropriated from FY 2019 through FY 2021 to build, train, equip, and sustain the ASSF.¹⁸⁸

ASSF Operations

NSOCC-A reported that the ASSF are conducting 67% more deliberate offensive operations this quarter compared to last quarter. SIGAR considers this to be a positive development: ASSF are trained for offensive operations, but are often misused for manning static checkpoints.¹⁸⁹ However, as SIGAR has previously noted, it is difficult to extrapolate operational successes from numbers of personnel and operations because many of the details of ASSF operations remain classified.

A presidential decree issued on January 21, 2021, consolidated all ASSF under the operational command of ANASOC. ANASOC now has operational control of GCPSU, National Interdiction Unit (NIU), National Directorate of Security (NDS) Strike Forces, SMW, and the Joint Special Operations Coordination Center. NSOCC-A claimed that they “observed less ASSF on checkpoints, and more ASSF applied in support of corps[-level] clearance operations.”¹⁹⁰ NSOCC-A added that it is too early to determine the impact of the new joint command on offensive operations. The increase in offensive operations this quarter is “more likely due to COVID-19 restrictions, reduction in forces, and an increase in enemy-initiated attacks.”¹⁹¹

The 717 ASSF total ground operations conducted this quarter were slightly fewer during the same period last year (750). February saw the highest number of operations (292) compared to January (234) and March (191). As seen in Figure 2.33, on the next page, the ASSF conducted 91% of its operations this quarter independent of U.S. and Coalition advisor support or accompaniment. This is well above the percentage of independent operations (53%) for the same period last year.¹⁹²

Except for aircraft maintenance, daily operations are conducted independent of advisors, as in-person TAA restrictions have remained in place.¹⁹³ Overall, NSOCC-A said this quarter, “ANASOC elements are performing adequately and their ability to conduct independently planned and executed operations is improving.” NSOCC-A provided several examples of ASSF success, including an operation in Kandahar Province where ANASOC units routed the Taliban from Arghandab District, “although with heavy casualties and constant Afghan air support,” and SMW missions throughout Afghanistan that freed over 100 prisoners held by the Taliban.¹⁹⁴



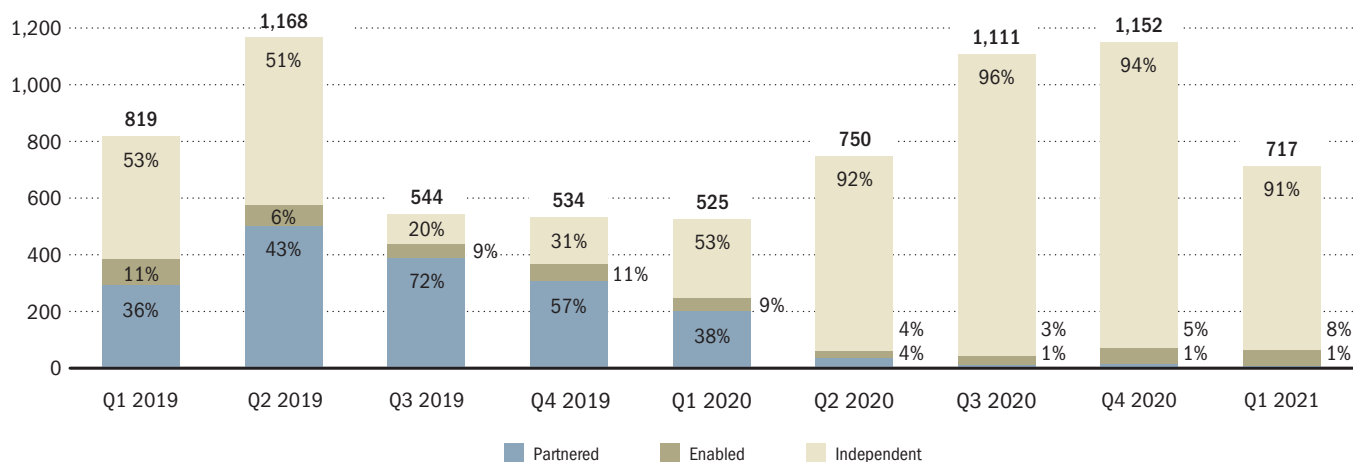
Afghan security forces with air and commando support conduct an operation to capture insurgent mines and munitions. (ANA Special Operations Corps photo)

The ASSF are conducting 67% more deliberate offensive operations this quarter compared to last quarter.

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FIGURE 2.33

ASSF GROUND OPERATIONS BY QUARTER



Note: Partnered = operations conducted by ASSF in which U.S./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, 4/5/2021; SIGAR, analysis of NSOCC-A-provided data, 4/2021.

AFGHAN NATIONAL POLICE

U.S. Funding

As of March 31, 2021, the United States had obligated nearly \$853.96 million and disbursed more than \$686.31 million of ASFF appropriated from FY 2019 through FY 2021 to build, train, equip, and sustain the ANP.¹⁹⁵ Also as of March 31, 2021, the United States had finished obligating nearly \$21.7 billion and nearly finished disbursing \$21.5 billion of ASFF appropriated from FY 2005 through FY 2018 to build, train, equip, and sustain ANP elements, including police special forces. These force elements constituted the ANP budget activity group for reporting purposes through the FY 2018 appropriation.¹⁹⁶

ANP Sustainment

As of March 31, 2021, the United States had obligated nearly \$714.2 million and disbursed about \$572.7 million of ASFF appropriations from FY 2019 through FY 2021 for ANP sustainment. Also as of March 31, 2021, the United States had finished obligating and nearly finished disbursing about \$9.6 billion from FY 2005 through FY 2018 ASFF appropriations to sustain ANP elements, including police special forces. 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).¹⁹⁷

To support the MOI, CSTC-A planned to provide up to \$176.6 million in FY 1400. Of these funds, approximately \$6.4 million (4%) was for salaries, with the remaining funds for purchase of goods, services, or assets.¹⁹⁸ As

SIGAR RELEASES 2021 HIGH-RISK LIST; CONTINUES WORK ON “POLICE IN CONFLICT” LESSONS LEARNED REPORT

SIGAR issued the *2021 High-Risk List* in March to alert legislators and policymakers of major areas of the reconstruction effort in Afghanistan at risk of waste, fraud, abuse, mismanagement, or mission failure. Prepared by the Research and Analysis Directorate, the *2021 High-Risk List* focuses on program areas and elements of the reconstruction effort that are: (1) essential to success; (2) at risk of significant and large-scale failure due to waste, fraud, or abuse; and (3) subject to the control or influence of the U.S. government.

For its ongoing *Police in Conflict* report, SIGAR found that after two decades of international support, Afghanistan currently has a small number of highly trained specialized police forces that have emerged under the tutelage of international advisors. At the same time, the Afghan government still lacks a police force that can legitimately enforce the rule of law on a day-to-day basis. The Afghan Uniformed Police (AUP), responsible for this civilian policing mission, are largely illiterate and poorly trained. Further, many AUP are considered abusive, predatory, and corrupt.

Additionally, SIGAR’s Lessons Learned Program (LLP) has begun briefing some of its preliminary findings from the report. Most recently, in response to current political discussions on the future of U.S. and international donor assistance to the Afghan National Police, LLP staff briefed Resolute Support, U.S. Embassy Kabul, British Embassy Kabul, and Netherlands Embassy Kabul on SIGAR’s ongoing study identifying lessons from U.S. and international foreign police assistance from 2001 to 2021.

of March 18, CSTC-A had disbursed no funding to the Afghan government to support the MOI.¹⁹⁹

ANP Equipment and Transportation

As of March 31, 2021, the United States had obligated more than \$3.7 million and disbursed about \$3.5 million of ASFF appropriations from FY 2019 through FY 2021 for ANP equipment and transportation costs. Also as of March 31, 2021, the United States had finished obligating and nearly finished disbursing about \$4.8 billion from FY 2005 through FY 2018 ASFF appropriations for ANP elements, including police special forces, equipment and transportation costs.²⁰⁰

Although CSTC-A has moved away from new procurements of major equipment and systems, items already procured are still being delivered to the ANP.²⁰¹ Table 2.13, on the following page, lists the highest-cost items of equipment provided to the ANP this quarter (November 1, 2020, through January 31, 2021). Of these items, the costliest was the delivery of 450 antitank grenade launchers (\$2.3 million total). No defense articles were transferred from USFOR-A equipment to the ANP via foreign military sales from stock during this period.²⁰²

ANP Infrastructure

As of March 31, 2021, the United States had obligated more than \$2.6 million and disbursed about \$2.3 million of ASFF appropriations from FY 2019

TABLE 2.13

MAJOR EQUIPMENT PROVIDED TO THE ANP				
Equipment Type	Equipment Description	Units Issued in Quarter	Unit Cost	Total Cost
Weapons	Antitank grenade launchers	450	\$5,100	\$2,295,000
Ammunition	7.62 mm cartridge	13,779,450	0.22	3,031,479
Uniform	Shirts, various sizes	63,985	32	2,048,160
Uniform	Trousers, various sizes	49,755	34	1,695,153
Uniform	Gloves	66,380	25	1,666,802
Ammunition	40 mm grenades	35,400	31	1,113,330
Weapons	40 mm grenade launcher	501	2,000	1,002,000
Parts	ACOG M150 rifle optic	386	1,779	686,694
Uniform	Boots, various sizes	3,844	108	414,153
Parts	Weapon sights	3,246	40	129,678
Total Cost of Equipment				\$14,082,448

Note: The above list reflects only the 10 highest-value equipment provided to the ANP this quarter (November 1, 2020–January 31, 2021). The “unit costs” listed reflect the average costs paid for items procured under multiple Foreign Military Sales cases. Costs are rounded to the nearest U.S. dollar except for unit costs below a dollar.

Source: CSTC-A, response to SIGAR data call, 3/16/2021.

through FY 2021 for ANP infrastructure projects. Also as of March 31, 2021, the United States had finished obligating and nearly finished disbursing about \$3.2 billion from FY 2005 through FY 2018 ASFF appropriations for infrastructure projects for ANP elements, including police special forces.²⁰³

As of March 11, 2021, CSTC-A was managing three ongoing, DOD-funded ANP infrastructure projects. These projects are the joint NATO ANA Trust Fund (NATF)- and ASFF-funded closed-circuit television surveillance system in Kabul (\$19 million of this funded by ASFF), the ASFF-funded GCPSU project at Kabul Garrison Command (\$2.6 million), and the ASFF-funded Kabul Security Forces Checkpoints (\$300,000) project awarded on October 1, 2020.²⁰⁴ CSTC-A reported that no projects were completed, cancelled, or terminated this quarter.²⁰⁵

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 is \$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.²⁰⁶

ANP Training and Operations

As of March 31, 2021, the United States had obligated more than \$133.5 million and disbursed about \$107.8 million of ASFF appropriations from FY 2019 through FY 2021 for ANP training and operations. Also as of March 31, 2021, the United States had finished obligating about \$4.1 billion and nearly finished disbursing roughly \$3.9 billion from FY 2005 through FY 2018 ASFF appropriations for ANP elements, including police special forces, training and operations.²⁰⁷

This quarter, CTSC-A provided SIGAR an update on current (two) U.S.-funded ANP training contracts. One is a \$4.1 million contract to train the ANP to maintain its ground vehicles as part of the NMS-GVS contract; it will continue until August 31, 2021, although another year is pending decision and would be implemented at the end of April 2021.²⁰⁸ The other is a contract to support training MOI and MOD women in occupational skills as part of the Gender Occupational Opportunity Development Program; the roughly \$1 million contract runs until May 1, 2021.²⁰⁹

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, as part of a continuing plan for the ANP to shift its focus from a paramilitary security force to one of community policing. DOD noted, however, that the security environment during the reporting period did not allow such a transition.²¹⁰

Efforts in that direction, though, include reducing the numbers of the most vulnerable checkpoints and reevaluating the training pipeline and training curriculum for police personnel. Specifically, MOI revised the curriculum of initial entry police training to better align with a civil law-enforcement mission. But MOI lacks 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.²¹¹

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).²¹² Although contamination includes legacy mines laid before 2001, most casualties today are caused by mines and other ERW that have accumulated since 2002.²¹³ 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.²¹⁴

According to UN reporting from March 2020, approximately 2.5 million Afghans live within one kilometer of areas contaminated with explosive hazards that are in need of immediate clearance.²¹⁵ From April 2019 through March 2020, the Mine Action Programme for Afghanistan (MAPA) reported an average of 130 civilian casualties per month from ERW.²¹⁶

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 \$423.9 million in weapons-destruction and humanitarian mine-action assistance to Afghanistan (an additional \$11.6 million was obligated between 1997 and

“The Security Council remains deeply concerned over the high number of civilian casualties by landmines, explosive remnants of war, and improvised explosive devices, as well as personnel participating in law enforcement, humanitarian, peacekeeping, rehabilitation and clearance programmes and operations.”

—United Nations Security Council
in commemoration of International
Day for Mine Awareness and
Assistance in Mine Action
on April 4, 2021

Source: UNSC, “Statement by the President of the Security Council,” 4/8/2021.

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Afghan humanitarian demining team member clears minefields and hazardous areas. (Department of State photo)

2001 before the start of the U.S. reconstruction effort). As of March 8, 2021, PM/WRA had released \$3.9 million in FY 2020 funds.²¹⁷

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).²¹⁸

From 1997 through December 31, 2020, State-funded implementing partners have cleared approximately 303.5 square kilometers of land (117 square miles) and removed or destroyed nearly 8.5 million landmines and other ERW such as unexploded ordnance (UXO), abandoned ordnance (AO), stockpiled munitions, and homemade explosives. Table 2.14 shows conventional-weapons destruction figures, FY 2010–2021.²¹⁹

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 October 1, 2020, there were 843.66 square kilometers (326 square miles) of contaminated minefields, battlefields, abandoned improvised munitions, and initial hazardous areas. As of December 31, 2020, the total known contaminated area was 835.7 square kilometers (323 square miles) in 3,905 hazard areas. PM/WRA defines a minefield as the area contaminated by landmines; a battlefield can include landmines and other improvised explosives; and an initial hazardous area will include an indeterminate amount and type of explosive hazards.²²⁰

TABLE 2.14

DEMINEING PROGRAM PERFORMANCE METRICS, FISCAL YEARS 2010–2021					
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	23,966,967	2,879	7,197	85,250	843,517,435
2021	4,455,557	531	85	30,001	835,667,191
Total	299,056,524	81,594	1,984,820	6,352,382	

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 2021 data covers October 1, 2020, through December 31, 2020.

Source: PM/WRA, response to SIGAR data call, 3/16/2021.

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 MAPA.²²¹ In June 2018, MAPA transitioned to Afghan national ownership within the Directorate of Mine Action Coordination.²²²

Funding for demining peaked at \$113 million in 2010. According to Afghan government estimates of the amount of funding needed to bring the country into compliance with the 1997 UN Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, only \$45 million of the \$95 million needed for 2019 was secured; over \$100 million is needed each year from 2020 through 2022.²²³ 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.²²⁴

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:²²⁵

- 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.²²⁶ From October 1, 2020, through December 31, 2020, COMAC provided 9,858 immediate-assistance packages and 1,009 tailored-assistance packages for a total program expense of just under \$2 million.²²⁷ The provinces receiving the most assistance included Nangarhar (\$110,279), Faryab (\$71,402), and Kandahar (\$44,460); those receiving the least included Bamyan (\$956), Panjshir (\$1,451), and Nimroz (\$188).²²⁸

As of November 1, 2020, USAID has obligated \$32.3 million for this program.²²⁹