



MEDIA OPERATIONS CENTRE (MOC)

Press and Media Service, NATO HQ BRUSSELS

T: +32-2-707-1007/1003

Email : moc@hq.nato.int

FACT SHEET

PROGRESS WITH THE DEVELOPMENT OF AFGHAN NATIONAL SECURITY FORCES (ANSF) MARCH 2009

Since their creation, by Presidential decree in May 2002, the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) have grown in capability, confidence and credibility.

Today, thanks to the combined efforts of the Afghan Government, NATO's International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), the US-led Combined Security Transition Command (CSTC-A) and the European Union Police Mission in Afghanistan (EUPOL), the Afghan National Army (ANA) has grown to 82,781 troops and the Afghan National Police (ANP) has more than 80,356 officers. These forces are being trained, equipped and mentored by the International Community so that they can take responsibility for their country's security. Overall, it is assessed that the ANA now participates in 80% of ISAF operations and leads 62% of joint operations.

These international efforts have already enhanced Afghanistan's security capacity. Twenty-five ANA Kandaks (battalions) and 11 Headquarters (2x Corps and 9x Brigades) have reached the highest standard - Capability Milestone 1 (CM1) - capable of conducting independent operations at battalion level. While, these units will still receive ISAF support in the areas of close air support, casualty and medical evacuation, there has been enough progress to allow ISAF to begin to gradually hand over security responsibility to the ANSF.

In Regional Command Capital, since 28 August 2008, the ANSF have gradually taken over the lead responsibility for security in Kabul city. This process is led by the Afghan Ministry of Interior and supported by the Ministry of Defence and ISAF. Since then, the number of incidents have decreased by 52%, thereby illustrating the ANSF' increasing strength.

The stand up of the Afghan National Army Air Corps (ANAAC) is another important milestone in increasing the ANA's capability to operate independently. Thanks to US-led training and investment, as well as numerous other national donations and investments, the ANAAC is now able to share some of ISAF's air support burden, in particular flying 90% of ANA air support missions in 2009 (as opposed to 10% in early 2008). The ANAAC now stands at 2,347 men and women, including 187 pilots - and 35 aircraft. Since then, the ANAAC is now moving an average of 5,000 passengers and 50,000 kg of cargo monthly.

Following a request by the Afghan Government to increase the size of their security forces it was agreed, by the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board, in November 2008, to expand the ANA to its current target strength of 122,000, with an additional 12,000 set aside for training and transient personnel. Training efforts provided by ISAF and CSTC-A are being resourced to meet the new strength levels. As a result, the Afghan Defence Ministry's ANA training plan now advances the full-sized ANA-fielding target date from end-2013 to December 2011. The Afghan National Army Air Corps' capacity is also planned to grow through 2016, when it is supposed to reach full operational capability with 7,500 personnel and 125 rotary and fixed-wing aircraft.