

Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF)

ANSF meets targets

In January 2010, the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board, the formal decision-making body for Afghan and international coordination, endorsed an increase of the Afghan National Army (ANA) growth target to 134,000 by October 2010 and 171,600 by October 2011; and for the Afghan National Police (ANP) to 109,000 by October 2010 and 134,000 by October 2011. The current approved end-strength for the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) is 305,600 forces by the end of October 2011.

In 2010, the ANSF grew by 79,000 to a total of 270,000. The ANA increased to 152,000 forces in February 2011, while the ANP currently stands at 118,000 forces. In Regional Command-Capital, since 28 August 2008, the ANSF gradually took over the lead responsibility for security in Kabul province. The Afghan Ministry of Interior (MoI) and Ministry of Defence (MoD) lead this effort with the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF).

Ministry of Interior

The primary branches of the ANP include:

- The Afghan Uniformed Police (AUP) is assigned to Police Districts and Provincial and Regional Commands. It also includes Traffic Police and a United Nations Protective Force.
- The Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP) is a specialised police force, split into rural and urban units, trained and equipped to counter civil unrest. Urban units maintain civil order in cities and towns, while rural units provide a police presence in high threat remote areas and establish a fair level of security.
- The Afghan Border Police (ABP) provides the MoI with a general law enforcement capability at international borders, entry points, and in the Border Security Zone, which extends 50 km into Afghan territory. The ABP deters and detects illegal entry and other criminal activity. In addition, the ABP controls pedestrian and vehicular traffic at border crossing points and is responsible for airport security.
- The Counter Narcotics Police of Afghanistan (CNPA) is the lead law enforcement agency charged with reducing narcotics production and distribution in Afghanistan. It fulfils this task through a multifaceted approach to counter-narcotics operations, incorporating intelligence, interdiction, eradication efforts, and public information.
- President Karzai established the Afghan Local Police (ALP) in August 2010. This MoI-led interim program is foreseen to last two-five years to compensate for shortfalls in ANSF. It is established in selected areas upon request by the local populace and following validation by the Afghan Government, in conjunction with ISAF. It provides for small, community-based self-defence units under the MoI's chain of command, as represented by the District Chief of Police. The units are representative of, and accountable to, the community. This programme stands as a bridge solution until adequate numbers of ANSF are trained to provide security for the entire country. Currently, there are 14 operational ALP sites with 2,800 recruits.

One year ago, one of the most pressing issues facing the ANP was that the majority of AUP were recruited and assigned to duty without formal training. This was primarily due to operational needs, but had the unintended consequence of negatively impacting the Afghan population's perception of the AUP as corrupt and inept. Consequently, the MoI and NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan (NTM-A) implemented a new model, which makes training mandatory for all police recruits.



Afghan National Police



Afghan National Police being trained by Czech Military Police

Ministry of Defence

The ANA is comprised of six Corps Headquarters and a Capital Division. All but one of these are assessed as capable of executing operations and providing regional security with varied partnered unit assistance. Thirteen of the twenty brigades throughout the country are also assessed at this level.

To date, the ANA has been, by necessity, an infantry-centric force. NTM-A has begun to focus on the development of enabling capabilities - such as military police, intelligence, route clearance, combat support and logistics - needed to provide the ANA fighting elements with the necessary underpinning support. The Afghan Defence University, Branch Schools - of which 11 out of 12 are already functioning - and training facilities are cornerstones of ANA development.



Afghan National Army soldiers wait for a graduation ceremony to begin at the Joint Security Academy Shorabak on Camp Leatherneck in Helmand Province.

Considerable efforts have also been invested in building an inclusive army that provides a cadre of women soldiers and reflects the overall ethnic make-up of the country. Currently there are 301 women in the ANA, of which 166 are officers. While the ANA ethnic composition is largely balanced, the MoD has developed a special recruitment drive to increase the level southern Pashtun participation. This has been on a constant rise, representing up to 3.6% of ANA new recruits in January 2011.

The Afghan Air Force (AAF) made significant progress towards becoming a professional, operationally capable and sustainable force by 2016. In 2010, the AAF acquired 10 new air frames to a total of 52, and increased its manning from 2,800 airmen in November 2009 to more than 4,000 in January 2011. The current target for the AAF is of 8,000 airmen and 129 fixed- and rotary-wing aircraft by 2016. The AAF established an airborne medical evacuation capability, providing specialized emergency medical care for remote areas. During the major floods in Pakistan and eastern Afghanistan last summer, the AAF flew 400 missions and transported over 188 tons of supplies. During the 2010 parliamentary elections, it recorded 225 flight hours and transported over 67,000 kgs supplies to remote locations. It also rescued survivors of the Salang Pass avalanche, supported search and recovery following an airliner crash, and delivered generators and supplies to schools.

“Quantity is important, but quality is imperative.”

Over the course of the past year, NTM-A has placed a greater emphasis on quality. Three areas of qualitative improvement have been: ANSF leader development, marksmanship, and literacy.

Leader training: ANA Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs) form the backbone of a professional military. Through leadership development courses, NTM-A was able to accelerate the number of trained NCOs from 1,950 in November 2009 to about 16,000 today, as well as to improve their level of training and education.

Improved ANSF marksmanship: since November 2009, the level of ANA weapon qualification rose from 35% to 95%.

Literacy: in 2009, 86% of the new recruits were illiterate. A mandatory literacy programme has since been developed for all recruits throughout their training with 1,200 Afghan instructors recruited. It is expected that by the end of 2011, 50% of the entire ANSF will have a first grade level of literacy.

The NTM-A mission also supports the development of self-sustaining institutions. The MoI opened the Afghan Border Police School and is working to open a National Police Staff College, for which EUPOL (European Police Mission in Afghanistan) provided vital oversight and trainers. Additionally a National Police Training Centre will open in Wardak and the ANP Academy will open in Mazar-e-Sharif by November 2011.



An Afghan National Army soldier greets a local man during Operation Moshtarak in Nad-e Ali District, Helmand Province.

Recruitment, Retention, and Attrition

There is a complex interaction between recruiting, retention and attrition. This interaction affects ANSF efforts to meet quantitative goals while maintaining adequate quality.

Recruitment is now following an 8-step vetting process. Upon signing the enlistment contract agreement, the recruit must get two individuals (village elder, Mullah, or other local government representative) to sign and vouch for the recruit. These individuals are held responsible if any discrepancy in the contract is found. The recruit's paperwork and government ID is reviewed and basic biometric information (retinal

scan, fingerprints, height, age, and weight) is collected, added to the recruit's personnel file and accompanies the recruit to training. The biometric data is then checked to see if the individual has any known criminal or insurgent links. Approximately 6% of applicants are screened out for either drug use or medical conditions.

Reducing attrition is essential for the long-term viability of the ANSF, especially with respect to retaining quality personnel. If total strength objectives are increased in the future, attrition must be reduced even further. High attrition is not compatible with growth or sustainment. Currently, for every ten ANA soldiers, NTM-A must train twenty-three recruits in order to maintain total overall strength.

The MoI implemented significant pay reforms in December 2009 resulting in improved retention of ANP. Annual ANCOPT attrition was at an annual rate 52.9% in November 2009; based on current trajectories, the annual rate was almost cut in half, to 24% in November 2010. NTM-A and the MoI's goal is to reduce attrition to 1.4% across the ANSF.

Training Continues in the Field

While the NTM-A Commander focuses on training the initial recruit and building ANSF institutional training capability, development of Afghan soldiers and policemen continues in the field. The ISAF Joint Command (IJC) Commander is responsible for developing fielded ANSF through Operational Mentoring and Liaison Teams (OMLTs) and Police OMLTs (POMLTs). Maintaining the same chain of command for manoeuvre and mentoring forces reduces overall risk as ISAF forces can more effectively respond to emergency situations involving mentoring teams and ANSF.

NATO's Mentoring Teams

OMLTs and POMLTs are an important part of NATO-ISAF's contribution towards the development of the ANSF. Each POMLT and OMLT is normally deployed with an Afghan unit for a minimum of six months.

POMLTs coach, teach, mentor, and when necessary, support the operational planning and employment of the ANP unit to which they are partnered. POMLTs are composed of 15-20 personnel from one or several countries. Nations contributing POMLTs, as of 4 March 2011, are:

- Canada: 2
- Croatia: 2
- Denmark: 1
- France: 5
- Germany (PMTs): 10¹
- Italy: 3
- Lithuania: 1
- Norway: 1
- Poland: 8
- Spain: 2
- Turkey: 1

- United Kingdom: 6
- United States(PMTs): 279



An Afghan National Army soldier along side US marines engage the enemy.

OMLTs provide a bridge from the collective training received at the Kabul Military Training Centre to field training. OMLTs consist of 11-28 personnel (depending on the type and function of the ANA unit with which it is partnered) from one or several countries. Nations contributing OMLTs, as of 4 March 2011, are:

- Australia: 6
- Belgium: 1
- Bulgaria: 4
- Canada: 6
- Croatia: 3
- Czech Republic: 1
- Denmark: 1
- France: 7
- Germany: 5
- Greece: 1
- Hungary: 1
- Italy: 8
- Norway: 1
- Poland: 5
- Portugal: 2
- Romania: 4
- Slovenia: 1
- Spain: 5
- Sweden: 1
- Turkey: 5
- United Kingdom: 7
- United States: (ETTs²): 76
- Multinational: 5

Embedded Partnering

Embedded partnering aims to meld two military forces into a single cohesive team. Each element brings a different set of skills and experience levels. ISAF forces provide doctrinal and technical experience. Afghan forces provide cultural and local situational awareness. Combining ANSF and international force capabilities

¹ Germany currently provides Police Mentoring Teams (PMTs), which cooperate with ISAF, but for legal reasons are not under ISAF's command.

² US Embedded Training Teams perform the same functions as OMLTs: providing ANA units with comprehensive mentoring.

creates a synergy that develops ANSF capability and combats the insurgency.

Embedded Partnering occurs at every echelon from the ministry to unit. At the Regional Command level this means all operations that are jointly planned and commanded by combined staff incorporate Regional Police, Border Zone and ANCOP brigade headquarters. For manoeuvre elements, ISAF and ANSF brigades and battalions integrate staffs. In addition to conducting joint missions, mentor teams co-locate with their assigned battalions. Police mentor teams embed with their assigned ANP units 24/7.

This continuous planning, deciding, executing, and assessing operations cycle enables a unified and combined force with Afghans in the lead. ISAF soldiers and Afghan security forces share risks and responsibilities. Embedded Partnering capitalizes on the combined team's strengths.

History

At the April 2009 Strasbourg-Kehl Summit, NATO Heads of State and Government decided to expand ISAF's mission to oversee higher-level training for the ANA, and training and mentoring for the ANP. To meet this goal, NATO established NTM-A on 21 November 2009.

NTM-A draws together enhanced NATO and national efforts to train ANA and ANP to increase coherence and effectiveness. It works in close partnership with the Afghan MoD and MoI, as well as in collaboration with EUPOL and the European Gendarmerie Force.



Afghan National Army soldiers, assisted by ISAF, plan an operation to clear insurgents out of the village of Shewan in Herat Province

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