

LEAD INSPECTOR GENERAL | REPORT TO THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS



OPERATION FREEDOM'S SENTINEL

REPORT TO THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS

OCTOBER 1, 2017–DECEMBER 31, 2017

LEAD INSPECTOR GENERAL MISSION

The Lead Inspector General for Overseas Contingency Operations coordinates among the Inspectors General specified under the law to carry out five primary activities:

- Develop a joint strategic plan to conduct comprehensive oversight over the contingency operation.
- Ensure independent and effective oversight of programs and operations of the Federal Government in support of the contingency operation through either joint or individual audits, inspections, and investigations.
- Promote economy, efficiency, and effectiveness and prevent, detect, and deter fraud, waste, and abuse related to the contingency operation.
- Perform analyses to ascertain the accuracy of information provided by federal agencies relating to obligations and expenditures, costs of programs and projects, accountability of funds, and the award and execution of major contracts, grants, and agreements.
- Report quarterly and biannually to the Congress and the public on the contingency operation and activities of the Lead Inspector General.

(Pursuant to sections 2, 4, and 8L of the Inspector General Act of 1978)

FOREWORD

We are pleased to submit the Lead Inspector General (Lead IG) quarterly report on Operation Freedom's Sentinel (OFS). This is our 11th quarterly report on this overseas contingency operation in compliance with our individual and collective agency oversight responsibilities pursuant to sections 2, 4, and 8L of the Inspector General Act of 1978.

OFS has two complementary missions: 1) the U.S. counterterrorism mission against al Qaeda, the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria-Khorasan, and their affiliates in Afghanistan; and 2) U.S. participation, with North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies and partner nations, in the NATO-led Resolute Support mission to develop the capacity of the Afghan Ministries of Defense and Interior Affairs and to train, advise, and assist Afghan security forces. The objective of Resolute Support is the establishment of self-sustaining Afghan National Defense and Security Forces and security ministries that together seek to maintain security in Afghanistan.

This quarterly report describes the activities of the U.S. Government in support of OFS, as well as the work of the Department of Defense, the Department of State, and the United States Agency for International Development to promote U.S. policy goals in Afghanistan, during the period from October 1, 2017, through December 31, 2017. We have organized the information in this report by the five strategic oversight areas set out in our *FY 2018 Joint Strategic Oversight Plan for Afghanistan*: security, governance and civil society, humanitarian assistance and development, stabilization and infrastructure, and support to mission. This report also features oversight work completed by the Lead IG Offices of Inspector General and our partner oversight agencies during the same period, as well as ongoing and planned oversight work.

Working in close collaboration, we remain committed to providing comprehensive oversight and timely reporting on OFS.



Glenn A. Fine
Principal Deputy Inspector General
Performing the Duties of the
Inspector General
U.S. Department of Defense



Steve A. Linick
Inspector General
U.S. Department of State
and the Broadcasting
Board of Governors



Ann Calvaresi Barr
Inspector General
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Development

On the Cover

(Top row) An Afghan National Security and Defense Forces honor guardsman stands beside a ceremonial flag (U.S. Air Force photo); A U.S. B-52 Bomber sits on a flightline with munitions loaded on a newly installed conventional rotary launcher in its bomb bay (U.S. Air National Guard photo); Freed Afghans tell Special Operations Kandak Commandos of their imprisonment by the Taliban after their liberation in Helmand province (U.S. Army photo); Afghan children watch as Afghan Special Security Forces conduct a patrol in Nangarhar province (U.S. Army photo). (Bottom row) An Afghan Air Force maintainer cleans the outside of an Mi-17 helicopter at Kandahar Airfield (U.S. Air Force photo); An Afghan Special Security Force operator takes aim during a special operations rehearsal (U.S. Air Force photo).

MESSAGE FROM THE LEAD INSPECTOR GENERAL



Glenn A. Fine

I am pleased to present the 11th Lead Inspector General (Lead IG) report on Operation Freedom's Sentinel (OFS). This report summarizes key events in Afghanistan this quarter and also describes completed, ongoing, and planned Lead IG and partner agency oversight work relating to OFS.

During the quarter, the Administration continued implementing its new South Asia strategy. The five pillars of the strategy are: changing from a time-based to a conditions-based approach; expanding combat authorities to allow military commanders to conduct offensive operations against the Taliban; seeking to integrate diplomatic, economic, and military power to drive the Taliban to reconcile; pressuring Pakistan to address sanctuaries within Pakistan for terrorists and militants; and asking India to increase economic assistance to Afghanistan.

Our report discusses the effects of this new strategy. Overall, based on available data, it is too soon to judge whether the new strategy has broken the stalemate in the fight against the Taliban and other extremists. During the quarter, there was no change in the percentage of the population or the number of districts under the control of the Afghan government, and there was no progress towards a reconciliation process with the Taliban. In addition, there were growing concerns about whether Afghanistan will be able to hold parliamentary elections as planned in July 2018, and the country was struggling to provide assistance to nearly two-million internally displaced persons.

This quarter, Lead IG agencies and oversight partner agencies continued oversight of OFS operations, issuing ten reports related to OFS. For example, the reports examined Department of State antiterrorism assistance programs in Afghanistan, oversight of U.S.-furnished property in Afghanistan, and reporting of allegations of sexual abuse by Afghan security forces personnel. In addition, Lead IG agency investigations resulted in multiple suspensions, debarments, and personnel actions for taking kickbacks, soliciting bribes, and other violations.

In January 2018, just after the quarter ended, my Lead IG colleagues and I visited Afghanistan, Qatar, and Iraq to meet with the military commanders, Department of State and U.S. Agency for International Development senior officials, and senior Afghan government officials, including the President of Afghanistan. We received briefings on the status of overseas contingency operations and the U.S. Government programs and operations that support them. We also met with our staff deployed to the region. The meetings were candid, productive, and informative. We sought to obtain a fuller understanding of the status of U.S. efforts in the region to help develop our oversight plans for overseas contingency operations. In subsequent Lead IG reports, we will provide more details on this trip and the key issues that emerged.

My Lead IG colleagues and I remain committed to oversight of OFS. We thank the OIG employees who are deployed abroad, travel to the region, and work hard here in the United States to perform their important oversight mission.

Glenn A. Fine

Principal Deputy Inspector General Performing the Duties of the Inspector General
U.S. Department of Defense





An Afghan Special Security Forces operator takes aim during a special operations rehearsal for a mission in Paktika province. (U.S. Air Force photo)

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FY 2018 OVERSIGHT PLAN

This quarterly report to Congress covers Operation Freedom's Sentinel and U.S. activity in Afghanistan according to the five Strategic Oversight Areas (SOAs) included in the *FY 2018 Joint Strategic Oversight Plan for Afghanistan*. These areas are Security, Governance and Civil Society, Humanitarian Assistance and Development, Stabilization and Infrastructure, and Support to Mission.

- **Security** focuses on the degree to which OFS is accomplishing its missions of counterterrorism, and training, advising and assisting the Afghan security forces.
- **Governance and Civil Society** focuses on the ability of the Afghan government, at all levels, to represent and serve its citizens.
- **Humanitarian Assistance and Development** focuses on ensuring that the population's basic needs are met, transitioning to peaceful coexistence in communities, and providing long-term development supporting health, education, and the empowerment of women.
- **Stabilization and Infrastructure** focuses on efforts to provide the people of Afghanistan the opportunity to pursue sustainable livelihoods in peaceful communities with effective economic systems and essential public services.
- **Support to Mission** focuses on administrative, logistical, and management efforts that enable the United States to conduct military operations, empower host-nation governance, and provide humanitarian assistance to the local population.



General John Nicholson, NATO Resolute Support commander, greets Afghan Special Operations Command School of Excellence leadership. (DoD photo)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is issued pursuant to sections 2, 4, and 8L of the Inspector General Act of 1978, which require that the designated Lead Inspector General (Lead IG) provide a quarterly report, available to the public, on an overseas contingency operation. The Department of Defense (DoD) IG is the designated Lead IG for Operation Freedom’s Sentinel (OFS). The Department of State (DoS) IG is the Associate Inspector General for OFS.

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) IG is designated by the Inspector General Act as the third IG responsible for oversight of all overseas contingency operations. Although humanitarian assistance and development efforts sponsored by USAID fall outside the OFS mission, this report provides a brief summary of those efforts to illustrate the whole-of-government approach taken by the United States to support the Afghan people. The USAID IG conducts audits and investigations of its programs in Afghanistan and coordinates those activities, as appropriate, with other oversight entities. A summary of USAID oversight work is included in this report.

This report contains information from the Lead IG agencies as well as from partner oversight agencies. This report covers the period from October 1, 2017, through December 31, 2017. The methodology for obtaining information used in this report and for drafting the report can be found in Appendix A. A classified appendix to this report will be provided to relevant agencies and congressional committees.

THE QUARTER IN REVIEW

The Department of Defense (DoD) reported making various changes to its military strategy in Afghanistan during the first quarter of Fiscal Year (FY) 2018. Roughly 3,500 additional U.S. troops are being deployed to Afghanistan. At the end of the quarter, there were roughly 14,000 U.S. troops in Afghanistan.¹ U.S. forces also exercised expanded combat authorities under the South Asia strategy. The expanded authorities allow U.S. forces to conduct offensive operations against the Taliban, rather than only engage with the militants in self-defense. In addition, U.S. and Afghan forces bombed Taliban drug processing facilities in an effort to cut off the insurgents' revenue streams.²

The overarching goal of the South Asia strategy is to apply a combination of military, diplomatic, and social pressure to drive the Taliban to enter into a reconciliation process with the Afghan government.³ It is too early to determine whether the increase in troops and expansion of their authorities will achieve this goal. Moreover, according to the United Nations, Afghanistan made no progress towards peace talks last year.⁴

Afghan President Ashraf Ghani's "Road Map" for the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF) aims to expand ANDSF control of territory so that 80 percent of the Afghan population lives in areas under government control by the end of 2019.⁵ As of the close of the quarter, there was no change in the percentage of the population living in government controlled or influenced areas. In November 2017, General Nicholson stated that 64 percent of the population lived in areas under government control or influence, which was the same percentage as the previous quarter.⁶ About 24 percent of the population lives in contested areas, and the Taliban controls areas accounting for the remaining 12 percent.

While it is possible to measure progress of some aspects of the Road Map and South Asia strategy, such as increasing the size of Afghan Special Security Forces (ASSF) or the Afghan Air Force (AAF), it is difficult to measure the effectiveness of the South Asia

SELECTED KEY EVENTS, 10/1/2017-12/31/2017

OCTOBER 3

Secretary of Defense James Mattis and General Joseph Dunford, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, outlined the new South Asia strategy before House and Senate congressional committees

OCTOBER 19

The Taliban used explosive-laden Humvees and other ANDSF vehicles to attack an Afghan National Army base in Kandahar province, killing at least 43 soldiers

OCTOBER 21

A Taliban car bomber killed 15 Afghan cadets and trainers at a military academy in Kabul

OCTOBER 17

The Taliban detonated stolen, explosive-laden ANDSF vehicles, including Humvees, at two police posts in Paktiya province, killing more than 80 police personnel

OCTOBER 20

An ISIS-K suicide bomber killed more than 50 worshippers at a Shia mosque in Kabul

OCTOBER 31

A young boy detonated a suicide vest inside the Green Zone in Kabul, near the U.S. Embassy, killing 9 civilians and wounding at least 20; ISIS-K claimed responsibility

General John Nicholson, Commander, Resolute Support and United States Forces in Afghanistan (USFOR-A), stated that the momentum had shifted in favor of the ANDSF.

strategy in improving overall security in Afghanistan other than tracking the percentage of population under government control. In their request for information next quarter, the Lead IG agencies will ask implementing agencies how they plan to measure progress under the new strategy.

This quarter, General John Nicholson, Commander, Resolute Support and United States Forces in Afghanistan (USFOR-A), stated that the momentum had shifted in favor of the ANDSF.⁷ Through most of 2017, senior officials and commanders had described the conflict in Afghanistan as a “stalemate.”

General Nicholson attributed the shift to changes in ANDSF leadership and increased support from the international community.⁸ U.S. and Resolute Support officials, echoing General Nicholson, said in December 2017 that the “conditions-based” South Asia strategy announced on August 21, 2017, was turning the tide in Afghanistan.⁹ U.S. officials reported similar gains against the Taliban during the troop surge in 2011-2013, and, while there were a variety of different dynamics at the time, the Taliban adapted and persisted.¹⁰

No Improvement in Security

The United Nations stated in December 2017 that the security situation in Afghanistan remained “highly volatile.” There were 21,000 security-related incidents (primarily armed clashes, improvised explosive devices, and targeted killings) in Afghanistan between January 1 and November 15, 2017, which was a slight increase over the same period in 2016.¹¹ The United Nations reported that the number of security incidents declined slightly late in the year, which follows the historic pattern of Taliban launching fewer attacks in the fall and winter.¹² The United Nations also reported that during 2017 the Taliban shifted from large-scale attacks on district or provincial centers to attacks on ANDSF facilities and checkpoints. For example, on October 17, Taliban militants killed more than 50 police personnel during an attack on the Paktiya province police headquarters.¹³

NOVEMBER 7

ISIS-K attackers stormed the Shamshad TV station in Kabul after detonating explosives at the compound gate, killing 2 civilians and wounding at least 2

NOVEMBER 19

USFOR-A began airstrikes against Taliban narcotics processing facilities in Helmand province

DECEMBER 4

Omar Bin Khatab, a top al Qaeda commander, was killed by an AAF airstrike in Ghazni province

DECEMBER 25

An ISIS-K suicide bomber attacked near an NDS facility and the presidential palace in Kabul, killing 6 civilians

NOVEMBER 13

Taliban fighters, using night-vision goggles, staged an early-morning attack on an ANP checkpoint in Farah province, killing at least 8 police officers

DECEMBER 1

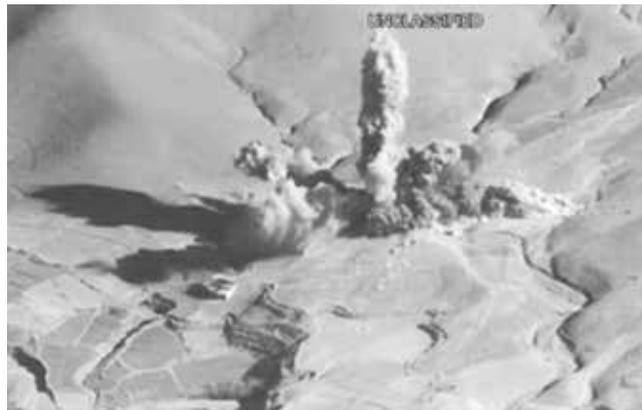
Mullah Shah Wali, head of the Taliban “Red Unit,” was killed by an AAF airstrike in Helmand province

DECEMBER 18

ISIS-K militants stormed an intelligence training center in Kabul; Afghan security forces repelled the attack and suffered no fatalities

DECEMBER 28

A bombing at a Shia cultural center in Kabul killed at least 41; ISIS-K claimed responsibility for the attack



During the quarter, the United States also continued counterterrorism operations against al Qaeda and the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria-Khorasan (ISIS-K). Despite suffering significant losses from U.S. and Afghan counterterrorism operations, ISIS-K maintained its ability to carry out high-profile attacks. ISIS-K claimed credit for a suicide attack that killed at least 50 worshippers at the Imam Zaman Shia mosque in Kabul on October 20, 2017, and a suicide attack that killed at least 41 people at a Shia cultural center in Kabul on December 28, 2017.¹⁴

Resolute Support again said that it classified ANDSF casualty data at the request of the Afghan government, so the Lead IG cannot discuss it in this unclassified report. We provide that information in the classified appendix to this report. The last publicly releasable ANDSF casualty data in May 2017 indicated that casualties were consistent with the high levels in 2016.¹⁵

ANDSF and USFOR-A conduct combined operations to strike drug labs and command-and-control nodes in Helmand province. (DoD video captures)

A Narco-Insurgency

General Nicholson stated in November 2017 that the Taliban was changing from an ideologically based group to a “narco-insurgency.”¹⁶ Given the increasing amount of money the Taliban makes from the illegal drug trade, U.S. forces began bombing Taliban drug labs to disrupt that revenue stream in November 2017.¹⁷ Although U.S. and Resolute Support officials described this as a new tactic, U.S. forces conducted operations in 2009 that specifically targeted Taliban drug labs in an effort to stem the flow of Taliban drug revenues.¹⁸

The United Nations reported that opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan set a new record in 2017.¹⁹ Cultivated land increased 63 percent over 2016 levels and potential opium

production set a new record at 9,000 tons. The United Nations stated that the Afghan government’s strategic focus on protecting population centers in 2017 might have made rural populations more vulnerable to the influence of anti-government entities who pay local farmers to grow poppy and protect farmers from government eradication efforts.²⁰

Some Afghan Government Improvement

Resolute Support reported that the Afghan government made progress on some fronts during the quarter, including fighting corruption, increasing the size of the Afghan Special Security Forces (ASSF), building capacity in the security ministries, and increasing government revenues.

This report will discuss that progress to the extent possible with the unclassified data available. As noted above, this quarter, USFOR-A and Resolute Support officials continued to classify information regarding the size, status, and readiness of the ANDSF. In addition to the data that was classified last quarter, USFOR-A and Resolute Support classified or otherwise restricted information regarding the creation of a new Afghan National Army “militia” force and data regarding the achievement of security benchmarks under the Kabul Compact issued by the Afghan government to detail plans for progress. Resolute Support officials also said that their Afghan public opinion surveys were no longer available in a publicly releasable format.

Tensions in Afghan Politics Grow

Political tensions increased between the National Unity Government and the Coalition for the Salvation of Afghanistan, an umbrella group of prominent political figures, many of whom had been adversaries in the past. In 2017, these figures aligned in opposition to the government and called for political and electoral reforms.²¹



Afghanistan President Ashraf Ghani passes in review of an Afghan National Security and Defense Force honor guard at Kandahar Airfield. (U.S. Air Force photo)

KEY CHALLENGES

The Lead IG derives this list through analysis of information from U.S. Government agencies, the United Nations, and open sources. Information on each challenge is included within the sections of the report.

The United States and Afghanistan faced persistent security and political challenges during the quarter. The Taliban and other militants, including ISIS-K, staged deadly attacks on Afghan forces and civilians across the country. Meanwhile, tensions continued between Afghanistan and Pakistan over Pakistan's support of terrorist and insurgent groups, including the Taliban, within its borders. The Afghan government struggled to resolve internal political tensions, reduce corruption, and prepare for parliamentary elections.

In the last quarter of FY 2017, the Lead IG highlighted three key challenges for OFS and the ANDSF: 1) implementing the plan to double the size of the ASSF; 2) creating a new Afghan National Army Territorial Force to help hold ground seized from the Taliban; and 3) transitioning the Afghan Air Force from Russian Mi-17 helicopters to U.S. Black Hawks. The security section of this report further discusses these topics.

In addition to those and other ongoing challenges, Afghanistan faced the following developing challenges this quarter as the United States continued to implement the Administration's South Asia strategy.

DEFEATING ISIS-K

In early 2017, General Nicholson stated that it was a goal of coalition and Afghan forces to defeat ISIS-K by the end of 2017. While U.S. and Afghan operations killed large numbers of ISIS-K fighters and pushed them out of some of their strongholds in Nangarhar province, ISIS-K was still a significant security threat at the end of 2017. For example:

- ISIS-K continued to recruit successfully from other militant and criminal groups in Afghanistan and Pakistan.
- ISIS-K carried out several deadly attacks in Kabul during the quarter, raising concerns about the proliferation of cells operating in the capital despite the large presence of Afghan and international security forces.
- After more than 16 years, U.S. counterterrorism operations have not eliminated al Qaeda in Afghanistan, which raises questions about how the United States will eliminate ISIS-K.

PRESSURING PAKISTAN TO ELIMINATE TERRORIST SAFE HAVENS

Part of the South Asia strategy calls for the United States to induce Pakistan to eliminate terrorist and insurgent sanctuaries within its borders. During the quarter, the United States made no discernible progress on this front. Pakistan rebuffed public assertions that it supports militants inside Pakistan who are a threat to Afghanistan. U.S. efforts to influence Pakistan as of the end of the reporting period had been limited:



Pakistan's Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi meets with Defense Secretary James N. Mattis in Islamabad, Pakistan on December 4, 2017. (DoD photo)

- Public shaming and criticism have historically failed to drive Pakistan to change its policies towards Afghanistan and end support for militant groups.
- China, Russia, and Iran continue to maintain ties with Pakistan, which diminishes U.S. influence and the potential disincentive effects of any reduction of military aid from the United States.
- The United States relies on Pakistan for air and land access to transport supplies and equipment in and out of Afghanistan.

HOLDING CREDIBLE ELECTIONS ON TIME

The Afghan government has scheduled elections for the lower house of parliament for July 2018. The term for the lower house expired in June 2015, but the Afghan government repeatedly postponed the constitutionally-mandated elections because it was unable to implement timely reforms to electoral commissions and procedures. U.S. military officials emphasized that holding credible elections, a critical component of the South Asia strategy, would increase social pressure on the Taliban to join a reconciliation process. However:

- The estimated \$200 million needed to conduct the elections was not in place by the end of the quarter. The international community has funded previous elections in Afghanistan.
- Efforts in 2017 to introduce biometric voter registration technology and electronic voting machines stalled and delayed the registration process.
- President Ghani removed the chairman of the Independent Election Commission in November 2017, and as of the end of the quarter, the post remained vacant, raising further concerns about Afghanistan's ability to complete election preparations on time.

Afghan villagers receive blankets, clothes, and other supplies from Afghan Commandos during a humanitarian aid delivery in Pekha Valley, Nangarhar province. (U.S. Army photo)



In December 2017, a standoff arose between President Ghani and Balkh Governor Atta Noor, one of the leading figures of the anti-government coalition. Noor alleged that he had submitted a standing letter of resignation with a number of conditions for Ghani to meet regarding political positions for Noor's party. Noor claimed that Ghani accepted the resignation without meeting the pre-conditions. Noor insisted that he was still the governor of Balkh province. His supporters said they would not recognize his dismissal, further escalating the conflict with President Ghani.²²

The country's First Vice President, Abdul Rashid Dostum, remained in "self-imposed exile" in Turkey "amid claims he ordered his men to kidnap, beat, and rape a political rival," and the government blocked him from returning to the country.²³ In November, a court sentenced seven of Dostum's bodyguards in absentia for the assault on this rival.²⁴

The Afghan Independent Election Commission made halting progress towards holding parliamentary and district council elections, scheduled for July 2018. The United Nations expressed concern that the progress had not been sufficient, and numerous political actors in the country called for again delaying the elections, which the government has repeatedly postponed since 2015.²⁵ General Nicholson emphasized the importance of holding parliamentary elections as scheduled in 2018, "which, if done credibly, will further enhance the legitimacy of the government in the eyes of the people," and increase pressure on the Taliban to enter into reconciliation talks.²⁶

Violence Undermines Humanitarian Relief Efforts

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the international humanitarian community continued to provide humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan, which has more than 1.9 million internally displaced persons (IDPs). In addition, USAID provided shelter and settlements, health programs, and food assistance to Afghan citizens. However, USAID reported that humanitarian assistance was impeded again this quarter by military operations; security threats throughout the country; violence against humanitarian providers, assets, and facilities; restriction and obstruction of civilians' access to services; and restriction of movement within Afghanistan.²⁷

Energy and Export Projects Support Improving Economic Growth

USAID reported progress in efforts to develop a National Export Strategy, which seeks to promote Afghan exports of produce, manufactured goods, precious stones, and professional services. In addition, programs to accelerate investment in mining and develop Afghanistan's energy industry showed some progress. However, challenges remained in the agriculture sector, including the lack of irrigation, and farm-to-market roads, and the existence of multiple obstacles to exporting high-value products.²⁸

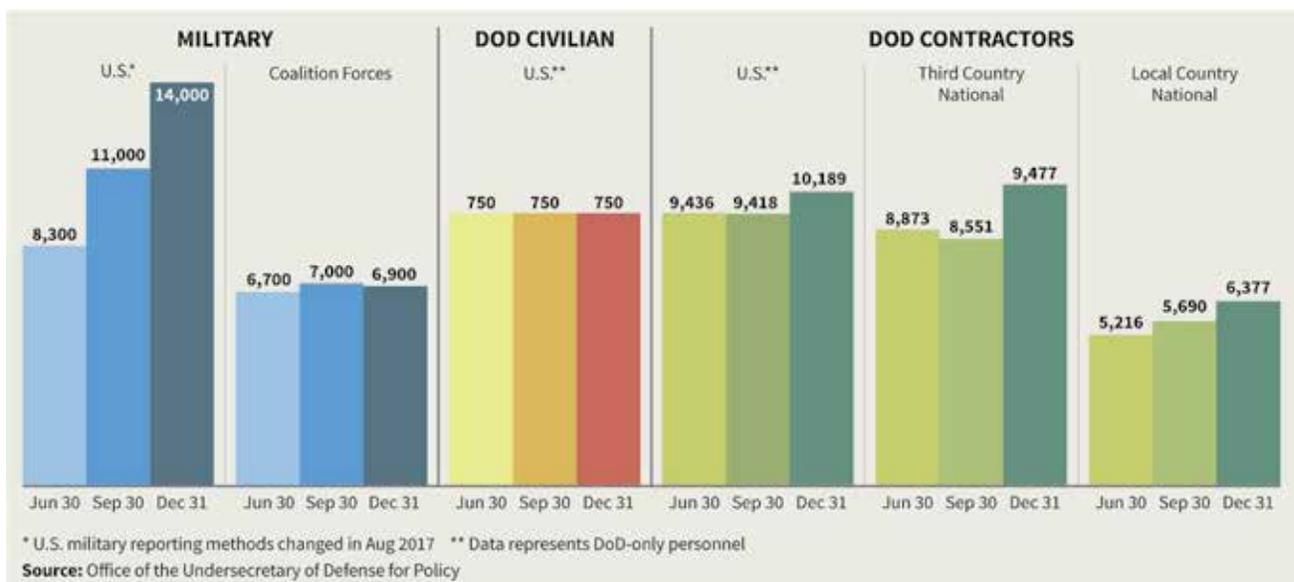
President Requests More Funding for OFS

This quarter, the U.S. Government operated under continuing resolutions that funded most Federal agencies at approximately their FY 2017 levels.²⁹ The President's Budget for FY 2018 requests \$45.9 billion for Operation Freedom's Sentinel (OFS). This includes \$4.9 billion – mainly to fund operations and sustainment of the ANDSF as well as the continued modernization and transition from Russian-made Mi-17 helicopters to UH-60 Black Hawks—a 16 percent increase over the FY 2017 enacted level.³⁰ A budget amendment submitted in November requests an additional \$1.2 billion to support the increase in forces deployed under the South Asia strategy.³¹

In support of the new South Asia strategy, the number of U.S. troops in Afghanistan this quarter rose from 11,000 to 14,000, and the number of contractors supporting OFS increased from 23,659 to 26,043.³² Most of the approximately 3,000 additional troops

Figure 1.

Quarterly Change in DoD Personnel in Afghanistan



deployed under the South Asia strategy will support train, advise, and assist operations at the tactical level. While additional coalition troops have not yet arrived in Afghanistan, 27 partner nations have pledged to increase their troop contributions.³³

LEAD IG OVERSIGHT ACTIVITIES

Outreach and coordination continued to be important aspects of the Lead IG's mission. In January 2018, just after the quarter ended, the DoD, DoS, and USAID Inspectors General visited Afghanistan, Qatar, and Iraq to meet with the military commanders, DoS senior officials, and USAID officials for briefings on the status of overseas contingency operations. The IGs sought to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the status of U.S. efforts in the region, to assess the whole-of-government approach to succeeding in the OFS and Operation Inherent Resolve (OIR) areas of operation, and to help develop integrated oversight plans for overseas contingency operations. The delegation also met with Office of Inspector General (OIG) staff deployed to the region. The meetings were candid, productive, and comprehensive. The Lead IGs will provide more details on this trip and the key issues that emerged from it in subsequent reporting.

Senior representatives of the Lead IG agencies also traveled to Afghanistan, Kuwait, and Iraq in early November 2017 to meet with senior military, diplomatic, and development officials executing U.S. interagency strategy in OFS and OIR. This visit laid the groundwork for the January 2018 joint visit to these overseas contingency operations by the three IGs.

During this quarter, the IGs also held high-level meetings with their oversight partners to coordinate oversight efforts and they participated in activities to share the Lead IG model.

The Lead IG agencies and a partner agency released 10 reports this quarter that related directly, or in part, to OFS.

- The **DoD OIG** released an evaluation and two audits, including an audit of the Army's oversight of property furnished through the Logistics Civil Augmentation Program in Afghanistan, which found that the U.S. Army had "poor accountability" for property furnished under the program, and that at least \$100 million in property was at increased risk of being unaccounted for, lost, or stolen.
- The **DoS OIG** released a compliance follow-up review and two audits, including an audit of the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs' invoice review process for contracts in Afghanistan. This audit found that some expenses were paid although not authorized in the contract.
- The **Special Inspector for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR)** released 4 reports, including a review of U.S.-based training for Afghan security personnel, which found that 83 of the 2,537 Afghans who came to the United States for training between 2015 and 2017 had been determined to be absent without leave and some remained unaccounted for through the date of the report.

The U.S. Army had "poor accountability" for property furnished under the program, and that at least \$100 million in property was at increased risk of being unaccounted for, lost, or stolen.

Table 1 lists the released reports by agency.

Table 1.

Oversight Reports Issued This Quarter

Project	Release Date
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL	
<i>Implementation of the DoD Leahy Law Regarding Allegations of Child Sexual Abuse by Members of the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces</i> DODIG-201-018	November 16, 2017
<i>Army Oversight of Logistics Civil Augmentation Program Government-Furnished Property in Afghanistan</i> DODIG-2018-040	December 11, 2017
<i>U.S. Central and U.S. Africa Commands' Oversight of Counternarcotics Activities</i> DODIG-2018-059	December 26, 2017
DEPARTMENT OF STATE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL	
<i>Management Assistance Report: Contract Terms and Guidance for Approving Student Training Expenses Relating to the Justice and Corrections Programs in Afghanistan Require Attention</i> AUD-MERO-18-14	October 27, 2017
<i>Management Assistance Report: Although Progress Has Been Made, Challenges Remain in Monitoring and Overseeing Antiterrorism Assistance Program Activities in Afghanistan</i> AUD-MERO-18-16	November 9, 2017
<i>Management Assistance Report: Lapse in Oversight at Embassy Islamabad, Pakistan, Allowed Design Change To Proceed Without the Contracting Officer's Knowledge</i> AUD-MERO-18-01	December 12, 2017
SPECIAL INSPECTOR GENERAL FOR AFGHANISTAN RECONSTRUCTION	
<i>Kabul Military Training Center Phase IV: Poor Design and Construction, and Contractor Noncompliance Resulted in the Potential Waste of as Much as \$4.1 Million in Taxpayer Funds</i> SIGAR 18-01-IP	October 10, 2017
<i>Afghan Ministry of Defense Headquarters Security and Support Brigade: Facility Construction Generally Met Contract Requirements, but Three Safety-Related Concerns Need to Be Addressed</i> SIGAR-18-09-IP	October 31, 2017
<i>U.S.-Based Training for Afghanistan Security Personnel: Trainees Who Go Absent without Leave Hurt Readiness and Morale, and May Create Security Risks</i> SIGAR-18-03-SP	October 31, 2017
<i>DOD Procured Non-Intrusive Inspection Equipment: \$9.48 Million Worth of Equipment Sits Unused at Borders in Afghanistan</i> SIGAR-18-14-SP	November 27, 2017

Source: Lead IG

Lead IG Agencies and Partner Agencies Planned and Ongoing Projects

As of December 31, 2017, Lead IG agencies and their oversight partners had 39 ongoing and 30 planned oversight projects for Afghanistan. The projects are listed on pages 98 and 107.

Although USAID has no OFS-related programs or activities, it conducts humanitarian and development activities in Afghanistan in many sectors, including agriculture, democracy and governance, economic growth, education, gender promotion, health, infrastructure, and humanitarian assistance. The USAID OIG conducts audits and investigations in Afghanistan related to these programs. The USAID OIG's activities are included in this report to provide a more comprehensive update on the oversight of U.S. Government programs in Afghanistan, including those not involving OFS-related programs.

The USAID OIG has 14 ongoing and 19 planned oversight projects. The projects are listed on pages 104 and 112.

The Lead IG investigative components and the military investigative organizations initiated 10 new investigations and closed 7 investigations during the quarter.

Investigations Activity

Between October 1, 2017 and December 31, 2017, Lead IG agency investigations resulted in one criminal charge, one misdemeanor conviction, seven suspensions, six debarments, seven personnel actions, two other administrative actions, and the removal of one employee from Federal employment. The Lead IG agencies' investigative components and the military investigative organizations initiated 10 new investigations and closed 7 investigations during the quarter. A former employee of a U.S. Government contractor in Afghanistan was sentenced to prison for accepting \$250,000 in kickbacks from a subcontractor. In addition, a former employee of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Afghanistan pleaded guilty and forfeited property and funds for soliciting approximately \$320,000 in bribes from contractors.

For the quarter ending December 31, 2017, there were 34 open investigations involving OFS-related programs and operations. These investigations involved allegations of procurement, grant, and other program fraud; corruption; theft; trafficking-in-persons; and other offenses. In addition, the Fraud and Corruption Investigative Working Group conducted 23 fraud awareness briefings in Afghanistan for 314 participants.

Hotline Activity

Each Lead IG agency maintains its own hotline to receive complaints and contacts specific to its agency. The OIGs' hotlines provide a confidential, reliable means for individuals to report violations of law, rule, or regulation; mismanagement; gross waste of funds; and abuse of authority for independent review. During this quarter, the central Lead OIG hotline investigator received and coordinated numerous complaints, which resulted in the opening of 34 cases. The cases were referred within the DoD OIG and the Service IG entities.

REPORT STRUCTURE

This report discusses key activities in OFS and Afghanistan in three chapters:

- Significant developments in OFS and Afghanistan this quarter, with information organized in sections aligned with the five strategic oversight areas adopted by the Lead IG;
- Completed oversight activities; and
- Ongoing and planned oversight activities.

METHODOLOGY

To fulfill their congressional mandate to produce a quarterly report on OFS, the Lead IG agencies gather data and information from Federal agencies and open sources, including congressional testimony, policy research organizations, press conferences, think tanks, and media reports. Federal agencies also provide written responses to quarterly data call questions from Lead IG agencies. The DoD, the DoS, and USAID provide comments to draft reports, which the Lead IG agencies consider in editing the reports.

The source of information is described in endnotes or notes to tables and figures. Except for references to Lead IG agencies and oversight partner agency audits, inspections, evaluations, or investigations in the report, the Lead IG agencies have not verified and assessed all the data included in this report. For details of the methodology, see Appendix A.

In addition to the unclassified quarterly report, the Lead IG agencies produce an appendix containing classified information about the counterterrorism mission and mission results of the Afghan Special Security Forces, as well as other previously unclassified or publicly releasable information related to OFS, such as ANDSF force strength, casualties, and equipment readiness. The Lead IG provides the classified appendix separately to relevant agencies and congressional committees.





Soldiers transport people and supplies to multiple locations in Afghanistan via UH-60 Black Hawks. (U.S. Army National Guard photo)

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AT A GLANCE

OPERATION FREEDOM'S SENTINEL



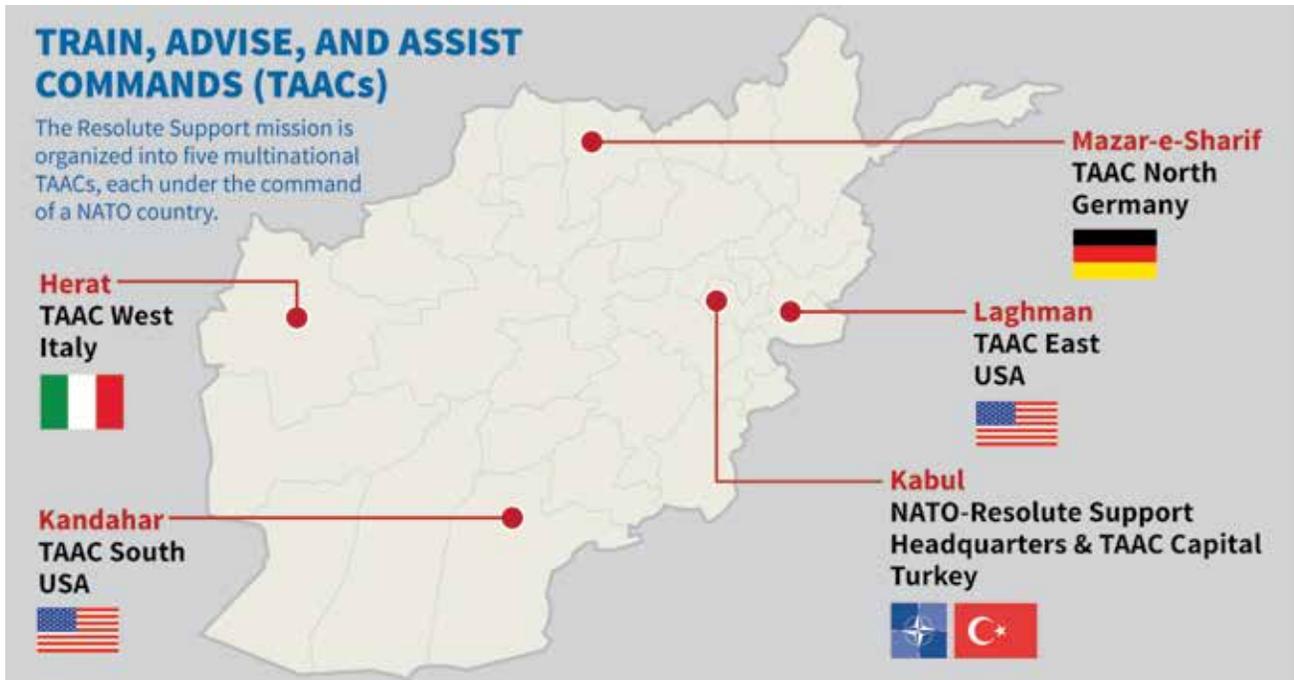
Afghan soldiers conduct a rehearsal raid mission at Camp Commando, Kabul. (DoD photo)

MISSION

U.S. forces carry out two complementary missions under the military operation known as OFS: counterterrorism operations against al Qaeda, its affiliates, and ISIS-K in Afghanistan; and support for NATO's Resolute Support Mission, which seeks to build the capacity of the MoD and MoI and to strengthen the ANDSF. OFS began on January 1, 2015, when the United States ended 13 years of combat operations in Afghanistan under Operation Enduring Freedom and transitioned to a NATO-led train, advise, and assist role, while continuing counterterrorism operations. At that point, the Afghan government assumed full responsibility for the security of Afghanistan with limited U.S. or coalition support on the battlefield.

HISTORY

U.S. combat operations began on October 7, 2001, to topple the Taliban regime and eliminate the al Qaeda terrorist organization responsible for the attacks on September 11, 2001. The Taliban regime fell quickly and U.S. officials declared an end to major combat on May 1, 2003. Subsequently, the United States and international coalition partners sought to build a strong, democratic Afghan central government. However, as the new Afghan government developed, the Taliban regrouped and launched increasingly deadly attacks to recapture lost territory. The deteriorating security situation resulted in a surge in U.S. troop strength from 37,000 in early 2009 to approximately 100,000 from 2010 to 2011. The surge reversed Taliban momentum and enabled a gradual reduction of U.S. forces to 16,100 by December 31, 2014, when the NATO-led combat mission ended and OFS began. By the end of 2016, roughly 11,000 U.S. troops remained in Afghanistan. However, since the launch of OFS, Afghan forces have struggled against a resilient Taliban and have suffered extensive casualties. As a result, the U.S. announced a new "conditions-based" strategy on August 21, 2017, which included the deployment of about 3,000 additional U.S. troops.



Sources: See endnotes, page 130



Secretary of Defense James Mattis speaks with U.S. Marine Corps General Joseph F. Dunford, Jr., Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, before a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing. (DoD photo)

THE QUARTER IN REVIEW

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Assessing Progress under the South Asia Strategy

On October 3, 2017, Secretary of Defense James Mattis and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Joseph Dunford provided details about the Trump Administration’s South Asia strategy in testimony before the Senate and House Armed Services Committees. They explained that the strategy, announced on August 21, 2017, has five pillars:¹

- Changing the focus from a time-based to conditions-based approach.
- Integrating diplomatic, economic, and military power to drive the Taliban to reconcile.
- Pressing Pakistan to eliminate sanctuaries within Pakistan for terrorists and militants.
- Pushing India to increase economic and development assistance to Afghanistan.
- Expanding combat authorities for commanders to conduct offensive operations against the Taliban.

In the hearings, members of Congress asked Secretary Mattis and General Dunford for details on the “conditions” that underpin the new strategy and how the Department of Defense (DoD) proposed to measure progress of the strategy. Members also wanted clarity on how the South Asia strategy differed from past Afghanistan strategies. In his opening remarks, Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman John McCain asked how the new strategy would create the conditions for reconciliation with the Taliban when “a surge in the past of over 100,000 troops could not create the conditions on the ground” to end the conflict.²

Freed Afghans tell Special Operations Kandak Commandos of their imprisonment by the Taliban after their liberation in Nahr-e Saraj district, Helmand province. (U.S. Army photo)



Secretary Mattis stated that the conditions in the strategy included securing population centers with the bulk of the Afghan people protected from violence, an Afghan government capable of providing services to the population, and an Afghan military able to conduct effective operations against the Taliban and terrorist groups.³ “At the end of the day,” General Dunford stated, “what we are helping to do is set the conditions where the Taliban believe they are going to have to come to the peace table in order to move forward.”⁴

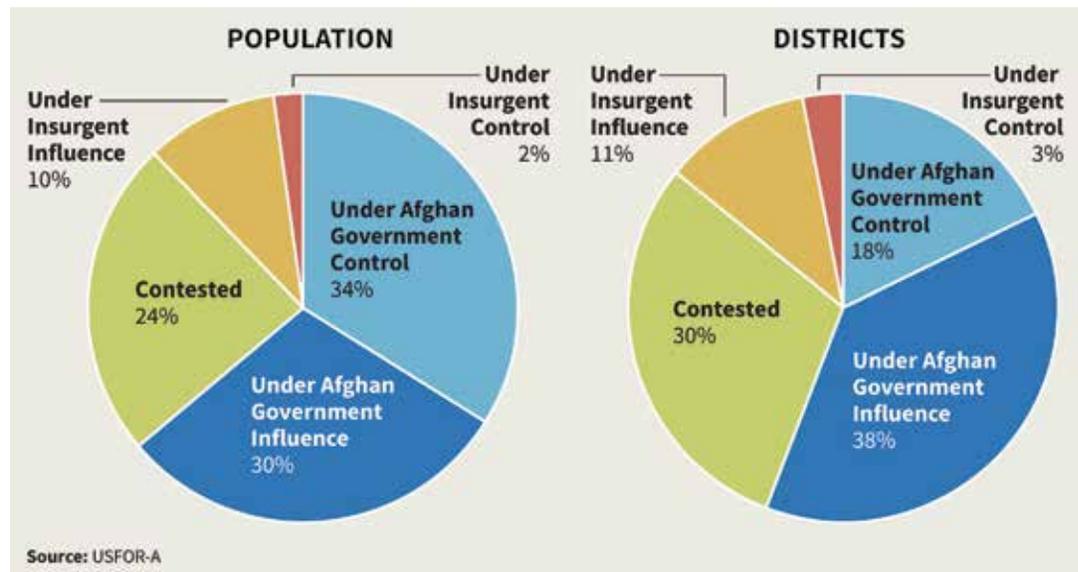
The overall goal of the South Asia strategy is to convince the Taliban, through the application of military, diplomatic, and social pressure, that their only path forward is to enter into reconciliation talks.⁵ However, the United Nations noted in December that there was no discernible progress in the peace process in 2017.⁶

During the quarter, military commanders altered their assessment of the security situation in Afghanistan. On November 28, 2017, General Nicholson said there had been a shift in the momentum of the conflict in favor of the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF). He attributed the shift to the South Asia strategy taking hold.⁷

“The Taliban were unable to accomplish any of their objectives and have now done the cowardly transition away from combat ops to high-profile attacks, kidnapping for ransom, and assassinations,” said U.S. Air Force Brigadier General Lance Bunch, Director of Resolute Support Future Operations in a December press briefing. “I think you can see that the momentum is shifting in the favor of the ANDSF.”⁸

However, the Taliban has a history of adapting to changing conditions and shifting their tactics in response to operations against them, and changes in Taliban operations do not necessarily signal that momentum has irreversibly shifted.⁹ For example, during the 2011-2013 period, U.S. commanders and officials made similar assessments, suggesting that momentum had shifted towards the ANDSF and that the Taliban showed signs of weakness.¹⁰ The insurgents went on to expand their control of Afghan territory as U.S. and international forces withdrew and transitioned into OFS in 2015.¹¹

Figure 2.

Percentage of Afghans Under Insurgent and Government Control

While military commanders expressed cautious optimism about the South Asia strategy and its initial impact, few unclassified metrics or benchmarks are available to measure clearly the progress of the strategy. On the sole quantifiable metric discussed publicly to date—expanding security to 80 percent of the Afghan population by the end of 2019—Afghanistan made no significant progress in 2017.¹² As of November 2017, the Afghan government controlled territory in which 64 percent of the population resided, the same as the previous quarter, and down from 80 percent in September 2013.¹³ In addition, the percentage of districts under government control was largely unchanged at the end of 2017 with the government controlling 56 percent of the country’s 407 districts.¹⁴

U.S. Forces Target Taliban Narcotics Labs

During the quarter, the United States increased the number of U.S. troops in Afghanistan and expanded their offensive authorities.¹⁵ In particular, U.S. forces expanded the scope of the military campaign to include airstrikes on Taliban narcotics processing and trafficking infrastructure in an effort to deprive the Taliban of one of its major revenue sources. On November 19, 2017, U.S. and Afghan forces carried out the first in a series of airstrikes on suspected Taliban drug processing facilities in Helmand province.¹⁶

General Nicholson characterized that new campaign as part of the broader effort to weaken the Taliban and drive them to reconciliation talks.¹⁷ “We believe that the Taliban, in some ways, have evolved into a criminal or narco-insurgency,” he said. “They are fighting to defend their revenue streams. They have increasingly lost whatever ideological anchor they once had.” General Nicholson said that the Taliban makes at least \$200 million a year from



The Afghan National Police set approximately three tons of confiscated drugs on fire during a controlled drug burn at Bost Airfield. This burn included opium, heroin, hashish, various chemicals, alcohol, and morphine. (U.S. Marine Corps photo)

the opium trade, and therefore operations that destroy narcotics infrastructure will reduce Taliban funds and put more pressure on them to reconcile with the Afghan government.¹⁸

As of mid-December, United States Forces–Afghanistan (USFOR-A) reported that it had eliminated 25 Taliban narcotics processing facilities out of an estimated 400 to 500 labs in the country.¹⁹ USFOR-A estimated that the strikes cost drug traffickers \$80 million in revenue, of which \$16.5 million would have gone to the Taliban.²⁰ USFOR-A stated that it used U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency’s (DEA) estimate of \$205,000 per barrel of narcotics in production plus estimates of the raw value of “critical components” within a lab to calculate revenue losses. The DEA estimates that the Taliban takes in 20 percent of the value of the narcotics that move through its territory.²¹

General Nicholson said the strikes were not directly related to the overall poppy eradication effort.²² However, the strikes come at a time when poppy cultivation and opium production were at an all-time high in Afghanistan (see page 24).

Operational Authorities Continue to Evolve

The airstrikes on Taliban drug facilities were part of a broader expansion of operational authorities under the South Asia strategy that permit U.S. forces to conduct a greater range of offensive operations against the Taliban. During Operation Enduring Freedom (October 2001–December 31, 2014), U.S. commanders in Afghanistan issued directives to minimize civilian casualties, which officials viewed as fuel for the insurgency.²³ Former Afghan President Hamid Karzai also routinely criticized U.S. airstrikes and claimed that they caused too many civilian deaths. He voiced this as a concern during U.S.-Afghan negotiations of the 2014 Bilateral Security Agreement.²⁴

When Operation Enduring Freedom concluded on December 31, 2014, the United States declared an end to its combat mission in Afghanistan. Starting in 2015, OFS has two complementary mission sets. First, U.S. forces would conduct security force assistance in

U.S. officials stated that the South Asia strategy is not a return to U.S.-led major ground combat operations, and that the ANDSF are leading the fight against the Taliban.

support of Afghan security institutions and fielded forces, as part of the NATO-led Resolute Support “non-combat” mission to train, advise, and assist the ANDSF. Second, U.S. forces would carry out counterterrorism operations against al Qaeda and affiliated groups.

Under the counterterrorism mission of OFS, U.S. Special Forces have conducted unilateral and partnered combat operations against al Qaeda and other terrorist groups. Additionally, as part of its security force assistance mission under OFS, U.S. forces were authorized, under select circumstances, to provide combat enablers (such as air support) to U.S.-advised Afghan counterterrorism and counterinsurgency offensive operations. Initially, apart from this limited combat-enabling authority, U.S. forces were authorized only to engage the Taliban in cases of self-defense or force protection.²⁵ USFOR-A stated that these restrictions gave the Taliban space to rebuild their infrastructure and change into a “quasi-state criminal network from Iran to Pakistan and north into the Central Asian States.”²⁶

In early 2016, the Obama Administration expanded the combat enabling authority to increase air support to the conventional ANDSF ground forces. In addition, authorities allowed U.S. forces to target the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria-Khorasan (ISIS-K).²⁷

In August 2017, President Trump announced that the United States would “expand authority for American armed forces to target the terrorists and criminal networks that sow violence and chaos throughout Afghanistan.”²⁸ In October 2017, Secretary Mattis testified that American troops had expanded authorities to target the Taliban outside of direct enemy contact.²⁹ Specifically, U.S. rules of engagement no longer included a proximity requirement in order to strike against Taliban forces.³⁰

U.S. officials stated that the South Asia strategy is not a return to U.S.-led major ground combat operations, and that the ANDSF are leading the fight against the Taliban.³¹ However, U.S. forces are carrying out, and will carry out more combat operations in Afghanistan. For example, U.S. airstrikes, which are combat operations, have dramatically increased. In addition, in the spring of 2018, more U.S. forces are scheduled to accompany Afghan conventional forces at the *kandak* (battalion) level in ground operations against the Taliban.³² The United States expects to deploy the first of its Security Force Assistance Brigades (SFABs) in the spring of 2018. SFABs are a new type of Army unit composed of personnel with expertise in training foreign militaries.³³

“The fighting will continue to be carried out by our Afghan partners, but our advisers will accompany tactical units to advise and assist and bring NATO fire support to bear when needed,” stated Secretary Mattis in his congressional testimony on October 3, 2017. “Make no mistake, this is combat duty, but the Afghan forces remain in the lead to do the fighting.”³⁴

Pakistan Stalemate Continues

According to the DoD, Afghanistan-Pakistan relations “remain tenuous.”³⁵ The DoD stated that tactical cooperation between Afghanistan and Pakistan on border operations “took positive steps” during the quarter through telephone hotlines, information sharing, and officer engagements. At the same time, the DoD noted that, “the trust deficit resulting from

Pakistan's support of and inaction against Afghan-oriented extremists, and Pakistan's concerns about terrorist attacks launched from Afghanistan, hamper the bilateral military collaboration required to achieve enduring security."³⁶

In December 2017, Director of Central Intelligence Mike Pompeo stated that nothing had changed on the Pakistan front, but that the United States would do everything it can to make sure terrorist safe havens no longer exist in Pakistan.³⁷ Immediately after the close of the quarter, President Trump tweeted that Pakistan had given the United States "nothing but lies & deceit." The Administration subsequently announced that the United States was suspending almost all security assistance to Pakistan.³⁸

According to the Department of State (DoS), this suspension of almost all security assistance to the Pakistani military meant that approximately \$1.5-2.0 billion in FY 2016 and prior-year military assistance, including defense articles planned for delivery in the near term, would not move forward. U.S. officials said that exceptions would be made on a limited, case-by-case basis if they were deemed vital to U.S. national security interests. The President's decision also meant that the provision of Excess Defense Articles and up to \$900 million in Coalition Support Funds were suspended. The suspension included FY 2016 and prior-year foreign military financing assistance that had not yet been delivered or committed to specific projects. It also included prior-year Pakistan Counterinsurgency Capability Funds. Some funding for training and education, such as the International Military Education Training program, may be exempted.³⁹

The DoS stated that the suspension was not a permanent cut-off and that security assistance funding and pending deliveries would be frozen but not cancelled in order to encourage the Pakistani government to take decisive action against terrorist groups. The DoS also stated that the freeze would not affect civilian aid programs.⁴⁰

Afghanistan Continues Progress on Compact Benchmarks

The U.S.-Afghan Compact (also known as the Kabul Compact) is a non-binding set of internal benchmarks that the Afghan government has set for itself in four areas:

- 1) Economic development and cooperation
- 2) Good governance and anti-corruption
- 3) Security
- 4) Peace and reconciliation

The Compact, announced by President Ghani on August 23, 2017, contains hundreds of benchmarks to achieve by the end of 2020. U.S. Government representatives participate alongside Afghan government leaders in committees that track implementation of the Compact's benchmarks. These officials view the Compact as one vehicle to measure

In November 2017, General Nicholson stated that the Afghan government had completed 163 out of 172 security benchmarks under the Compact between January and November 2017.

progress towards reforming government and improving security.⁴¹ The U.S. Embassy and Resolute Support mission efforts to build capacity and train Afghan forces and ministries helps the Afghan government achieve Compact benchmarks.

The Compact is an outgrowth of the U.S.-Afghanistan Strategic Partnership Agreement that the countries executed in 2012. That agreement, which runs through 2024, outlined the bilateral commitment to advance peace, security and reconciliation, and to build Afghanistan's institutions and economy. President Ghani initiated development of the Compact following an April 2017 meeting with U.S. National Security Advisor H. R. McMaster in which they discussed ways to pursue progress on these fronts⁴²

Although Secretary Mattis acknowledged that it was not possible to apply quantitative measures to determine progress on each of the different benchmarks identified in the Compact, he said it did offer a way to “quantify where we can, the progress we’re making.”⁴³

According to a DoD official, “All of the Compact’s benchmarks are intended to build capacity in one form or another by improving accountability, improving ANDSF effectiveness, [and] enabling the Afghan government to perform tasks now performed by Resolute Support.”⁴⁴ USFOR-A, the lead agency for measuring progress on the benchmarks contained in the security portion of the Compact, said that the Compact “compels the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to enact critical reforms through realistic, attainable, and measurable objectives.”⁴⁵ The DoS stated that U.S. Government assistance to Afghanistan was not tied to achieving the benchmarks of the Compact but that the benchmarks were instead a mechanism by which U.S. Government officials can monitor the Afghan government’s progress towards its own goals.⁴⁶

Many of the Compact’s security benchmarks are steps towards achieving goals of the ANDSF Road Map, the multi-year strategy established in 2017 to grow and realign the ANDSF to be a more effective fighting force.⁴⁷ The DoD stated that Resolute Support advisors have built a new “tracker” to measure completed tasks and the tracker is a “binary” (yes-no) form of measurement that “removes inherent subjectivity” in quantifying which benchmarks have been achieved.⁴⁸

In November 2017, General Nicholson stated that the Afghan government had completed 163 out of 172 security benchmarks under the Compact between January and November 2017.⁴⁹ USFOR-A added that there are 500 benchmarks established over the life of the Compact, which extends until 2020. DoD officials have added that the Compact is a “living” document, and benchmarks can be added over time.⁵⁰

The security benchmarks are not publicly releasable, and therefore this report cannot include an evaluation of progress towards meeting the benchmarks. However, it is important to recognize that the benchmarks are internal steps toward reforming the government ministries and security forces. While achieving the benchmarks should help set conditions for the government to provide better services and security, meeting benchmarks does not guarantee better governance and security.

Opium Harvest Sets New Record

In its annual Afghanistan Opium Survey released in November 2017, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime reported that the total land area under poppy cultivation in Afghanistan increased 63 percent in 2017 to a record 328,000 hectares (1,266 square miles, slightly larger than the state of Rhode Island). The previous record of 224,000 hectares was set in 2014. In 2001, the last year of Taliban rule, cultivation was 8,000 hectares.⁵¹ Opium production in 2017 could total 9,000 tons, or nearly double the 4,800 tons produced in 2016.⁵²

According to the survey, cultivation intensified in almost all the major poppy-growing provinces. About half of the expansion—63,000 hectares—occurred in Helmand Province. Although the southern provinces of Afghanistan still account for most of the opium production, poppy cultivation expanded to new regions. Potential opium production in 2017 was 9,000 tons, or nearly double the 4,800 tons estimated in 2016.⁵³

The United Nations said that multiple factors—political instability, poor security, corruption, lack of quality education and employment opportunities, and insufficient access to markets and other financial resources—contributed to the increase in poppy cultivation in 2017. In addition, the United Nations found that advances in agriculture, including the use of fertilizers and pesticides, as well as solar panels to power irrigation pumps, might have made poppy cultivation more profitable.⁵⁴

The United Nations said that the Afghan government's strategic focus on protecting population centers in 2017 might have made rural populations more vulnerable to anti-government entities. According to the United Nations, "Political instability and increased insecurity particularly affected the Northern region, where opium poppy cultivation expanded drastically in the last couple of years. Generally, the weaker engagement of the international aid community may also have reduced the socio-economic development opportunities in rural areas."⁵⁵

The United Nations also reported that although opium prices decreased in 2017 due to the spike in supply, the total farm-gate value—that is, the total price paid to farmers—of the 2017 crop increased because of the expanded cultivation. The United Nations estimated that the farm-gate value of the 2017 opium production totaled about \$1.39 billion, an increase of about 58 percent over 2016.⁵⁶ Farmers in Helmand Province, the largest opium-producing province, earned an estimated \$584 million.⁵⁷ The United Nations warned that, "The significant levels of opium poppy cultivation and illicit trafficking of opiates will probably further fuel instability [and] insurgency and increase funding to terrorist groups in Afghanistan."⁵⁸

SECURITY

U.S. Counterterrorism and Combat-Enabling Activities

U.S. military forces engage in offensive and combat-enabling operations as part their counterterrorism mission, which supports the Resolute Support mission. The U.S. counterterrorism mission in Afghanistan seeks to defeat al Qaeda, ISIS-K, and their associates, protect U.S. forces, and prevent Afghanistan from “becoming a safe-haven for terrorists to plan attacks against the U.S. homeland.”⁵⁹ The DoD stated that the presence of terrorist and insurgent groups in Afghanistan and Pakistan “requires an Afghan supported U.S. platform in the region to monitor, contain, and respond to these threats.”⁶⁰

Through the Resolute Support train, advise, and assist mission, U.S. troops and civilian advisors work with the Ministry of Defense (MoD), the Ministry of Interior Affairs (MoI), and their forces as they plan and execute operations against the Taliban. As noted above, under the new South Asia strategy, U.S. commanders in the field have more authority to conduct offensive operations in support of ANDSF operations against the Taliban⁶¹

SECURITY SITUATION REMAINS “HIGHLY VOLATILE”

According to DoD, as Afghan security forces assumed greater responsibility for their nation’s security, they faced a resilient, active, and externally supported insurgency.⁶² In December 2017, the United Nations reported that 21,000 security incidents took place from January 1 through November 15, roughly the same number as in 2016, although there was a slight decrease in the rate of incidents tracked during the final two months of that period.⁶³ The United Nations reported that nearly two-thirds (62 percent) of reported security incidents were armed clashes, followed by improvised explosive devices (17 percent). These security incidents most often occurred in the eastern and southern regions of the country.⁶⁴

The ANDSF also reported a decrease in enemy-initiated attacks since September 2017. However, the DoD, which relies on ANDSF data for reporting purposes, noted that these figures are often imprecise, as ANDSF units commonly do not report attacks if they do not result in ANDSF casualties.⁶⁵

Violence in Afghanistan historically ebbs heading into winter. While the Taliban does not cease all operations in the winter, the Taliban tends to conduct fewer attacks in the fall and winter. In the spring, as the weather warms and the first poppy harvest concludes, militants increase their operational tempo. The drop-off in attack volume this quarter was consistent with historical patterns.⁶⁶

In past winters, U.S. and Afghan forces also reduced their operational tempo to focus on training and equipping priorities. This year, however, the U.S. and Resolute Support plan to continue the airstrikes and operations through the winter to maintain pressure on the Taliban, said Brigadier General Bunch, who leads air campaign integration for Resolute Support. The ANDSF are also conducting more operations through the winter in an effort to degrade the Taliban in advance of the militant group’s annual spring offensive.⁶⁷

TALIBAN TARGET ANDSF INSTALLATIONS AND CONVOYS

This quarter, the Taliban continued to threaten Afghan security forces and civilians by mounting strikes on ANDSF installations and launching high-profile attacks in Kabul and other locations.⁶⁸ The Taliban attacked Afghan security checkpoints and facilities throughout the country, including checkpoints in Farah, Ghazni, and Helmand provinces, and in several other regions.⁶⁹

These attacks often resulted in multiple casualties for both the ANDSF and the Taliban. The Taliban used these attacks to steal equipment that they later used against the ANDSF. As a result, USFOR-A noted in December 2017, the ANDSF had moved to consolidate forces in strategic locations, which reduces the vulnerability of ANDSF equipment to attack.⁷⁰ However, the ongoing vulnerability of ANDSF equipment was particularly apparent this quarter, when Taliban fighters stole ANDSF Humvees, filled them with explosives, and then drove the bomb-laden vehicles into police facilities in Paktiya province, leaving more than 80 Afghan officers dead.⁷¹ Two days later, the Taliban used similar tactics to attack an ANA base in Kandahar province, killing more than 40 soldiers.⁷²

The Taliban's ongoing shift away from large-scale battles to what Resolute Support described as "guerilla-style tactics" against ANDSF checkpoints, installations, and convoys was especially notable in Helmand province, where U.S. and Afghan forces expanded their campaign against the Taliban.⁷³ As the Taliban experienced pressure in the southern part of the country, it increased its attacks in the western provinces, particularly Herat province.⁷⁴ USFOR-A noted that checkpoint ambushes in Herat were often unsuccessful, causing the Taliban to shift its attention to ANDSF convoys travelling through the province.⁷⁵ Local media reported that the Taliban suffered many casualties during ANDSF offensives against Taliban positions in Herat province. For example, a 10-day operation in Herat's southern Shindand district left as many as 75 Taliban fighters dead.⁷⁶

Herat and the southern provinces remained important theaters of operations for the Taliban. Taliban fighters operating in the south often fused operations with local criminal groups to facilitate movement of personnel, weapons, equipment, and narcotics to other provinces. Resolute Support reported this quarter that the primary Taliban objective was "to freely flex fighters and resources throughout the region" and to disrupt and repel ANDSF and coalition forces that sought to suppress criminal and insurgent activity.⁷⁷

In the northern provinces, the ANDSF focused operations on clearing and securing territory and transportation routes, particularly in the Ghormach district of Badghis province and along Highway 1 (also known as the "Ring Road"). Resolute Support reported that the Taliban continued to threaten major roadways and small areas of territory, if only temporarily, and conducted small-scale attacks on ANDSF checkpoints.⁷⁸

This quarter, USFOR-A observed an increase in Taliban procurement and use of commercial scopes for rifles. These rifle attachments, which are widely available, have provided the Taliban an advantage over the ANDSF during checkpoint attacks, as they enable Taliban fighters to fire more accurately from greater distances and stay out of range of ANDSF return fire.⁷⁹

The Taliban continued to threaten Afghan security forces and civilians by mounting strikes on ANDSF installations and launching high-profile attacks in Kabul and other locations.

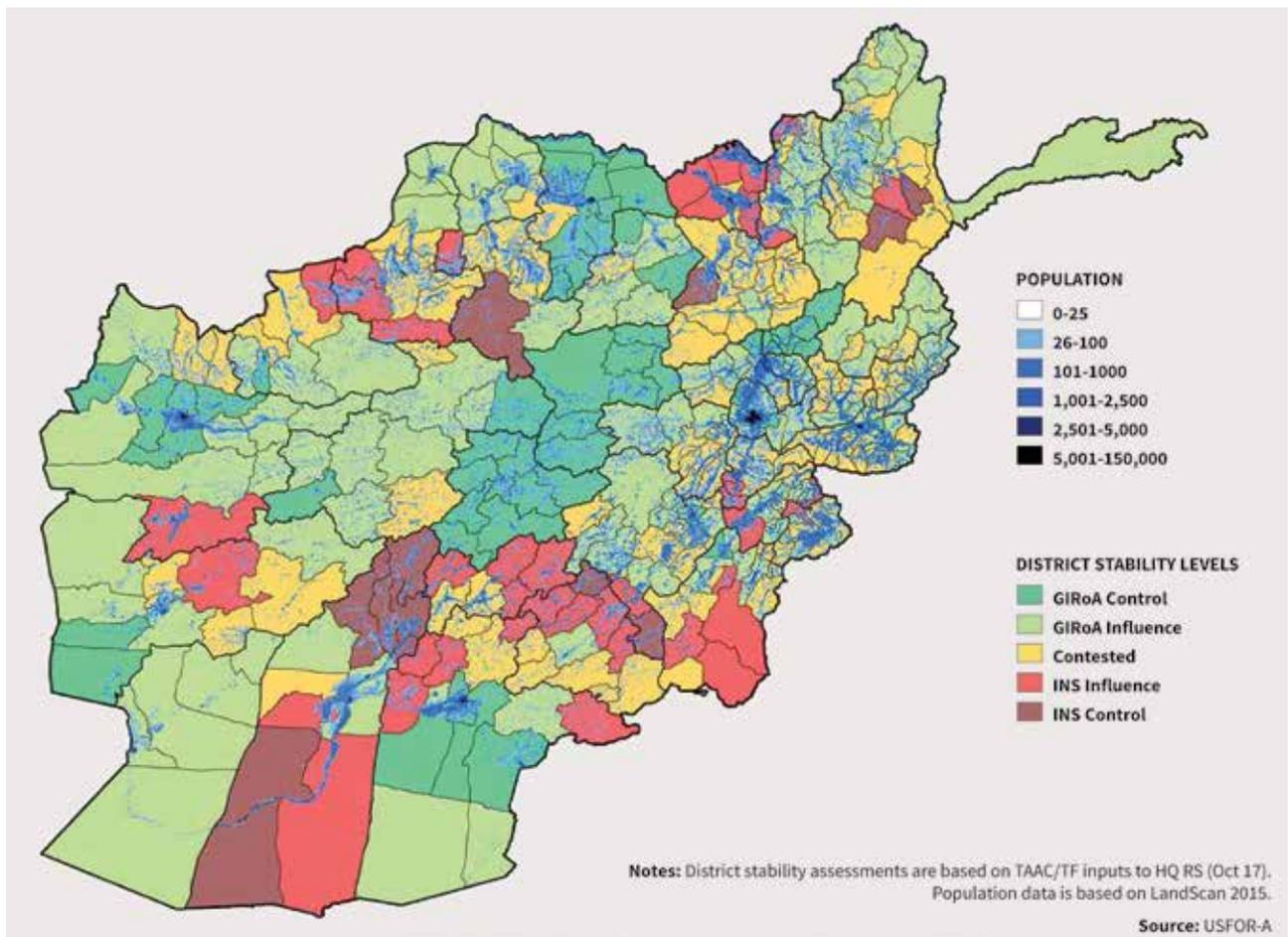
USFOR-A also observed that in some provinces, such as Kandahar and Helmand, the Taliban increased its use of improvised explosive devices (IEDs).⁸⁰ The Taliban also carried out one high profile attack in Kabul, though this was fewer than the five high profile attacks in the capital that the Taliban claimed in the previous quarter.⁸¹ The ANDSF successfully prevented several IED attacks, and many Taliban fighters died when IEDs exploded prematurely.⁸²

NO CHANGES IN POPULATION CONTROL

During the quarter, the Taliban continued to stage attacks on district centers.⁸³ The Taliban targeted district administration centers within the provinces of Kandahar, Ghazni, Farah, and Uruzgan but the ANDSF repelled them in all cases and the district centers were never in danger of falling, said USFOR-A.⁸⁴ It added that the only district center that the Taliban actually tried to capture outright was Ma'ruf in Helmand province, and they were unsuccessful.⁸⁵

Figure 3.

District Control and Population Concentration Levels in Afghanistan, as of October 2017



Overall, the security situation throughout Afghanistan remained a stalemate during the quarter with the ANDSF maintaining control of population centers and the Taliban holding rural areas. As noted previously, one goal of the ANDSF Road Map is to ensure that at least 80 percent of the Afghan population lives in areas under Afghan government control. Resolute Support reported that as of late November 2017, 64 percent of the Afghan population lived in an area under Afghan government control, a figure that is unchanged from the previous quarter. The areas under Afghan government control represent approximately 56 percent of Afghanistan's 407 districts, and 59 percent of Afghanistan's 643,000 square kilometers of territory.⁸⁶ Figure 3 shows district control and population concentration levels as of October 2017. More details about district control in Afghanistan are available in the classified appendix to this report.

MILITIAS COMPLICATE SECURITY PICTURE

The political conflict in Balkh province highlighted the ongoing security challenges posed by private militias in Afghanistan. As discussed in the Governance section of this report starting on page 58, the Afghan government removed powerful governor Atta Noor, who has a sizeable militia and refused to accept his ouster.⁸⁷

Militias have long been a part of Afghanistan's tribal culture. Militias battled the Soviet Union in the 1980s, then fought with each other during the civil war in the 1990s, and later helped overthrow the Taliban.⁸⁸ Today's militias—including governmental and extra-governmental groups—both enhance security and undermine it.⁸⁹ USFOR-A and the Afghan government are currently exploring the possibility of creating a new militia force, called the Afghan National Army Territorial Force. This force is designed to be an evolution of the Afghan Local Police which has a mixed record of improving security in some areas and committing human rights abuses in others.⁹⁰

According to USFOR-A, there are at least ten regionally-based militias in Afghanistan, many of which are considered legacy militias from the Soviet era.⁹¹ Table 2 lists the eight

Table 2.

Private Militias Currently Operating in Afghanistan

Militia Leader	Government Title	Location
Abdul Rashid Dostum	First Vice President	Jowzjan/Faryab
Atta Noor	Former Balkh Governor	Balkh
Ismail Khan	Former Governor of Herat province	Herat
Mohammed Mohaqqueq	Second Deputy CEO	Mazar-e-Sharif
Abdul Raziq	Chief of Police, Kandahar	Kandahar
Haji Zahir Qadir	Parliamentarian	Nangarhar
Sher Mohammad Akhunzada	Parliamentarian	Northern Helmand
Amanullah Guzar	Parliamentarian	Kabul

Source: USFOR-A.

Overall, the security situation throughout Afghanistan remained a stalemate during the quarter with the ANDSF maintaining control of population centers and the Taliban holding rural areas.

The primary goal of each militia is “the acquisition of resources necessary for the militia to perpetuate itself as a source of power for its leader.”

major private militias USFOR-A said are currently operating in Afghanistan. Each is under the control of a significant political figure or powerbroker.

USFOR-A stated that each militia has its own specific agenda, and that agenda can change. At times, powerbrokers might direct their militias to carry out activities that reinforce security aims of the Afghan government or the local community when the objectives of the power broker overlap with that of the Afghan government or local community. However, according to USFOR-A, the primary goal of each militia is “the acquisition of resources necessary for the militia to perpetuate itself as a source of power for its leader.”⁹²

USFOR-A stated that it was not easy to estimate the size of the militias as they typically have both active and reserve components. The reserve components—which can number in the hundreds or thousands—may be called up as needed. The active size is generally constrained by the controlling powerbroker’s access to resources. While most of the militia leaders are wealthy, their assets are not always liquid.⁹³

The ANDSF have coordinated with militias in some cases to hold checkpoints and reinforce local security. USFOR-A said that some militias performed well in this function, but in other cases, they have fled in the face of danger and left villagers unprotected. In addition, some militias have harassed and abused local populations, providing an opening for the Taliban to appeal to communities.⁹⁴

Militias hinder local governance by engaging in predatory behavior that “undermines the rule of law and alienates the local population,” according to USFOR-A.⁹⁵ Some powerbrokers use their militias to “capture” local bureaucracies and put their personnel in positions to embezzle funds or otherwise manipulate local governance to enrich themselves. Militias also extort money from the collection of tolls, engage in the poppy trade, smuggle weapons, and tax mines and other businesses.⁹⁶ USFOR-A stated that while the Taliban threat has subsided in many parts of the country, residents of Kunduz, for example, “express a sense of increased insecurity due to increased depredations by illegal militias and armed gangs.”⁹⁷

Former Balkh Governor Noor’s militia is a prime example of how a militia’s motivations and activities may shift over time. In the past, Noor used his militia to maintain security in the province, which served to bolster his position as governor and aligned with national security interests. In particular, Noor used his militia to help eliminate poppy cultivation from Balkh province, which garnered international recognition and protected him from possible removal from office by then-President Hamid Karzai. However, in recent years, in the face of growing security challenges, he backed off his poppy eradication efforts, and Balkh returned to the list of provinces actively cultivating poppy. At the same time, Noor used his militia to secure government positions to enrich himself.⁹⁸

In December 2017, President Ghani dismissed Noor and appointed a new governor in Balkh. Ghani stated that he had accepted Noor’s resignation, but Noor refuted that claim, saying he had previously submitted his resignation subject to the government meeting a set of demands. Noor and his backers refused to recognize Ghani’s decision and warned of potential “consequences.”⁹⁹ The standoff was unresolved at the end of the quarter.

ISIS-K LOSES TERRITORY, BUT THREAT REMAINS HIGH

In early 2017, General Nicholson announced USFOR-A's goal to "destroy ISIS-K in 2017."¹⁰⁰ As the year and the quarter ended, U.S. and Afghan forces did not achieve that goal. USFOR-A escalated a campaign of airstrikes and ground operations targeting the ISIS-K stronghold in southern Nangarhar province.¹⁰¹ The ANDSF launched an extended campaign against ISIS-K in December that also forced fighters to withdraw southward. Ongoing "red-on-red" fighting between ISIS-K and Taliban in the area placed additional pressure on ISIS-K's efforts to gain and hold territory. However, USFOR-A reported that ISIS-K planted IEDs to cover their retreat.¹⁰² This may slow efforts by ANDSF to secure the area and allow thousands of displaced residents to return.

By the end of the quarter, ISIS-K controlled territory in just 3 of 22 districts of Nangarhar province (Achin, Deh Bella, and Pachir wa Agam), down from 9 districts at its peak in November 2015, as shown in Figure 4. In particular, USFOR-A and ANDSF routed ISIS-K from Kot district, cutting off a key supply route for ISIS-K fighters and weapons from border districts, particularly Achin, to districts in central Nangarhar province.¹⁰³

The Afghan MoD and Resolute Support reported killing approximately 1,600 ISIS-K fighters in 2017.¹⁰⁴ The campaign against ISIS-K and the Taliban in Nangarhar province has also been costly for U.S. forces. Of the 15 U.S. forces fatalities in 2017, 8 occurred in Nangarhar province, though not all deaths were the result of enemy fire.¹⁰⁵ The Afghan government does not release ANDSF casualty figures.

As ISIS-K lost territory in Nangarhar province, General Nicholson cautioned that ISIS-K fighters could regroup and relocate to another part of Afghanistan. Over the course of the year, small numbers of self-proclaimed ISIS-K militants appeared in Jowzjan, Kunar, and other provinces.¹⁰⁶ However, these militants may not benefit from the same geographic, social, and security advantages that favored rapid ISIS-K growth in Nangarhar province, such as weak government and Taliban control in rural areas, deep mountain cave networks, and a long tradition of Salafist ideology and education in the region.¹⁰⁷ Additionally, it is not clear to what extent the various ISIS-K factions in Afghanistan cooperate with each other.¹⁰⁸

USFOR-A said ISIS-K might shift its focus from controlling territory to launching more high profile attacks. According to USFOR-A, ISIS-K "utilizes easily-procured explosive precursors readily available in Pakistan" and then transfers them to Kabul for attacks.¹⁰⁹ During the quarter, ISIS-K claimed responsibility for several mass-casualty attacks in Kabul, including attacks targeting an intelligence training center, a television station, a Shia cultural center, and an Afghan intelligence office near the U.S. embassy.¹¹⁰ ISIS-K continued to be able to procure weapons and recruit fighters from outside Afghanistan and it has demonstrated an ability to continue attacking Kabul despite growing pressure on its core territory in Nangarhar. General Nicholson noted, however, that pressure on ISIS in Iraq and Syria has not resulted in a surge of fighters transiting to Afghanistan.¹¹¹

The Afghan MoD and Resolute Support reported killing approximately 1,600 ISIS-K fighters in 2017.

Figure 4.

ISIS-K Controlled Territory in Nangarhar

This quarter, USFOR-A reported that the level of and potential for ISIS-K cooperation with the Taliban remained low. Last quarter, an attack in Sar-e Pul province raised concerns that the two groups might join forces, but a subsequent investigation by the United Nations found that local militants claimed dual affiliation for local and political purposes, not because the two groups were launching joint operations.¹¹² USFOR-A intelligence advisors said that there is still “no evidence” of cooperation between the two groups.¹¹³ In fact, ISIS-K and the Taliban continue to fight each other, particularly in Nangarhar and Jowzjan provinces.¹¹⁴

AL QAEDA THREAT LIMITED BUT ENDURING

Al Qaeda and its affiliate, al Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent retain a limited presence in Afghanistan (see page 32). USFOR-A assessed that “the safe haven support that Afghanistan-based AQ members likely receive from other [violent extremist organizations] is probably the greatest obstacle to eliminating their presence in Afghanistan.”¹¹⁵

During the quarter, ANDSF and coalition forces conducted operations against al Qaeda in Ghazni, Zabul, and Paktiya provinces, resulting in the deaths of several al Qaeda fighters. An operation in Ghazni province killed Omar Khateb, who Afghan intelligence and U.S. officials described as the most senior al Qaeda leader killed since October 2016.¹¹⁶



AL QAEDA TODAY IS RESILIENT, LARGER, AND MORE AGILE

CNA Reports U.S. Lacks Strategy for Defeat of al Qaeda

A Center for Naval Analyses (CNA) report commissioned by the DoD and released this quarter concluded that in 16 years of war against al Qaeda, the United States has not defeated the group or any of its affiliates. Instead, CNA found that today al Qaeda is more resilient, adaptive, and able to exploit weak and failing states than it was in 2001, even as the organization has been upstaged by ISIS as the “vanguard of global jihad.” While al Qaeda has faced tremendous pressures and has been unable to conduct major attacks against the West on the scale of the September 11th attacks, neither the core organization nor any of its affiliates have been defeated by the United States and its allies.

AL QAEDA CORE IN AFGHANISTAN

Founded in 1988, al Qaeda Core (AQ) carried out a series of spectacular terrorist attacks, culminating in the September 11, 2001 attacks. Counterterrorism operations have killed many high-level members, including founder Osama bin Laden, disrupting the organization’s ability to carry out plots against Western targets. AQ has not succeeded in executing audacious attacks since 2005, which CNA attributed to a

combination of successful counterterrorism efforts, the rise of ISIS, and the lackluster leadership of bin Laden’s replacement, Ayman al Zawahiri. CNA reported that while “far-flung franchisees” operate outside of AQ’s control and its brand has become increasingly “toxic,” it has still provided theological and ideological inspiration and strategic and operational guidance to affiliates in nearly two dozen countries. While AQ has been severely degraded, the group has been able to replenish its ranks and remain tightly knit, and has proven to be “resilient, agile, and tenacious.”

AL QAEDA IN SYRIA

Al Qaeda in Syria (AQs) grew out of efforts by members of al Qaeda’s Iraq branch to exploit the popular uprising against Syrian President Bashar al Assad. In 2011, they formed Jabhat al Nusra (JN), but remained loyal to AQ during the split between AQ and ISIS in 2014. AQ provided JN with foreign fighters and financial and military assistance as the group increased its role in the civil war by joining with other rebel groups seeking to overthrow the Assad regime. In 2016, JN said it severed ties to AQ, renaming itself Jabhat Fateh al



Sham, but the U.S. Government continues to label it an al Qaeda affiliate. Since then, it has gained military strength and territory, particularly in Aleppo and Idlib provinces, and has remained focused on Syria's civil war rather than on external operations. In January 2017, the group merged with other Syrian jihadist organizations to form Hayat Tahrir al Sham, which consists of some 30,000 fighters, including an estimated 18,000 belonging to AQS. To counter AQS, the United States has carried out airstrikes and, for a time, aided rival Arab fighters and anti-extremist civil society groups in Syria, but has focused on fighting ISIS rather than AQS. As a result, the CNA report concluded AQS has not been defeated or dismantled; rather, it has emerged as "one of the most powerful fighting forces among the Syrian opposition."

AL QAEDA IN THE INDIAN SUBCONTINENT (AQIS)

Al Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS) was founded in 2014 as a conglomerate of groups operating in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan. However, the group may be "more about the appearance of expansion" in reaction to the AQ's split with ISIS than about actual expansion. AQ members are involved in AQIS's leadership and provide guidance to AQIS. The group's largest attack was a failed attempt to hijack a Pakistani warship in 2014. Otherwise, AQIS has mainly carried out low-level attacks since its formation, such as hit-and-run assassinations of scholars, bloggers, social activists, and authors. While AQIS goals align with AQ's, CNA described AQIS as the "weakest and least active" al Qaeda affiliate and said that it poses "little if any threat to the United States."

Note: Extent of al Qaeda's international presence is based on Lead IG analysis of CNA report.

AL QAEDA IN THE ISLAMIC MAGHREB (AQIM)

An outgrowth of Algerian Islamist rebel groups, AQIM is organized into independent "battalions," each consisting of several dozen fighters who operate in the Sahara and Sahel regions, including Algeria, Mali, and Mauritania. From 2008 to the present, AQIM primarily focused on attacking local security forces, but also bombed the United Nations building in Algiers and successfully carried out kidnappings and murders of foreign, mainly French, citizens. In March 2017, after years of shifting allegiances, several "battalions" unified under one Malian leader, while two small units pledged allegiance to ISIS. To confront this increased violence, the United States has worked to enable Mali, France, and others to disrupt and dismantle AQIM. While AQIM has largely been unable to hold territory, it has maintained an ability to conduct attacks on security forces and civilians throughout West Africa.

AL QAEDA IN THE ARABIAN PENINSULA (AQAP)

In 2009, AQ members operating in Saudi Arabia and Yemen merged to form al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP). CNA characterized AQAP as the most prominent and dangerous AQ affiliate. It maintains close connections to AQ and to al Shebab. Since its founding, AQAP has orchestrated or been associated with several high-profile attacks in the west, including the 2009 attempted "underwear bombing" in the United States and the 2015 assault on the satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo in France. While the Saudi government has largely been able to prevent AQAP from operating in Saudi Arabia, Yemen's instability enabled AQAP to take hold and expand there, particularly after several key commanders escaped from prison in 2006. The escalation of Yemen's civil war in 2015 benefitted AQAP, which seized territory and gained strength in southern Yemen while Yemeni and Saudi forces concentrated on fighting the Houthi rebels. The United States conducted an aggressive drone operation against AQAP, but the war in Yemen forced it to suspend counterterrorism cooperation with the Yemeni military and increased the difficulty of targeting militants.

HARAKAT AL SHEBAB AL MUJAHIDEEN (AL SHEBAB)

Harakat al Shebab al Mujahideen (al Shebab) is AQ's largest official affiliate in East Africa, operating primarily in Somalia while also conducting operations in neighboring states. Al Shebab emerged during the civil wars in Somalia and gained prominence after the Ethiopian invasion of Somalia in 2006, when it successfully seized vast areas of the country. In 2008, it officially pledged allegiance to AQ, and was recognized by AQ leadership in 2012. Today, it maintains de facto control of parts of southern Somalia. In 2013, al Shebab attacked the Westgate Mall in Nairobi, Kenya, killing at least 67 people. The United States countered al Shebab with airstrikes and special operations support to Somali forces. However, CNA concluded that U.S. and international efforts have only partially disrupted al Shebab, which continues to conduct attacks and hold territory in Somalia.

ASSESSING THE TERRORIST THREAT

General Nicholson and USFOR-A officials stated during the quarter that there were 21 terrorist organizations operating in Afghanistan and Pakistan.¹¹⁷ The DoD's December 2017 report, "Enhancing Security and Stability in Afghanistan" stated that the existence of those groups "requires an Afghan supported U.S. platform in the region to monitor, and respond to these threats."¹¹⁸ During the quarter, Lead IG staff asked DoD personnel in Afghanistan to provide a breakdown or ranking of the different groups and the level of threat they pose to U.S. forces and interests. Additional data about the terrorist threat in Afghanistan, including an assessment of terrorist groups monitored by the Defense Intelligence Agency, are available in the classified appendix.¹¹⁹

According to the DoS, which is responsible for designating entities as FTOs, there were 13 FTOs based in Afghanistan and Pakistan in 2016.¹²⁰ In addition to those 13, there were 8 entities that the U.S. Government considers supporters or funders of terrorism, known as "Specially Designated Global Terrorists," under Executive Order 13224.¹²¹ Those two categories of terrorist groups combined equal the 21 entities that the DoD stated are operating in the region. (See Table 3 for a list of these 21 entities.)

While some of the groups based in Afghanistan and Pakistan, such as al Qaeda and ISIS-K, have global aspirations and reach, many of the others are groups or offshoots of groups that formed in the 1980s to fight Soviet forces in Afghanistan. Some later turned their focus to terrorism aimed at reversing what they regard as the illegal Indian annexation of Muslim-majority Jammu and Kashmir. Other groups formed to fight the Pakistani government. Many of the groups declared U.S. and NATO forces a target after the fall of the Taliban in the 2000s. Some groups, however, exist in the region but appear to pose no direct threat to U.S. personnel or interests. For example, according to the DoS's July 2017 report, a group known as Jundallah, is an FTO that in 2016 had a physical presence in Afghanistan and Pakistan but, had engaged in terrorism against Iran to advance Balochi rights.¹²²

According to the DoD, the Haqqani Network, largely based in Pakistan, was the greatest threat to U.S., coalition, and Afghan forces of any of the terrorist groups in the region.¹²³

Although not listed among the 21 groups identified as operating in USFOR-A's area of responsibility, the DoS listed the Indian Mujahedeen as operating in Pakistan and noted that the group had links to ISIS.¹²⁴

In 2015-2016, ISIS-K eclipsed al Qaeda as the focus of U.S. counterterrorism operations in Afghanistan. Although ISIS has a stated goal of carrying out global attacks and forming a caliphate, and ISIS has been either responsible for or the inspiration for many attacks in the West, the affiliate ISIS-K is largely focused on violence inside Afghanistan. Despite rumors that ISIS fighters have been fleeing Iraq and Syria to join ISIS-K, DoD officials have stated there is no evidence of that. Instead, ISIS-K is filling its ranks primarily with Pakistani and Afghan militants who are defecting from other terrorist or insurgent groups.¹²⁵

Experts contend, however, that al Qaeda remains the predominant threat to the United States. Despite the fact that the United States went to war in Afghanistan in 2001 to eliminate

al Qaeda and affiliated groups and supporters, 16 years later, the group still has a presence in the country.¹²⁶ According to estimates, there are 50-200 al Qaeda militants in Afghanistan and Pakistan. While their capability to plan and carry out attacks along the lines of 9/11 has been substantially degraded, the threat is not eliminated.¹²⁷

Experts state that al Qaeda has been able to exploit the rise of ISIS-K to rebuild and rebrand itself as a more “moderate” terrorist group.¹²⁸ It has also lowered its profile and deepened ties with the Taliban according to analysts, and it continues to focus on a “long game.”¹²⁹

Table 3.

Terrorist Groups operating in Afghanistan and Pakistan

Terrorist Group	Estimated Ranks	Origins/Mission
AQ and AQIS	200	Formed in 1988 to establish an Islamic caliphate
Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement	100	Uighur separatists with small Afghanistan/Pakistan presence
Haqqani Network	3,000-5,000	Formed around time of Soviet invasion, aligned with AQ and Taliban
ISIS-K	1,000	Evolved in 2014 largely from TTP and Taliban
Islamic Jihad Union	25	Splintered from IMU and targets coalition forces
Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU)	100-200	Formed to overthrow Uzbek government, turned focus to NATO troops
Jama'at ul Dawa al-Qu'ran	25	Peshawar-based group linked to AQ, Taliban, and LeT
Jamaat-ul-Ahrar	200	TTP splinter group formed in 2014
Lashkar-e Tayyiba	300	Anti-India group formed in late '80s
Tariq Gidar Group	100-300	TTP-linked group that primarily targets the Pakistani government
Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP)	7,000-10,000	Formed in 2007 to fight Pakistani military in FATA
Commander Nazir Group	*	Formed in 2006 to support AQ and target NATO in Afghanistan
Harakat-ul Jihad Islami	*	Formed in 1980 to battle USSR, shifted to India and NATO
Harakat-ul Jihad Islami/Bangladesh	*	Formed in 1984 to fight USSR, turned focus to Kashmir
Harakat-ul Mujahidin	*	Formed in 1985 to fight USSR, turned focus to Kashmir
Hizbul Mujahidin	*	Formed in 1989 to target Kashmir
Iranian Revolutionary Guard-Quds Force	*	Formed in 1979 to support terrorist groups
Jaish-e Muhammed	*	Formed in 2000 to annex Kashmir, also targets NATO forces
Jundallah	*	Baloch separatists who have targeted Iran since 2003
Lashkar-e Jhangvi	*	Pakistani anti-Shia group formed in 1996

* No credible estimated numbers

Sources: USFOR-A, 9/30/2017; DoS, 7/2017; Stanford University.

AIR WAR EXPANDS

U.S. airpower played a growing role in the campaign against ISIS-K and the Taliban during the quarter. The U.S. Air Forces Central Command (AFCENT), which publishes a monthly report on sorties and weapons releases by U.S. military aircraft in Afghanistan, reported 1,296 close air support sorties in Afghanistan during the quarter, 407 of which involved at least 1 weapon release.¹³⁰ Close air support refers to “air action by fixed-wing and rotary-wing aircraft that are in close proximity to friendly forces, and requires detailed integration of each air mission with the fire and movement of those forces.”¹³¹ While the tempo of close air support sorties—with or without a weapon release—grew slightly in recent quarters, the number of reported numbers of weapons released increased substantially. AFCENT reports that U.S. forces released 1,460 weapons in the first quarter of 2018, a four-fold increase from 1 year ago. As U.S. support of ANDSF ground operations increases under the new strategy, and as more advisors deploy with Afghan units, the number of close air support missions is likely to grow.

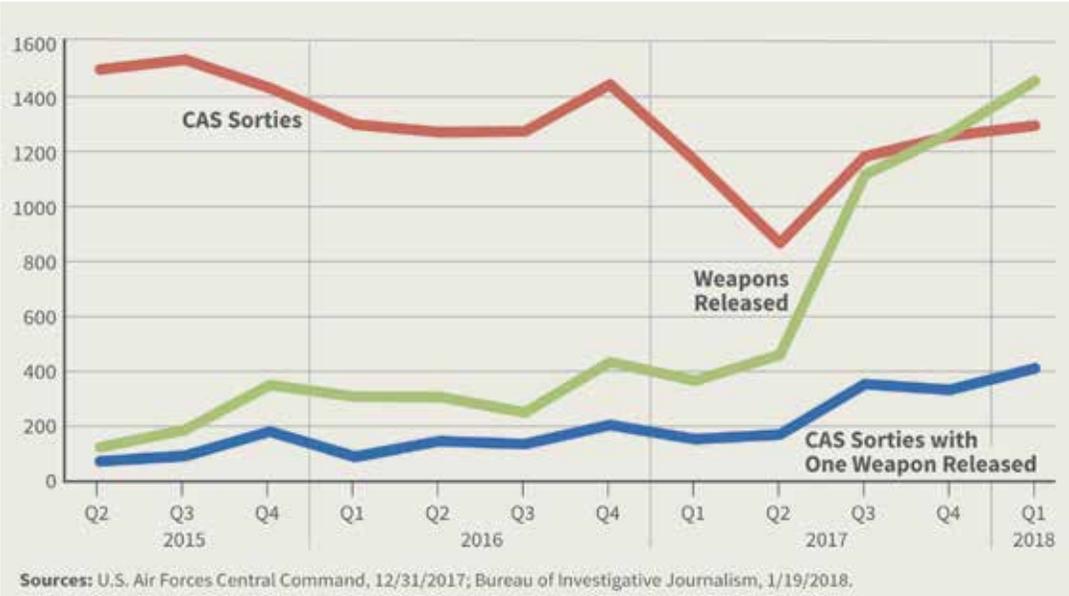
It is important to note that AFCENT’s report of a weapon release, which the media often report as an “airstrike,” may in fact include many rounds of one munition. For example, AFCENT reported 100 rounds of munitions that are 40 millimeters and smaller, such as those fired from an F-16 or A-10, as a single weapon release, as shown in Table 4.¹³² This reflects how some aircraft fire smaller munitions quickly in multi-

Table 4.
AFCENT Methodology for Calculating Weapons Releases

Munition	Rounds per 1 Weapon Release
Bomb/Missile	1
105mm Cannon	2
40mm Cannon	100
30mm Cannon	100
25mm Cannon	100
20mm Cannon	100

Source: DoD

Figure 5.
U.S. Air Force Activity in Afghanistan, 2015-2017



round sets in order to achieve the tactical effect of a larger munition. As such, this method of calculating weapons releases limits direct month-to-month comparisons of weapons release data, as the combination of munitions used may vary greatly.

CIVILIAN CASUALTIES CONTINUE AT HIGH LEVELS

Civilian casualties resulting from the conflict in Afghanistan are difficult to document. In October 2017, United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) reported that it had documented 8,019 civilian casualties (2,640 deaths and 5,379 injured) so far in 2017. UNAMA found that the number of civilian casualties attributed to airstrikes—466 as of October 2017—was growing, corresponding with an increase in airstrikes by the Afghan and U.S. air forces.¹³³ UNAMA had not yet published civilian casualty data for the final 3 months of 2017 by the time this report was published.

The Lead IG report on OFS for the quarter ending September 30, 2017, included data from UNAMA showing an increase in civilian casualties that UNAMA attributed to increased airstrikes by U.S. and Afghan forces. USFOR-A and Resolute Support objected to the Lead IG inclusion of that information, arguing that UNAMA's numbers were incorrect and that there was no causal relationship shown between the increase in airstrikes and any increase in civilian casualties.¹³⁴ USFOR-A said that UNAMA's numbers are often inflated, due to their methods for investigating, vetting, and counting civilian casualties.

This quarter, USFOR-A reiterated that it often “disagrees” with UNAMA civilian casualty reports.¹³⁵ “We coordinate closely with UNAMA; I’d say on a weekly basis,” General Nicholson said at a press conference in Kabul in November 2017. “UNAMA has its methodology, we have our methodology, and the methodologies are different.”¹³⁶

At the request of the Lead IG, UNAMA and Resolute Support provided details of their methodologies to calculate civilian casualties. UNAMA said that its personnel perform site visits whenever possible to examine physical evidence and interview witnesses, hospital officials, and survivors. When site visits are not possible, UNAMA collects data from video sources, reports, non-governmental organizations, secondary sources, and third parties.¹³⁷ Resolute Support stated that it assesses reports of civilian casualties based on data produced by the Train, Advise, and Assist Commands, Task Forces, ANDSF operational reports, aircraft video footage, records of U.S. and Afghan weapons releases, and other coalition and Afghan government-generated information.¹³⁸

While Resolute Support does not regularly release its civilian casualty data to the public, it occasionally disputes UNAMA civilian casualty reports.¹³⁹ Resolute Support recently reported that its Civilian Casualty Credibility Assessment Review Board investigated 124 of UNAMA's reported incidents involving civilian casualties caused by international forces and determined that only 11 incidents were attributable to coalition forces (airstrikes in all cases), resulting in 19 civilian deaths and 32 civilian wounded. Meanwhile, Resolute Support categorized 22 incidents as “disputed,” 86 as “disproved,” and 5 as “open” investigations. Resolute Support noted that the majority of “disproved” incidents took place in areas where

“there were no [coalition forces] operations occurring at the alleged locations during a 72-hour window...or the alleged [civilian casualties] were valid military targets.”¹⁴⁰

In some cases, UNAMA and Resolute Support disagree on whether an individual is a civilian or a militant. An incident this quarter illustrates the complexity of investigating and vetting claims of civilian casualties and determining responsibility. U.S. and Afghan forces conducted a four-day partnered operation in the Chahar Darah district of Kunduz province in November 2017. According to USFOR-A, coalition forces conducted airstrikes in self-defense.¹⁴¹

UNAMA stated that the operation caused civilian casualties.¹⁴² On November 6, USFOR-A released a statement confirming that it had carried out operations in the Kunduz area and that it had conducted an independent investigation into allegations of civilian casualties. USFOR-A “concluded that there were no civilian casualties. Specifically, no hospitals or clinics in the local area indicated treatment of people with wounds from armed conflict.”¹⁴³

Local villagers in the Chahar Darah district had a different version of events. They told the New York Times and Reuters that there had been a nighttime airstrike. The next morning, Taliban militants forced villagers to remove Taliban bodies from the scene of the strike. Villagers said that while they were removing the bodies, there was another strike that killed as many as 13 civilians. Multiple media organizations reported they spoke with hospital officials who confirmed that they treated civilian victims of the follow-on strike.¹⁴⁴

On November 14, 2017, in response to an inquiry from the Bureau of Investigative Journalism, Resolute Support added the following:

Our forces take every precaution to conduct all operations in a way that all civilian casualties are avoided. There are times when the insurgency forces civilians to take part in activities resembling that of an enemy combatant. It’s these cases where it’s possible civilians could be mistaken as members of the insurgency based on their offensive activities and therefore engaged by coalition air weapons team.¹⁴⁵

The Resolute Support statement neither admitted nor denied that there had been civilian casualties resulting from strikes in Kunduz. The incident illustrates how Resolute Support and organizations like UNAMA might arrive at different civilian casualty figures.¹⁴⁶

Another reason why UNAMA and Resolute Support/USFOR-A might arrive at different civilian casualty figures is that USFOR-A does not investigate Afghan Air Force strikes.

In addition to efforts to improve ANDSF tracking and reporting of civilian casualties, Resolute Support conducts training to help the ANDSF prevent civilian casualties. Since the beginning of 2017, Resolute Support stated that it has provided training for “a significant number” of ANDSF in the prevention and mitigation of civilian casualties. According to Resolute Support, that training focuses on “accurate definition and identification of civilians during conflict,” and “[civilian casualty] prevention and mitigation efforts during pre-operational planning, execution of operations, and post operational consequence management, such as reporting, investigation, data collection, victim assistance....”¹⁴⁷

In addition to efforts to improve ANDSF tracking and reporting of civilian casualties, Resolute Support conducts training to help the ANDSF prevent civilian casualties.



A commando night raid led to the seizure of 130 kg. of explosives and more than 50 weapons in Helmand province. The Commandos also seized \$105,000 worth of heroin and detained 10 Taliban militants. (U.S. Army photo)

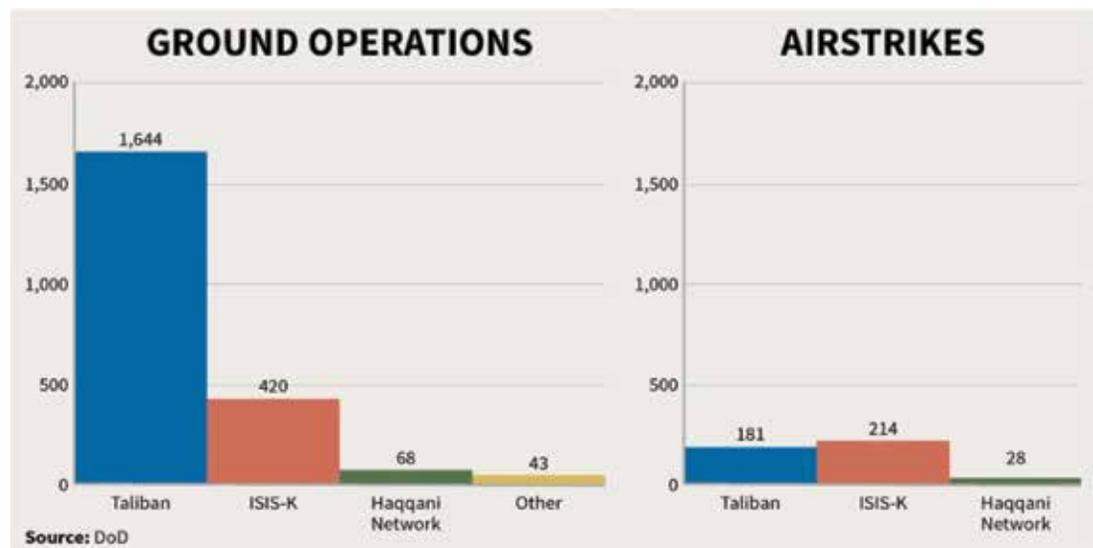
More than 350 ANDSF officers have completed “train the trainer” courses intended to enable them to train personnel in their units in preventing and mitigating civilian casualties.¹⁴⁸

SPECIAL OPERATION FORCES TARGET TALIBAN AND ISIS-K

The DoD’s Special Operations Joint Task Force-Afghanistan is responsible for many, though not all, offensive and combat enabling operations against the Taliban, ISIS-K, and other groups in Afghanistan. This quarter, the DoD reported the number of operations and airstrikes between June 1 and November 24, 2017, which enabled ASSF operations. As shown in Figure 6, the majority of ground operations targeted the Taliban, while the majority of airstrikes targeted ISIS-K militants. The DoD reported that these operations resulted in more than 220 Taliban and 174 ISIS-K killed in action.¹⁴⁹

Figure 6.

U.S. Special Operations in Afghanistan, October 1, 2017-December 31, 2017



U.S. special operations forces targeted Taliban militants throughout the country during the quarter. Operations aimed to prevent the Taliban from gaining a solid foothold in Kunduz province, in the north, and to disrupt Taliban operations in the south through ground operations and airstrikes. A December airstrike killed Mullah Shah Wali, leader of the Taliban's "Red Unit."¹⁵⁰ In western Herat province, an operation focused on clearing Shindand district, and according to USFOR-A, this operation "was largely successful," killing several Taliban leaders and destroying multiple weapons caches.¹⁵¹

U.S. special operations forces also supported the U.S. counterterrorism mission by targeting ISIS-K and killing dozens of ISIS-K fighters in Nangarhar province.¹⁵² Forces also targeted Haqqani Network fighters in the east and disrupted some threat streams against Kabul.¹⁵³ U.S. special operations forces tested the feasibility of using airfield runways in Faryab province to support ongoing counterterrorism operations in other provinces of northwest Afghanistan.

U.S. FORCES KILLED IN ACTION, WHILE ANDSF CASUALTY DATA CLASSIFIED

This quarter, as in the previous quarter, Resolute Support said that they classified the ANDSF casualty figures at the request of President Ghani. Afghan casualty data for this quarter are available in the classified appendix to this report.

Three U.S. Army soldiers died in Afghanistan this quarter: one, in Logar province, from injuries sustained during a helicopter crash; a second in a vehicle accident in Nangarhar province; and a third from hostile fire in Logar province.¹⁵⁴ There were no fatalities reported among Resolute Support contributing nations in Afghanistan this quarter.¹⁵⁵

The Resolute Support Train, Advise, and Assist Mission

Through the NATO-led Resolute Support mission, U.S. and coalition forces train, advise, and assist Afghan security forces as they "develop the capacity to defend Afghanistan."¹⁵⁶ In addition to building the fighting capabilities of the ANDSF, the United States

Table 5.

Resolute Support Essential Functions

EF	
1	Plan, Program, Budget, and Execute
2	Transparency, Accountability, and Oversight
3	Civilian Governance of the Afghan Security Institutions and Adherence to Rule of Law
4	Force Generation
5	Sustain the Force
6	Plan, Resource, and Execute Effective Security Campaigns
7	Develop Sufficient Intelligence Capabilities and Processes
8	Maintain Internal and External Strategic Communication Ability

and coalition partners provide direct support to the MoI and MoD to attempt to “institutionalize” ANDSF gains over the past 16 years.¹⁵⁷

Resolute Support organizes its activities to build ministerial capacity into eight key areas, referred to as “essential functions” (EFs), which ministries should be able to perform.¹⁵⁸

In addition, the Resolute Support Gender Office provides guidance on gender-related issues to all of the EFs.¹⁵⁹

THE ANDSF ROAD MAP

The ANDSF Road Map, which President Ghani launched in early 2017, provides the broad framework for reforming, restructuring, and developing Afghanistan’s security forces. The Road Map is a multi-year strategy with four main lines of effort:

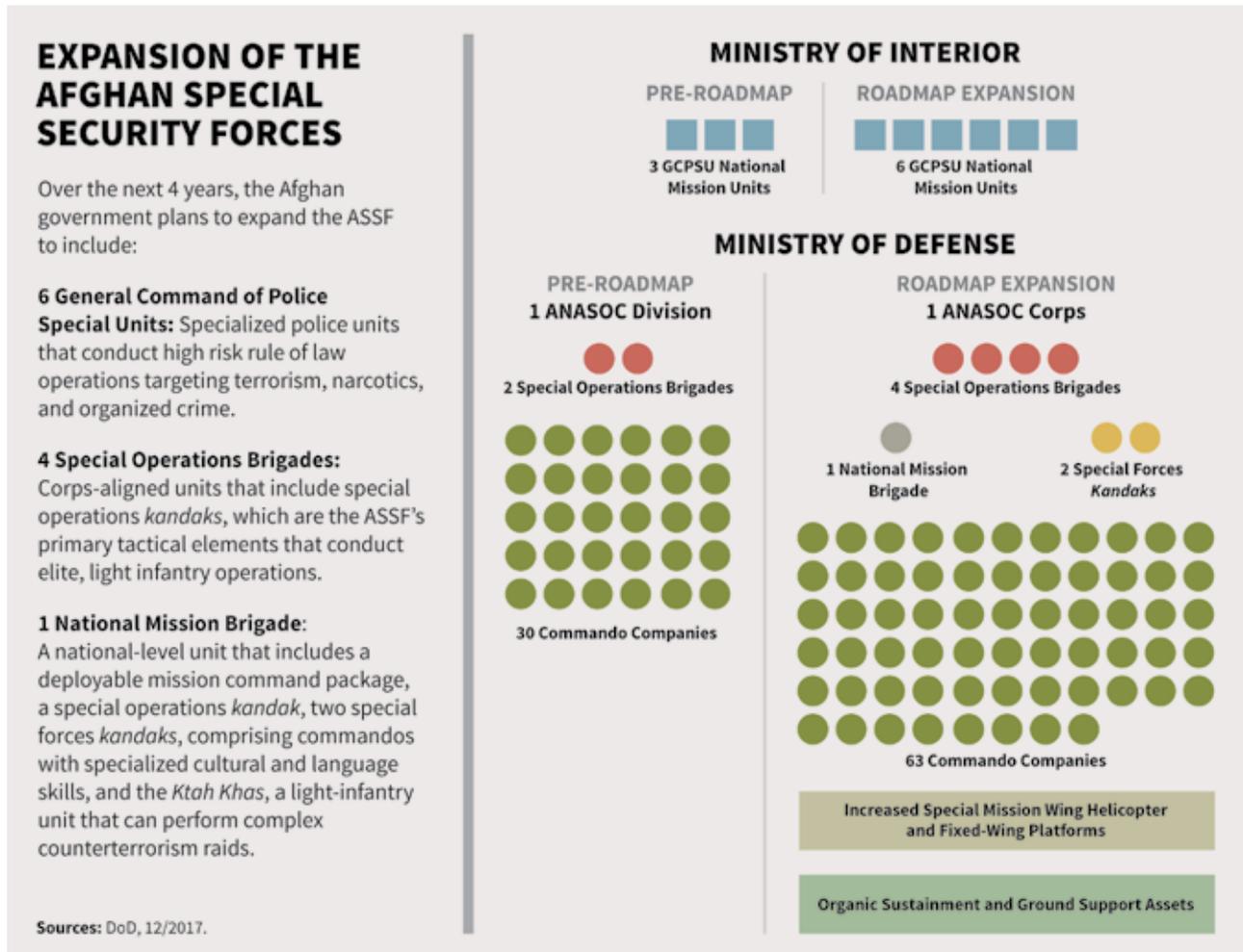
- **Increase Fighting Capabilities:** Increase the size and strength of the ANDSF’s most effective fighting units, specifically special operations and air forces.
- **Leadership Development:** Emphasize the development of honest, competent, and committed ANDSF professionals through improved instruction, education, and training, as well as merit-based selection.
- **Unity of Command/Effort:** Review command and control structures to improve the unity of command and effort between Afghan National Army (ANA) and Afghan National Police (ANP) units by realigning MoI combat units and border forces to the MoD.
- **Counter Corruption:** Implement reforms to address illicit activity and patronage networks within security organizations in order to reduce the corruption that has weakened the ANDSF.¹⁶⁰

The following sections provide an overview of Resolute Support advisory activities that support ANDSF offensive and defensive capabilities and ANDSF progress toward the Road Map goals this quarter.

FORCE GENERATION NEARS TARGETS

In October 2017, NATO completed its annual force generation process, which determined how many coalition troops, and from which nations, will be assigned to the Resolute Support mission. In 2017, a majority of Resolute Support contributing nations increased their troop commitment, which accounts for approximately 700 additional troops, to complement the roughly 3,500 additional U.S. troops that the Administration’s new South Asia strategy calls for assigning to Afghanistan.¹⁶¹ Of the additional U.S. troops, more than 2,500 will be assigned to Resolute Support. Coalition nations, including the United States, have filled approximately 93 percent of the total NATO requirements for Afghanistan for 2018, leaving a shortfall of approximately 1,000 troops. Much of this shortfall is in advising the Afghan Special Security Forces (ASSF) and Afghan Air Force (AAF), and enablers for expeditionary advising.¹⁶²

Figure 7.



This quarter, Resolute Support provided information about its Initial Key Leader Training (iKLT) program, which was designed to ensure that advisors who arrive in theater are “adequately and comprehensively introduced to the Resolute Support mission and the intricacies of advisor roles.”¹⁶³ Additional information about the iKLT program is available in the classified appendix of this report.¹⁶⁴

MOD AND MOI CONTINUE EXPANSION OF AFGHAN SPECIAL SECURITY FORCES

Under the Road Map, the size of the ASSF will grow from 19,022 to 33,896 personnel by 2020.¹⁶⁵ The expanded ASSF will include added special operations commando companies, with increased airpower and organic sustainment and support assets, and more specialized police units, described in Figure 7. An ongoing challenge for the ANDSF is ensuring that these elite operators focus on the Afghanistan’s most critical security missions. In its December 2017 report, the DoD noted that the ANA continues to use some ASSF

forces for conventional operations, such as manning checkpoints and personal security detachments, rather than the counterterrorism, counterinsurgency, and other security missions that they are trained to perform.¹⁶⁶

To accommodate the increase in ASSF personnel, the MoD expanded the Commando Qualification Course from 800 to 1,000 students per course and now has the ability to run four courses per year as opposed to one. This training is less rigorous than the special operations selection processes used by Western militaries as most of the ASSF are not supposed to be equivalent to the U.S. military's elite Green Berets or Navy SEALs. USFOR-A stated that the 14-week Commando Qualification Course is most comparable to the U.S. military's basic training and advanced infantryman training courses. Approximately 10 percent of Commando Qualification Course students fail to complete the training; counterintelligence vetting screens out an additional 5 percent. USFOR-A noted that the 10 percent attrition rate is comparable to attrition rates of similarly trained light infantry soldiers in Western militaries. USFOR-A stated that "while ASSF are not as capable as the [special operations forces] of advanced Western militaries, these well-trained light infantry have had 6 months more training than the Taliban they are fighting and in comparison, they are elite and perform exceptionally well on the battlefield."¹⁶⁷

USFOR-A also noted that the ASSF does not recruit directly from active Afghan National Army (ANA) units.¹⁶⁸ All ANA personnel who enter the ASSF must complete their initial contracts first so that the ANA can maintain personnel strength as the ASSF grows. Currently, 90 percent of candidates for commando school are graduates of the ANA's 12-week basic training course, while 10 percent are ANA soldiers who completed their initial term of service.¹⁶⁹ Similarly, recruiting for Afghan National Police (ANP) provincial special units is limited to existing special mission units only, rather than the general police force.¹⁷⁰ No increase in the overall authorized force of 352,000 ANA and ANP personnel will be required; authorized but unfilled ANA billets and billets moved from the MoI to the MoD will be used to increase the number of ASSF personnel.¹⁷¹

While the MoD rapidly adjusted training programs to accommodate ASSF expansion, the MoI has not altered training for its units. The DoD noted in December 2017 that the General Command of Police Special Units did not plan for ASSF expansion under the Road Map and therefore did not have any additional training capacity. As a result, growth of the National Mission Units did not begin on schedule and could only train enough police to keep pace with attrition.¹⁷² However, USFOR-A reported that the Special Police Training Center more than tripled its student capacity in fall 2017 from 100 to 360 students. It also added follow-on courses for the special police training wing.¹⁷³

QUESTIONS ABOUT A NEW "HOLD FORCE" REMAIN

During the quarter, USFOR-A and the government of Afghanistan continued to explore plans to pilot-test a new security force. Previously referred to as the Afghan Territorial Army, the proposed Afghan National Army Territorial Force (ANATF) would serve as a "hold" force in security-permissive locations. The purpose is to expand the overall

hold capabilities of the ANA and free up other ANA personnel to carry out more tactical operations.¹⁷⁴

As previously reported, the ANATF would comprise locally recruited soldiers who answer to ANA officers and non-commissioned officers from the regional ANA brigade.¹⁷⁵

In response to a Lead IG request for information, USFOR-A stated this quarter that it would not provide any additional unclassified information about the proposed ANATF pilot programs.¹⁷⁶ However, based on details discussed in Lead IG report for the fourth quarter of FY 2017, the Lead IG reiterates concerns raised in that report about the proposed territorial force. While the ANATF is designed to be an extension of the ANA as opposed to a “militia,” the experience of past locally-sourced force experiments in Afghanistan, including the current Afghan Local Police, indicates that such forces are prone to being co-opted by power brokers and preying on local communities. This can destabilize communities, undermine support for the Afghan government, and open the door to Taliban or other extremist influence.¹⁷⁷

Questions remain as to what additional steps USFOR-A and the Afghan government will take to improve upon past militia-like, locally-recruited police units and ensure that the ANATF will enhance security in local communities and not abuse local populations. Unclassified details of when and where initial ANATF units might launch were not available.

EXPANDING THE AFGHAN AIR FORCE

The DoD continued its \$6.8 billion AAF modernization program that includes increasing the size of the AAF fleet and entirely replacing some aircraft, such as the Russian-made Mi-17 helicopter, in both the AAF and the Special Mission Wing (SMW)—the air component supporting the ASSF. According to the DoD, “the AAF will rely heavily, and at great cost, on contract logistics support to sustain more than 227 new aircraft. New pilot training pipelines will be heavily stressed and the pipelines for most other specialties will not be able to keep up.”¹⁷⁸

The DoD added that in the short run, it will rely on contractor logistics support upon to sustain combat operations, and it will take several years for Afghan maintenance capabilities to be developed. The DoD added that the “explosive growth” in AAF personnel increases the potential for insider threats.¹⁷⁹ Other DoD officials stated that these potential challenges were worst-case risks, which had been identified as manageable.¹⁸⁰

UH-60 BLACK HAWK TRANSITION CONTINUES

“...the AAF faces a difficult transition over the next 24 months, fielding the replacement for the Mi-17 helicopter, the UH-60 Black Hawk.”—DoD¹⁸¹

This quarter, AAF continued to transition from Russian-made Mi-17 helicopters to U.S.-made UH-60 Black Hawks. Afghan pilots and maintainers are familiar with the Mi-17 and capable of operating the helicopter with a significant degree of independence. However, U.S. sanctions and congressional restrictions on contracting with Russian firms resulted in the decision to replace the Mi-17 with Black Hawks.¹⁸²

In the previous quarter, the Lead IG raised concerns about the transition from Mi-17s to Black Hawks. Those concerns persist this quarter, as reporting from the DoD indicates that the transition process will require increased investment in Mi-17 training and maintenance to bridge the transition.¹⁸³ Moreover, there are still questions about the long-term sustainment costs of the Black Hawks. As Table 6 shows, the AAF remains heavily reliant on the Mi-17 for tactical lift and limited airstrikes.

The 9th Air and Space Expeditionary Task Force-Afghanistan (9th AETF-A) reported that as of December 2017, the United States had delivered 4 Black Hawk helicopters to the AAF.¹⁸⁴ The DoD stated that it plans to deliver 2 Black Hawks per month in 2018 for a total of 24 over the course of the calendar year.¹⁸⁵ The plan to modernize the AAF calls for phasing out the AAF's fleet of 42 Russian-made Mi-17 helicopters (24 of which were reported as operational this quarter with most of the others in maintenance) and integrating 159 U.S.-made Black Hawks for the AAF and SMW through 2023.¹⁸⁶ The DoD's FY 2018 budget request includes \$709.8 million to pay for a second year of an estimated \$6.8 billion phased AAF and SMW modernization program.¹⁸⁷

In the fall of 2017, 9th AETF-A began training existing Mi-17 pilots to fly Black Hawks. During the quarter, the first class of pilots completed its 6-week Aircraft Qualification Training and was certified to fly the Black Hawk. These pilots must next pass a 10-week Mission Qualification Training course, scheduled to begin in February 2018, to prepare them to operate the Black Hawk in support of military operations. A second Aircraft



A refurbished UH-60 Black Hawk of the Afghan Air Force sits on the flightline at Kandahar Airfield. (U.S Air Force photo)

Qualification Training class was scheduled to graduate in mid-January, with a third class to begin at that time.¹⁸⁸

As a senior U.S. aviation advisor stated in a media report, “Getting the aircraft is just the head of the snake. That’s the easy part. The hard part to get is the tail of the snake—training pilots and flight crews, doing maintenance and finding parts.”¹⁸⁹ The training program for the Black Hawk is limited to 6 former Mi-17 pilots per session and takes 3 months before they are qualified to operate the aircraft in combat. As utility helicopter pilots, they will be tasked with a wide range of assignments, including troop transport, supply drops, evacuation of wounded and dead soldiers, and firing mounted machine guns to provide defensive air cover.¹⁹⁰

Given the limitations of aircraft delivery and pilot training, the remaining Mi-17s will need to be kept in service until the AAF has sufficient Black Hawk helicopters, pilots, and crews and other rotary and fixed wing aircraft that are being fielded under the modernization plan to meet operational demands. According to media reports, DoD officials acknowledged that while the pilot transition program will typically take just a few months for existing pilots, it may take 5 to 7 years to train Afghan maintainers to perform repairs and inspections on the more modern Black Hawks. DoD officials stated this was comparable to the timeline for training U.S. military Black Hawk maintainers.¹⁹¹

Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan (CSTC-A) also plans to provide service for the Mi-17 fleet to mitigate gaps in rotary wing capability until sufficient Black Hawk capacity is achieved. Aviation advisors in theater noted that this will require Mi-17 pilot training to continue beyond 2019, which represents a change from the initial plan to end major support for the Mi-17s by 2019. Current plans call for stabilizing the Mi-17 fleet through 2020 and gradually phasing out the aircraft by 2023, barring combat attrition, as Black Hawk capacity increases.¹⁹² Other DoD officials stated that these were not approved plans, and no funding would be requested for Mi-17 overhauls once the current round is completed over the next year and a half.¹⁹³

Table 6.

AAF Fleet Strength and Activity, October 1, 2017-December 31, 2017

	Usable Aircraft	Pilots	Flight Hours	Sorties	Airstrikes	Casualty Evacuations	Human Remains Recovered	Passengers	Tons of Cargo
Mi-17	24	82	1,500.9	2,694	56	538	370	16,128	542.5
MD-530	24	55	1,478.5	958	170	—	—	—	—
C-130	2	12	183.5	151	—	332	163	5,700	275.2
C-208	17	43	1,233.5	1,100	—	355	161	6,135	—
A-29	19	14	546.9	258	66	—	—	—	—
UH-60	4	6	181.2	61*	—	—	—	—	—

* Training sorties only

Note: Usable aircraft excludes those currently under repair for routine maintenance or accidental damage. Seven of the AAF’s A-29s are located at a training facility in the United States. The AAF also operates four Russian-made Mi-35 helicopters for which U.S. advisors provide no support.

Sources: 9th AETF-A, 12/21/2017; USFOR-A, 12/3/2017.



Afghan munitions airmen move a Mark-81 bomb toward an A-29 Super Tucano in Kabul. (U.S. Air Force photo)

A-29 AND MD-530 CREWS INCREASE CAPACITY

The AAF uses the A-29 Super Tucano, a light attack turboprop airplane, to conduct airstrikes and provide close air attack in support of ground forces. In previous quarters, advisors reported that A-29 pilots made progress with the targeting and accuracy of unguided munitions.¹⁹⁴ In December 2017, Afghan A-29 crews conducted their first laser-guided bomb deployments.¹⁹⁵

The AAF continued to integrate A-29 assets in joint operations with the ANA 215th Corps this quarter, according to 9th AETF-A. Without advisor assistance, the 215th Corps commander coordinated approval of target packages with the MoD targeting cell. With moderate advisor assistance, the AAF launched A-29s on close air assault missions against the targets identified by the 215th Corps. A-29s also conducted their first armed overwatch mission in support of an Afghan Narcotics Interdiction Unit raid on a drug production facility.¹⁹⁶

The MD-530 is the AAF's primary close air attack and aerial escort helicopter.¹⁹⁷ As of this quarter, the AAF had 24 operational MD-530s, armed with .50 caliber machine guns and rockets, and USFOR-A reported that 10 more were scheduled for delivery over the second half of 2018 as part of the AAF modernization plan.¹⁹⁸

This quarter, MD-530 crews, independent of advisors, de-conflicted airspace with U.S. F-16s for the first time, 9th AETF-A reported. Afghan Tactical Air Controllers achieved this by communicating with their U.S. counterparts over the same tactical frequency.¹⁹⁹ Afghan Tactical Air Controllers are AAF personnel embedded in the ANA to serve as a link for joint air and ground operations. While advisors have previously reported some misuse of these personnel by their ANA units, those detailed to the ASSF have reportedly proven effective in cases such as this.²⁰⁰

MAINTENANCE AND LOGISTICS PRESENT PERSISTENT CHALLENGES

In an effort to prolong the life of the AAF's four C-130 cargo planes, coalition advisors developed plans to establish a more predictable flight schedule to include airfields

designated for logistics management. This required prioritization and forecasting of AAF supply needs. Aviation advisors acknowledged that the ANDSF supply chain management process is still immature, making such forecasting difficult. According to 9th AETF-A, this capability will also require significant advisor assistance for the foreseeable future.²⁰¹

This quarter, coalition advisors continued to train AAF maintainers to perform scheduled and routine maintenance, munitions loading, pre- and post-flight inspections, and basic maintenance tasks, such as checking fluid levels and tire pressure on the A-29, Mi-17, MD-530, and C-208 fleets. The AAF will continue to rely on contractor support for advanced maintenance, fleet management, flight line control, and all C-130 maintenance.²⁰² According to media reports, U.S. and other foreign contractors complete approximately 80 percent of all work on U.S.-supplied military aircraft in the ANDSF.²⁰³

ANDSF IMPROVES OPERATIONAL CAPABILITY

The DoD reported that while ANDSF operational capabilities are improving, many challenges remain, including “poor leadership, corruption, misuse of the ASSF, and improper utilization of specialty personnel.”²⁰⁴

As part of the Resolute Support mission, advisors worked with ANDSF during the quarter to develop and implement operational readiness training courses that focus on joint operations. Such ongoing training is designed to ensure that all soldiers continue to learn and maintain

Afghan National Army Special Operations Command soldiers conduct urban operations training during commando qualification courses. (DoD photo)



Resolute Support reported that ANDSF ability to cooperate across services when planning and executing operations increased notably over the course of 2017.

the necessary skills to perform optimally on the battlefield. As implementation of the operational readiness cycles continued during the quarter, Resolute Support reported that the training remains “unevenly implemented across corps and divisions.” While some corps have successfully graduated entire *kandaks* through the courses, many commanders only send company-sized groups because they require some soldiers to remain and respond to regional security concerns.²⁰⁵

Resolute Support reported that ANDSF ability to cooperate across services when planning and executing operations increased notably over the course of 2017. ANA-ASSF cooperation, in particular, “has proven a crucial factor in allowing regional commanders to conduct offensive operations designed to destroy or clear Taliban fighters from insurgent-held areas.”²⁰⁶ In addition, Resolute Support reported that the AAF has improved its ability to provide timely reconnaissance and supporting fire to ground troops. Officials said cooperation between ANA corps and police zone staff also improved.²⁰⁷

ANDSF INTELLIGENCE CAPABILITY ADVANCES

The DoD and Resolute Support reported that ANDSF demonstrated improved capability to collect and use intelligence to support combat missions. The ANA doubled its aerial intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) capability through the deployment of two ScanEagle systems with the 201st Corps, based in Laghman province, and the 205th Corps, based in Kandahar.²⁰⁸ USFOR-A noted that the 215th Corps, stationed in Helmand and Nimroz province, is the most advanced user of the ScanEagle technology, while the 205th Corps and the 201st Corps also showed increased capacity to use modern ISR technology.²⁰⁹

Resolute Support advisors continued to work with ANDSF intelligence staff to develop a module to track key intelligence equipment. The module, described as a “one-stop shop” for ISR management and synchronization, is intended to facilitate intelligence planning processes. Resolute Support said that it might take several months to fully deploy and evaluate the effectiveness of the module.²¹⁰

ANDSF SEEKS TO GROW NEW LEADERS

Under the Road Map, Resolute Support and the Afghan government prioritized the development and promotion of capable and honest leadership within the ANDSF.²¹¹ Historically, the ANDSF’s top-heavy and often corrupt leadership has been a burden on the MoI and MoD and hindered the ministries’ ability to respond to security challenges. Last quarter, Resolute Support reported that, as of mid-2017, the number of general officers in the ANA was approximately double its authorized end strength.²¹² During 2017, under President Ghani’s “Inherent Law,” the ANDSF began to identify and retire senior military leaders in order to promote younger leaders, many of whom entered service after 2001 and were trained by NATO forces.²¹³

Resolute Support noted that ANA efforts to remove and replace ineffective generals has paid dividends, particularly in the south, but declined to publicly release additional information about Inherent Law implementation.²¹⁴ This information and progress toward meeting Inherent Law goals is included in the classified appendix to this report.²¹⁵

As the ANDSF seeks to grow, recruitment remains a key challenge. The DoD noted that attrition is a greater challenge for the ANA than it is for the ANP; armies inherently have high turnover because most soldiers are on time-limited enlistments and many do not re-enlist, whereas police are not under enlistment contracts.²¹⁶ One root cause of ANA attrition is poor leadership, which the ANDSF seeks to address through its right sizing of the general officer corps under the Inherent Law and improved leader training. In addition, the MoD has continued to emphasize recruitment and re-enlistment efforts.²¹⁷ For example, the ANA conducted two recruiting and re-enlistment road shows. In addition, the MoI has approved a province-by-province plan to improve recruiting and quality of life among police.²¹⁸ Additional information about ANA re-contracting rates and efforts to boost re-enlistment is available in the classified appendix to this report.

The ANA also made progress in its ability to prioritize and assign new recruits to units with the greatest manpower needs, according to a Resolute Support assessment. This demonstrated the ANA's improved planning and analysis capability, as well as its ability to simultaneously train and integrate large groups of new recruits while simultaneously conducting combat operations.²¹⁹ At the same time, CSTC-A noted that the MoD continued to struggle with some aspects of force management, such as development of *tashkils* (staffing tables) and payment systems. Resolute Support advisors encouraged MoD leadership to use the recently fielded Afghan Personnel and Pay System to make better-informed decisions about force structure.²²⁰

One root cause of ANA attrition is poor leadership, which the ANDSF seeks to address through its right sizing of the general officer corps under the Inherent Law and improved leader training.

ABP TRANSITION COMPLETE, ANCOP TRANSITION UNDERWAY

The MoI and MoD completed the transition of selected MoI Afghan Border Police (ABP) units to a new MoD Afghan Border Force (ABF) on December 31, 2017.²²¹ CSTC-A highlighted the successful transfer of the ABP to the 201st Corps on December 3, 2017. In that instance, the ministries completed the transfer of all ABP property and associated paperwork to the Corps in Nangarhar. The ministries have also scheduled recurring meetings to address supply concerns to ABF personnel in remote areas.²²² In mid-December 2017, CSTC-A reported that the ministries' leadership and their advisors have yet to formalize an agreement to ensure that equipment requirements are filled during the ABP transition, but that they are working to do so.²²³ USFOR-A reported that the transfer of the Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP) is underway, with completion expected in late spring 2018.²²⁴

RESOLUTE SUPPORT PROGRESS RATINGS

Resolute Support uses a rating system to track MoD and MoI progress toward attainment of the institutional capacity to perform effectively and independently. Coalition advisors and their Afghan counterparts establish milestones by mutual agreement. In addition, Resolute Support tracks MoI and MoD progress on work strands that support Road Map activities. Advisors evaluate ministerial progress and capability using a rating scale that ranges from a low of 1, meaning that the Afghan organization has agreed to a specific action, to a high of 5, meaning that the Afghan organization can effectively sustain the capability.²²⁵ Resolute Support regularly modifies reporting and assessment processes, so it is not possible to track trends over time using the progress rating tracker.²²⁶

Table 7.
Resolute Support Progress Ratings, as of November 14, 2017

Rating	Meeting	MoD	MoI	Examples of Milestones and Work Strands with this Rating
1	Agreed	8	9	Supply Chain Management, Women in ANDSF, Police Reorganization
2	In Progress/ Initiated	8	12	Rule of Law and Governance, Trauma Care Systems, Budget Formulation Process (MoI)
3	Partially Effective	11	15	Procurement Processes (MoI), Budget Execution Processes (MoD), Training and Education
4	Fully Effective	9	2	Budget Formulation Process (MoD), Payroll Execution Process (MoD), FAST Program (MoD)
5	Sustainable	1	0	Budget Formulation Process (MoF)
TOTAL		37	38	

Source: USFOR-A

As of mid November 2017, 21 of the MoD’s 37 milestones were given one of the top 3 ratings of “partially effective,” “fully effective,” or “sustainable,” as shown in Table 7. Resolute Support advisors gave 17 of the MoI’s 38 milestones one of the top 3 ratings.²²⁷ The MoD and MoI milestones and work strands with the highest progress ratings related to budget formulation and execution processes (though the highest rated milestone addresses budget formulation processes at the Ministry of Finance). The milestones and work strands with the lowest rating of “1” included women in the ANDSF, police reorganization, and milestones related to maintenance, logistics, and automation.²²⁸

While the MoI has consistently lagged behind the MoD in Resolute Support assessments of ministerial progress, Resolute Support advisors commended MoI acting minister of interior affairs Wais Barmak for ordering the development of a four-year strategic plan for the ministry that emphasizes counter corruption, merit-based promotion, and police reform.²²⁹

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IMPROVES

The coalition advisors for EF1, who work with MoD and MoI to develop their capacity to plan, manage, and execute their budget, provided only a limited update on their function’s progress during the quarter.²³⁰ The advisors reported that the MoD and MoI successfully spent all of the two-year allocation funds provided to them through the FY 2016 and indicated that they are on track to spend Afghan Security Forces Funds (ASFF) in FY 2017 and FY 2018.²³¹ The DoD provides a portion of ASFF to the Afghan government primarily to fund ANA pay and facilities maintenance; the majority of ASFF is executed by the DoD using DoD contracts.²³² While this demonstrates that the ministries are able to plan a use for the funds they receive, it is not clear if the ministries properly distributed and effectively used the funds to support ANDSF efforts.²³³

WEAK INTERNAL CONTROLS

The coalition advisors for EF2, who work with the ministries’ offices of inspector general, reported that MoI and MoD officials struggled to develop independent monitoring capacity.

Some of this slow progress may be attributable to the effectiveness of the advisory program itself. In December 2017, the DoD OIG released a declassified evaluation of EF2's advising efforts at the MoD, based on an in-country evaluation conducted in 2016. The report found that Resolute Support advisors' "lack of program emphasis" and "insufficient level of training" hindered development and implementation of the Ministerial Internal Control Program, a system of ministry-wide checks and balances to promote transparency, accountability, and oversight. The report further noted that some ANA commanders impeded efforts by MoD IG staff to conduct inspections and combat corruption.²³⁴

This quarter, EF2 advisors indicated that limited progress has been made since the DoD OIG conducted the assessment. CSTC-A reported that progress in the MoD has been "stagnant" and that the MoI "lacks progress" in key performance areas. During the quarter, EF2 advisors continued to focus on inputs to the MoI and MoD inspector general process, such as identification of personnel needs, training in specialized skills, and professionalization of staff. CSTC-A noted, however, that the MoD IG completed an Annual Inspection Plan that, while lacking some of the advisors' recommendations, are "solid documents" that address systemic concerns in the MoD. CSTC-A reported modest process and personnel improvements at the MoI, but similarly did not report any concrete outcomes of IG processes, such as inspections and actions (such as arrests, funds recovered) taken because of those inspections.²³⁵

UNEVEN PROGRESS ON COUNTER-CORRUPTION

Corruption, an endemic threat to the viability of the Afghan government and its security institutions, is a key focus of the Resolute Support mission. EF3 rule-of-law advisors reported that progress on counter-corruption has been uneven. They reported that the newly established Counter-Corruption Advisors Group worked effectively with Afghan and U.S. partner agencies to investigate fuel contracts and other forms of corruption in the Afghan military, leading to the removal of some senior military officials. In addition, EF3 advisors reported limited progress at the MoI and MoD in developing and implementing a coordinated counter-corruption policy.²³⁶ Despite the progress, investigators still faced barriers to conducting complete and independent inquiries into corruption. EF3 advisors noted that the Major Crimes Task Force, the elite Afghan law enforcement agency that conducts high-level corruption cases, continued to improve its capacity but was "stifled" by the Afghan Attorney General's office. "Investigators are cautious while investigating high level cases due to potential repercussions, which include being fired, transferred or put in jail," the advisors said. Moreover, the task force's director and his staff frequently receive death threats.²³⁷

Afghanistan's Anti-Corruption Justice Center (ACJC), which rules on corruption cases relating to MoI and MoD personnel, continued to prosecute high-level officials. The ACJC court convicted two brothers, Nazeer Ahmad and Aziz Rahman, for illegally sending large amounts of funds from their money exchange business outside Afghanistan. The brothers received a sentence of 18 months in prison and an \$80,000 fine.²³⁸ However, according to Department of Justice reporting, the brothers were the lowest-level offenders in an alleged trade-based money-laundering scheme worth about \$250 million.²³⁹ The ACJC appeals body also tried Abdul Ghafar Dawi, an oil executive, and two associates on charges of

Despite the progress, investigators still faced barriers to conducting complete and independent inquiries into corruption.



A driver removes the top of a fuel truck canister on Bagram Airfield. (U.S. Army photo)

embezzlement and false documentation involving millions of dollars in fuel and oil contracts. The defendants initially received sentences of 6 years, as well as fines and restitution totaling nearly \$34 million.²⁴⁰ However, the sentences were reduced on appeal on the grounds that the judicial finding was questionable.²⁴¹ Other prominent ACJC cases this quarter included an appellate case that recovered 23 million Afghanis (approximately \$330,000) in ANP salaries, and a trial of a bank executive that resulted in a fine of 50 million (approximately \$720,000) Afghanis.²⁴² However, security concerns prevented EF3 advisors from making frequent visits to the ACJC, which is responsible for trying corruption cases.²⁴³

EF3 advisors also work with MoI and MoD to identify, investigate, and address gross violations of human rights. The advisors reported that both ministries made progress in this area during the quarter. The MoD in particular, developed a Policy on International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights and used mobile training teams to build capacity in regional offices.²⁴⁴

LOGISTICS CAPACITY ADVANCES

“Sustain the force,” the focus of EF5’s advisory efforts, encompasses maintenance, logistics, medical services, and other functions required to ensure operational readiness of the ANDSF. CSTC-A reported that ANDSF had met two benchmarks related to transportation movement control and preparing materiel for distribution, and that it is on track to meet other benchmarks related to logistics and maintenance. In particular, the command reported improvements in ANDSF capacity to distribute and monitor fuel, a complex logistical process that is often a target for corruption. EF5 logistics and maintenance advisory efforts extend to communications and technology, where this quarter advisors worked with ANDSF to improve cybersecurity, modernize and maintain radio systems, and extend fiber optic networks.²⁴⁵

EF5 advisors reported that ANDSF medical staff took steps this quarter to attract better-qualified medical personnel to serve in the ANDSF. These efforts included outreach to

Afghan universities and offering a competitive pay/incentive package. In addition, advisors provided specialized training in the use of medical data and, for new ANA and ANP recruits, training in Self Aid Buddy Care, a program used by the U.S. military to train soldiers in basic first aid and life support.²⁴⁶

One of the core missions of EF5 is the implementation of the CorePartners suite of automated logistics business systems to track and manage ANDSF equipment and materials. During the quarter, EF5 advisors began to train 274 university-educated Afghans to become logistics specialists who are proficient in the CorePartners to support property accountability, information management, and maintenance management. At the end of the quarter, the software's information management tool, called CoreIMS, was functioning as designed and employed at target ANDSF locations, while the property management and maintenance management functions are intended for fielding beginning in May 2018.²⁴⁷ The advisors acknowledged a key weakness in the CoreIMS system as currently deployed: it only provides visibility on inventory at national and regional warehouses and depots, but not inventory distributed below that level (Humvees distributed to forward supply depots). The advisors stated that there was no plan to expand CoreIMS below the regional level, but noted that the property management function, once operational, "will provide visibility of accountable items issued from depots."²⁴⁸

EF5 advisors reported that ANDSF medical staff took steps this quarter to attract better-qualified medical personnel to serve in the ANDSF.

STRATEGIC MESSAGING IMPROVES

Through EF8, coalition advisors work with MoD and MoI communications staff to promote ANDSF improvements and successes in order to build Afghan popular support for the ANDSF and Afghan government. USFOR-A reported that the overall trend in the ministries' strategic communications strategy has been "slightly positive," though the MoI lags behind the MoD in its ability to execute communications functions independently. EF 8 advisors supported development of MoD communications staff through training and development of career paths for personnel in the ministries' Religious and Cultural Affairs Directorates, the Information Operations Directorates, and Public Affairs Directorates. The MoD's communication directorates also showed improvement in its ability to plan and execute joint communications campaigns. For example, they will synchronize efforts to support the ongoing transfer of the ABP and ANCOP to the MoD. USFOR-A noted that at both the MoI and MoD, the ministers held more press conferences during the quarter and met more frequently with media, allowing the ministry to highlight successes and attempt to shape the public narrative about ANDSF capacity. While the ministries demonstrated increased public engagement during the quarter, USFOR-A noted ongoing concern about the accuracy of information released by the ministries, particularly insurgent casualty figures.²⁴⁹

In addition to developing the ministries' public affairs capacity, EF 8 advisors support ministry staff who develop strategic messaging intended to support security operations, including efforts to encourage the Taliban to see reconciliation as the only option. USFOR-A applauded the appropriation of funds to secure non-mission-capable "Radios in a Box," which the ANA uses for tactical information operations.²⁵⁰ However, it is not clear if the MoD has made progress in ensuring that trained personnel are available to operate the "Radios in a Box," a key deficiency that the advisors noted in the previous quarter.²⁵¹



Afghan women line up to receive school supplies during the ANA Special Operations Command visit to the Afghan Women's Education Center near Camp Commando, Kabul. (U.S. Army photo)

EF8 advisors reported that, at the regional and local level, corps commanders have improved their ability to localize messaging and deliver it in the language of the local population. The advisors report that corps commanders have cultivated relationships with local journalists and know how to highlight their forces' growing capacity to protect the local population. Some commanders are showing growing aptitude for social media, including Facebook, and are increasing the use of these platforms as part of their media engagement efforts.²⁵²

SLOW PROGRESS TO INTEGRATE WOMEN

The advisors in the Gender Affairs Office reported that Afghan security and military sectors continue to have a “desperate shortage of senior women...to serve as inspirational role models for the younger generations of Afghan women.”²⁵³ The advisors reported that the ANDSF made progress in building and maintaining facilities for women, such as women's gyms and daycare centers, and expanded a program that provides training basic literacy in English language, computer skills, and office administration to female ANDSF members. The advisors stated that they had worked to add more female police officers to family response units, which respond to reports of domestic and sexual abuse.²⁵⁴

AFGHANISTAN UNVEILS CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

On December 2, 2017, the MoD's legal department issued a “Policy for Protection of Children in Armed Conflict.” The policy addresses a range of topics from banning the recruitment of child soldiers to rescuing children from the battlefield. The policy clearly forbids sexual abuse of children in the ANA and directs that commanders must report any suspected violations through the chain of command to the MoD and General Staff legal departments.²⁵⁵

While the MoD's new policy requires that unit commanders report any violations, it does not provide any reporting requirements or whistleblower protections for subordinates who report commanders suspected of violating child protection policies. Moreover, the policy only applies to the MoD and not the MoI.

DoD OIG: Military Lacks Consistent Procedures, Training Regarding Child Sexual Abuse in ANDSF

This quarter, the DoD OIG released an evaluation entitled *Implementation of the DoD Leahy Law Regarding Allegations of Child Sexual Abuse by Members of the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces*. The report addresses alleged sexual abuse of young boys—known in Afghanistan as “bacha bazi”—by the Afghan security forces.

The DoD Leahy Law states that no DoD funds may be used for any training, equipment, or other assistance for a unit of a foreign security force if the Secretary of Defense has credible information that the unit has committed a gross violation of human rights (GVHR).²⁵⁶ The law included two exceptions. The DoD may continue to provide support to a unit accused of GVHR if the Secretary of Defense, after consultation with the Secretary of State, determines: 1) the government of the country of which the unit is a part has taken “all necessary corrective steps” to address the alleged violation; or 2) the equipment or other assistance to be provided is “necessary to assist in disaster-relief operations or other humanitarian or national-security emergencies.”²⁵⁷

The Leahy Law did not apply to the ANDSF until 2014.²⁵⁸ However, in 2005 Congress granted the Secretary of Defense the authority to use Afghan Security Forces Funds, “notwithstanding any other provision of law,” for the “provision of equipment, supplies, services, training, facility and infrastructure repair, renovation, and construction” for the ANDSF.²⁵⁹

The DoD OIG evaluation was conducted in response to a congressional request, and addressed several questions raised by Congress. The report contained four main findings:

- Prior to September 2015, the DoD did not provide clear guidance and training to U.S. forces in Afghanistan on how to report allegations of child sexual abuse.
- The Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy lacked guidance and processes for assessing the credibility of information relating to GVHR allegations.
- The Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy only makes decisions to withhold funding or apply the notwithstanding authority about once a year, and therefore is not applying the Leahy Law in a timely manner regarding GVHR committed by ANDSF personnel.
- The DoD lacks policies and guidance regarding how it collects and tracks data for allegations of GVHR by ANDSF personnel. As a result, the DoD IG was unable to determine the completeness and accuracy of information it reviewed pertaining to allegations of child sexual abuse by ANDSF personnel.

While the evaluation determined that there was no official guidance that discouraged DoD personnel from reporting cases of child sexual abuse, some personnel interviewed by the DoD OIG “explained that they, or someone whom they knew, were told informally that nothing could be done about child sexual abuse because of Afghanistan’s status as a sovereign nation, that it was not a priority issue for the command, or that it was best to let the local police handle it.”²⁶⁰

The evaluation also found that between 2010 and 2016, DoD and Afghan government personnel reported 16 allegations of child sexual abuse involving Afghan government officials, 11 of which were reported to the Afghan government. The DoD OIG could not confirm whether the 16 allegations “represented the total number reported to U.S. or Coalition Forces Commands in Afghanistan due to inconsistent DoD reporting procedures and an overall lack of unified guidance on reporting and record keeping relating to child sexual abuse.”²⁶¹

The DoD OIG report made eight recommendations, including that the DoD should develop policies and procedures for tracking and reporting GVHR allegations by ANDSF personnel; define “credible information” as it pertains to DoD Leahy Law and establish a process for credible information determinations; and develop procedures to apply the DoD Leahy Law in a more timely fashion.

The Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy concurred with the recommendations and stated that the DoD is:

- developing Instruction 2110.A “Implementation of DoD Leahy Law Restrictions on Assistance to Foreign Security Forces,” that will clarify reporting procedures;
- updating the Resolute Support standard operating procedures for reporting GVHR;
- drafting a clarification memorandum on the application of the DoD Leahy Law in Afghanistan that will include the checklist for GVHR credible information determinations; and
- reviewing historical data and will apply the DoD Leahy Law in accordance with Secretary of Defense Guidance.

The DoD also stated that it “created and launched a central database accessible to all stakeholders in July 2017 to record allegations of human rights abuses by [ANDSF] and document the credibility determinations for each report.”²⁶²

In January 2018, SIGAR released a redacted version of its report on “bacha bazi,” entitled *Child Sexual Assault in Afghanistan: Implementation of the Leahy Laws and Reports of Assault by Afghan Security Forces*, which included additional findings and recommendations beyond the DoD OIG evaluation.

While SIGAR found that the DoD, the DOS, and the Afghan government have taken steps to identify and investigate child sexual assault incidents, the security situation and the drawdown of U.S. forces have hampered these efforts and that further action needs to be taken. SIGAR recommended that the Secretaries of Defense and State reiterate guidance to personnel that GVHR, including child sexual abuse, are not to be tolerated and establish clear reporting and training requirements.²⁶³

SIGAR also recommended that the Secretaries incorporate requirements into existing and future contracts clauses that contractor personnel must report information on potential violations to the Leahy Law point of contact in each department. SIGAR made additional recommendations to improve DoD and DoS internal coordination and coordination with Afghan authorities, establish a single report tracking system accessible by all DoD and DoS stakeholders, and that the Secretary of Defense designate a specific position to oversee DoD implementation of the Leahy Law in Afghanistan.²⁶⁴

GOVERNANCE AND CIVIL SOCIETY

Uneven Progress towards Holding Elections

Parliamentary and district council elections, currently scheduled for July 2018, are in danger of being postponed again due to technical, political, and bureaucratic problems. The elections were originally scheduled for July 2015, and have been repeatedly postponed due to difficulties in enacting electoral reforms and completing technical preparations.²⁶⁵ In November 2017, President Ghani fired Najibullah Ahmadzai, Chairman of the Independent Election Commission (IEC).²⁶⁶ The IEC is the organization responsible for administering and supervising all elections and referenda.²⁶⁷ According to media reports, the seven members of the election commission signed a letter to President Ghani requesting Mr. Ahmadzai's removal for incompetence.²⁶⁸ According to Mr. Ahmadzai, five of the commissioners claimed to have been pressured to sign the letter by Ghani's aides.

As of the end of the quarter, President Ghani had yet to appoint a new Chairman. Moreover, the IEC was understaffed with 40 percent of its positions vacant. Finally, financing for the election, which could cost up to \$200 million, was not fully pledged or in place. International donors have funded Afghan elections in the past.²⁶⁹

U.S. officials stated that timely elections are an essential component of the South Asia strategy and a vehicle to exert social pressure on the Taliban. According to media reports, Afghan officials and western diplomats expressed concern that a postponed, botched, or illegitimate election in 2018 could destabilize the country. In 2014, the results of the national election were contested, leading to the formation of the "National Unity Government" brokered by the United States to resolve the crisis.²⁷⁰ During the quarter, former Afghan President Hamid Karzai voiced support for an opposition faction that is calling for a Loya Jirga, or council of tribal elders, instead of national elections to decide on the future leadership of the country.²⁷¹ Presidential elections are scheduled for 2019.²⁷²

In support of the 2018 elections, USAID continued to provide technical assistance to the IEC and the Electoral Complaints Commission through a \$30 million grant with the United Nations Development Programme. In addition, the IEC completed its polling center assessment and announced that it would initiate a paper-based voter registration for the 2018 parliamentary elections.²⁷³

USAID also supported civil society organizations and Afghan media to help facilitate their participation in the electoral process. USAID reported that its Afghan Civic Engagement Program (ACEP), which addresses engagement and coordination between electoral management bodies and civil society organizations, primarily focused on election processes this quarter.²⁷⁴ According to USAID, the ACEP supported the creation of a Civil Society Election Coordination Group, which met to facilitate the exchange of ideas and seek ways to address significant issues relevant to elections. The ACEP also supported mechanisms for civil society organizations and government cooperation at the sub-national level and engaged civil society organizations in thematic roundtables to improve their internal coordination and strengthen their role in national development processes.²⁷⁵

The ultimate goal of the South Asia strategy is to drive the Taliban to enter into a reconciliation process with the Afghan government.

According to USAID, challenges to holding elections on time include security, the tight schedule to complete voter registration, and the IEC’s reliance on the Afghanistan Central Civil Registration Authority to issue *tazkeras*, the primary form of identification voters need to register at polling centers.²⁷⁶ Not all Afghans possess national IDs—particularly women and internally displaced persons.²⁷⁷

USAID reported that excessive bureaucracy, lack of access to information—especially at the sub-national level—slow and lengthy work procedures, lack of support and coordination from government entities, and regular turnover of high-ranking officials hindered the interactions of ACEP with the Afghan government. Civil society organizations also reported, according to USAID, poor coordination among public institutions at the sub-national level.²⁷⁸

According to USAID, the government of Afghanistan appears to be wavering on its commitment to empower women in the lead up to the upcoming elections. USAID reported that as the quarter closed, female ministers were being ousted by a very conservative parliament and were not getting the necessary support from the President’s office. The Civil Service Commission announced 17,000 new job openings but USAID noted that the Commission does not have a strong program or targets for hiring qualified women in leadership positions.²⁷⁹

Political Tensions Increase

During the quarter, President Ghani clashed with Atta Mohammed Noor, the powerful Governor of Balkh province and a leader of the Northern-based Jamiat-e-Islami political party. In November, the Afghan government prevented Noor from flying to an opposition rally in the south of the country. In December, President Ghani removed Noor from office by announcing that he had accepted Noor’s resignation letter. Noor contested the firing. Noor’s aides stated that Noor had signed the undated resignation letter as a trust-building measure during failed negotiations for the appointment of Jamiat-e-Islami party officials to senior administration posts. In a televised speech, Noor urged his supporters to keep to civil protest “for now” but stated that he would resort to any means to remain in office if the government resorted to force.²⁸⁰ The crisis remained unresolved at the end of the quarter.

Uncertain Progress towards Peace Talks

The ultimate goal of the South Asia strategy is to drive the Taliban to enter into a reconciliation process with the Afghan government. During the past decade, there have been attempts to initiate peace talks, but at the end of the quarter there was still no agreement on the parameters of a process, such as who should facilitate and participate in peace talks.²⁸¹

During the quarter, the United States, Afghanistan, and the international community continued efforts to induce the Taliban to participate in peace negotiations. In October, Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, a former insurgent who struck a peace deal with the government in 2016, claimed in an interview that the Taliban “are now more eager for peace.”²⁸² Also

in October, Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said that, “there are, we believe, moderate voices among the Taliban, voices that do not want to continue to fight forever. They don’t want their children to fight forever. We are looking to engage with those voices and have them engage in a reconciliation processes leading them to a peace process and their full involvement and participation in the government.”²⁸³

In October 2017, the Quadrilateral Coordination Group met in Oman for the first time in 16 months. The group, which includes senior foreign ministry officials from the United States, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and China, seeks to bring the warring factions in Afghanistan to the negotiating table. The meetings were suspended in May 2016 after a U.S. drone strike killed the Taliban chief Mullah Akhtar Mansoor in Pakistan. A Taliban official reportedly told the media that the Taliban had “nothing to do” with the October 2017 coordination group meeting and had not been contacted regarding the meeting in any way.²⁸⁴

According to the United Nations, Afghanistan’s High Peace Council completed its strategic plan for 2017-2020.²⁸⁵ In December, a senior member of the Afghan High Peace Council offered to facilitate and recognize an office in Kabul or “any country” so that the Taliban could join peace negotiations. The Taliban has been operating an unofficial “Political Office” out of Qatar since 2013. President Ghani had recently pressured the Qataris to shut down the office. In making the offer of a recognized office, the High Peace Council stated that they were ready to enter into the peace process without any preconditions and “through whatever mechanism” the Taliban proposed. The Taliban immediately rejected the offer.²⁸⁶



U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson meets with Afghan President Ghani at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan on October 23, 2017. (DoS photo)

At the end of the reporting period, the Taliban had made no indication that they were preparing to join any kind of peace process.

On December 26, Pakistani Foreign Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif, Afghan Foreign Minister Salahuddin Rabbani, and Chinese Foreign Minister Way Yi met in Beijing for talks to improve relations between Kabul and Islamabad. Following the meeting, the Afghan and Pakistani Foreign Ministers issued a joint statement calling for a “broad-based and inclusive peace and reconciliation process” and requesting that the Taliban “join the peace process at an early date.”²⁸⁷

At the end of the reporting period, the Taliban had made no indication that they were preparing to join any kind of peace process.

Afghanistan-Pakistan-United States Relations Remain Tense

As noted previously in this report, the South Asia strategy states that the United States will press Pakistan to eliminate safe havens for the Taliban and other terrorist groups within Pakistan. The DoS reported that it has made it clear to Pakistan that the United States has the resolve to stay in Afghanistan as long as it takes to enable a political settlement that ends the war.²⁸⁸

Since the Administration announced the South Asia strategy in August 2017, senior government officials, including Secretaries Tillerson and Mattis, have engaged with Pakistan to convey specific and concrete steps Pakistan should take in support of the strategy. Steps included combatting all terrorist groups, and the United States offered to assist Pakistan with such efforts. The United States is also working with Afghanistan to ensure that terrorists are unable to exploit Afghanistan’s territory for safe haven, a longstanding request of Pakistan.²⁸⁹

In November 2017, Pakistan’s Chief of Army Staff General Bajwa presented President Ghani with a draft Afghanistan-Pakistan Action Plan for Solidarity for bilateral coordination through five working groups (diplomatic, military, intelligence, economic, and refugee issues). Since that time, both sides have been engaged in discussions on the paper and the parameters of the working groups. According to the DoS, the two countries have attempted similar working groups in the past, with varying levels of success.²⁹⁰

Little Progress Fighting Corruption

The DoS reported that the government of Afghanistan made little progress combating corruption during the quarter.²⁹¹ The DoS reported that there was no meaningful progress in curbing government graft and corruption by bringing prosecutions against corrupt officials or in prosecuting suspects in high-profile government scandals.²⁹² In the Kabul Compact, the Afghan government committed to having the Counter-Narcotics Justice Center prosecute at least five drug kingpins by January 2018, but it had not undertaken any prosecutions this quarter.²⁹³

HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE AND DEVELOPMENT

The United Nations Afghanistan Humanitarian Response Plan for 2018-2021, published on December 1, 2017, estimated that 3.3 million people, nearly 1 in every 10 Afghans, would need humanitarian assistance in 2018.²⁹⁴ The United Nations estimated that there were 1.9 million displaced Afghans in 2017, up from more than 1.5 million displaced as of late 2016.²⁹⁵ In 2017, conflict displaced more than 438,000 additional people, approximately 15 percent of whom were in hard-to-reach areas, according to USAID.²⁹⁶ The United Nations projected that approximately 450,000 more people would be internally displaced in 2018.²⁹⁷

Conflict in mid-October and at the end of November between non-state armed groups in Nangarhar Province created more than 40,000 new IDPs. As of November 30, more than 61,000 people had been displaced from the Khogyani district in Nangarhar.²⁹⁸

Natural disasters continued to impact humanitarian needs, with avalanches, flash floods, and landslides, among other events, affecting more than 111,000 Afghans across 33 provinces in 2017.²⁹⁹ The United Nations projected that 230,000 people would be affected by natural disasters in 2018.³⁰⁰

In addition, many Afghan refugees continued to return to Afghanistan during the reporting period. According to the DoS, more than 623,000 Afghans returned to the country during 2017, mostly from Pakistan and Iran.³⁰¹ As of December, more than 560,000 Afghans, including deportees, had returned to Afghanistan from Pakistan and Iran in 2017, according to the International Organization for Migration (IOM).³⁰²

The IOM assisted more than 108,000 returnees in 2017, with nearly one-third of those relocating to Nangarhar province (nearly 35,000 undocumented Afghans), followed by Kabul (more than 15,000) and Kandahar (nearly 10,000).³⁰³ The United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees worked to repatriate approximately 58,000 voluntary returnees who had been registered refugees in Pakistan and Iran.³⁰⁴

During the quarter, the Pakistani Government extended the validity of refugees' Proof of Registration cards from December 31, 2017, to January 31, 2018, which gave Afghan refugees

Table 8.

Afghan Refugee Returnees, Calendar Year 2017

	From Pakistan	From Iran	Other	TOTAL
Voluntary Registered Returnees	57,411	1,202	204	58,817
Undocumented Returnees	94,034	194,321	—	288,355
Deportations	4,106	271,982	—	276,088
TOTAL	155,551	467,505	204	623,260

Source: DoS

another month of legal status.³⁰⁵ Table 8 includes year-end totals for Afghans returning to Afghanistan.

USAID's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) and Food for Peace (FFP), through the USAID Afghanistan Office of Humanitarian Assistance, and the DoS Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration are the primary U.S. Government offices responsible for humanitarian assistance. The majority of OFDA funding in Afghanistan in FY 2017 supported logistics support and relief management (29 percent of OFDA funding), shelter and settlements (14 percent), humanitarian coordination and information management (14 percent), and health (11 percent).³⁰⁶ Most of the funding for FFP supported food assistance, 61 percent of which was provided through local and regional food procurement, 32 percent for food vouchers and cash transfers, and 7 percent for U.S. in-kind food aid (See tables 9 and 10).³⁰⁷

USAID reported military operations; violence against humanitarian actors, assets, and facilities; restriction and obstruction of access to services; and restriction of movement within Afghanistan impeded humanitarian assistance. Humanitarian providers' access

Table 9.

Status of USAID Humanitarian Assistance Funds for Afghanistan, October 1, 2017-December 31, 2017, by Office (in millions/rounded)

Office	Obligated	Disbursed	Expended
OFDA	—	\$7.0	\$16.2
FFP	—	\$6.9	\$29.4
TOTAL	—	\$13.9	\$45.6

Sources: USAID OFDA and FFP, 1/17/2018.

Notes: USAID reported disbursements that may exceed obligations because some disbursements during the reporting period were made against awards obligated in a different quarter. Data on disbursements can provide valuable information about how much money has been spent on activities as well as the amounts of funding that remain available for expenditure. Provided a letter of credit from the U.S. Government, however, humanitarian assistance implementing partners may accrue expenses before drawing down on agency funds. For this reason, expenditures on humanitarian assistance activities sometimes exceed disbursements. Figures may not sum due to rounding.

Table 10.

USAID Funds Obligated for Afghanistan, October 1, 2017-December 31, 2017, (in millions/rounded)

Fund	Obligated	Disbursed
Operating Expenses	\$0.1	\$0.1
Operating Expenses (OCO)	\$3.2	\$1.9
International Disaster Assistance (FY 17) (OCO)	—	—
TOTAL	\$3.3	\$2.0

Sources: USAID, OAPA, 1/18/2018.

Notes: Same as Table 8 above.

to beneficiaries was limited primarily due to military operations and ongoing hostilities as well as violence against humanitarian assistance resources. These constraints also continued to prevent humanitarian providers, including USAID/OFDA and USAID/FFP implementing partners, from conducting assessments.³⁰⁸

Shelter remained a top priority for Afghan IDPs and returnees. The United Nations 2018-2021 Afghanistan Humanitarian Response Plan estimated that 900,000 people will be in need of shelter assistance in 2018, and there will also be significant need for basic household items and winterization assistance, including blankets, emergency shelter materials, and winter clothing.³⁰⁹

Food security remained a concern in Afghanistan with an estimated 1.9 million people categorized as severely food insecure, according to the United Nations, and 40 percent of children under the age of 5 suffering from stunted growth caused by poor nutrition.³¹⁰ The USAID-funded Famine Early Warning Systems Network estimated in October that total wheat production in Afghanistan in 2017 will reach only 86 percent (4.3 million metric tons) of the 5-year annual average. Precipitation for the October through May wet season was forecast to be at below-average levels, which may result in lower crop yields.³¹¹

The safety of aid workers also continued to be threatened. The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs reported 377 incidents in Afghanistan against aid workers, assets, and activities related to humanitarian access in 2017, a significant increase over the 200 incidents reported in 2016. In 2017, 143 (38 percent) of these incidents were against health workers or health facilities. The increase in the number of incidents was partly due to continued conflict in certain areas of Afghanistan and partly due to improved reporting, according to the United Nations.³¹²

STABILIZATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Afghanistan's economy has made some promising gains since 2002, but continues to face significant challenges to economic growth, including poor infrastructure, high unemployment, insecurity, and corruption.³¹³ The World Bank reported that the annual economic growth rate for Afghanistan is expected to increase to 3.2 percent in 2018, up from 2.6 percent in 2017, as long as the security situation does not worsen. This remains significantly lower than the average of 9.6 percent annual growth from 2003 to 2012, when international donor aid factored heavily into economic growth.³¹⁴

USAID works with the Afghan government to strengthen and empower the private sector, create jobs, and promote cross-border trade, among other activities.³¹⁵ This quarter, USAID launched an assessment to reassess its work in developing Afghanistan's energy sector and ensuring alignment with its emerging Country Development Cooperation Strategy

The Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) conducts extensive oversight and auditing of stabilization and infrastructure programs in Afghanistan and issues a quarterly report as well as individual audit reports. SIGAR's latest unclassified reports are available on its website: <https://www.sigar.mil/>

Conflict has destroyed or damaged most of the agricultural infrastructure such as rural roads, storage facilities, and irrigation systems.

and other U.S. government priorities. According to USAID, findings from the assessment are expected in early 2018 and will inform USAID decisions on supporting the Afghan energy and power sector. Work continued on the 10 megawatt Kandahar Solar Project being implemented by the private sector with viability gap funding support from USAID.³¹⁶

USAID reported that the Geneva-based International Trade Center, in conjunction with the government of Afghanistan, developed its National Export Strategy. The strategy seeks to grow Afghan exports and includes strategies for seven different sectors: dried fruit and nuts; fresh fruit and vegetables; saffron; marble and granite; carpets; precious stones and jewelry; and business and professional services. The Afghan Ministry of Mines and Petroleum also developed a “Mining Sector Road Map” with assistance from the USAID-funded Commerce Department’s Commercial Law Development Program. The objective of the Road Map is to accelerate investment in the extractive sector by improving the climate for exploration, development, and production of mineral and hydrocarbon resources.³¹⁷

The greatest challenges to the economic development of the agriculture sector, according to USAID, include the lack of irrigation, lack of farm-to-market roads, poor function of extension services, and multiple obstacles to exporting high value products. Only 6 percent of available agricultural land in Afghanistan is under irrigation, according to the World Bank.³¹⁸ Conflict has destroyed or damaged most of the agricultural infrastructure such as rural roads, storage facilities, and irrigation systems. In addition, the lack of cold storage facilities, scalable production, phytosanitary (pest control) standards, and adequate trade financing hinders export of high value agricultural products from Afghanistan, USAID reported. Other challenges include a lack of credit to private businesses, an absence of government incentives for investment, public sector corruption, and predatory tax collection.³¹⁹

SUPPORT TO MISSION

The Lead IG “support to mission” strategic oversight area concerns administrative, financial, logistical, and management activity to support the U.S. Government’s efforts to conduct military operations, empower host-nation governance, and provide humanitarian assistance to local populations.

DoD Status of Funds

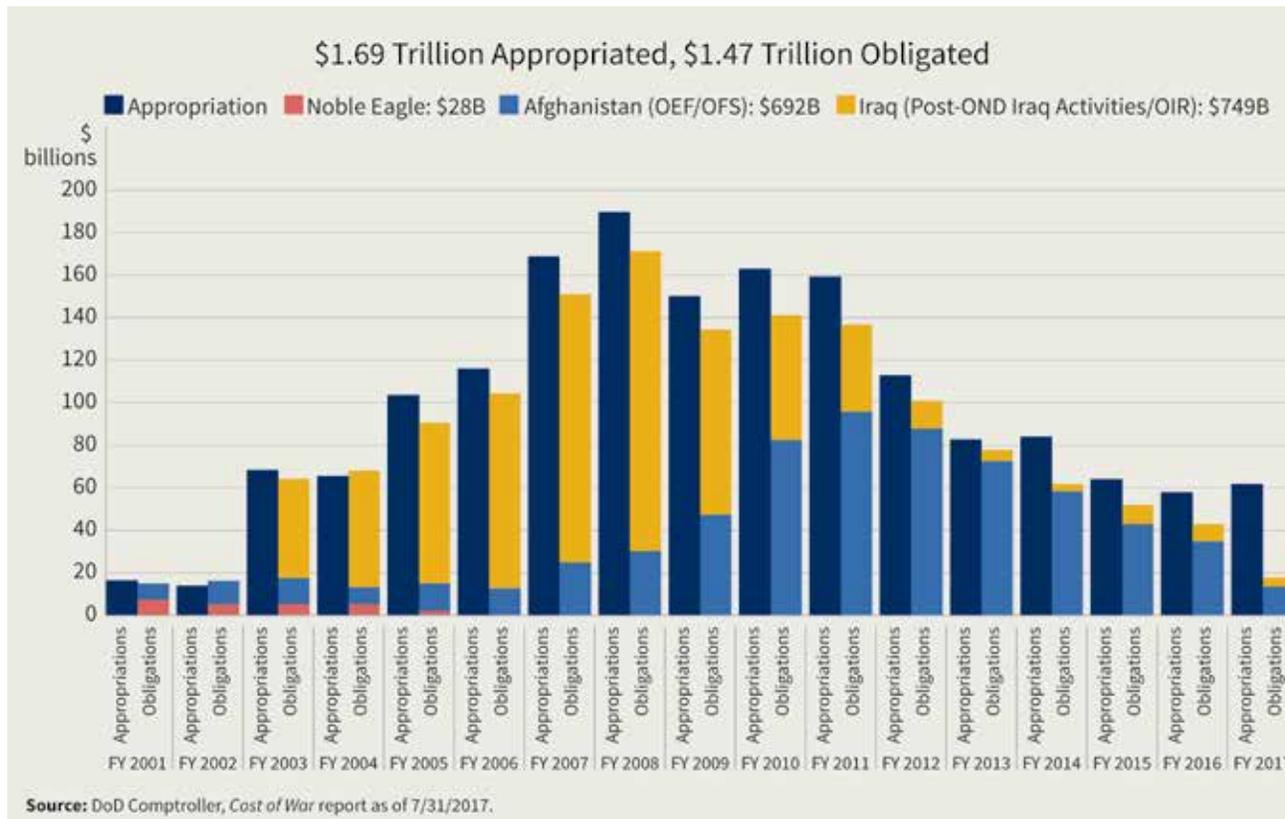
This quarter, the Federal Government operated under a pair of continuing resolutions that funded most Federal agencies at their FY 2017 levels minus a small reduction.³²⁰ OCO funds were exempt from this reduction. However, the DoD cannot use continuing resolution funding to start new programs, enter into multi-year contracts, or increase production rates.³²¹

In his FY 2018 budget, the President requested a total of \$639.1 billion for the DoD, of which \$64.6 billion is designated for OCOs, of which \$45.9 billion is for OFS.³²²

In total, since September 11, 2001, Congress has appropriated \$1.69 trillion and the DoD has obligated \$1.47 trillion for war-related expenses in Afghanistan, Iraq, and related operations, as well as for homeland security missions under Operation Noble Eagle.³²³

Figure 8.

Total DoD War-Related Appropriations and Obligations since September 11, 2001



According to the DoD’s *Cost of War* report, the DoD obligated \$33.4 billion in support of OFS from the start of FY 2017 through July 31, 2017. The DoD has spent \$107.6 billion on OFS since that operation began on January 1, 2015, and a total of \$692.3 billion in Afghanistan since September 11, 2001.³²⁴

However, two DoD OIG audits on the *Cost of War* found shortcomings in the accuracy and timeliness of the report. In both cases, the DoD OIG recommended that the Services develop and implement standard operating procedures to ensure that personnel are properly reporting OCO costs. The Service budget offices agreed to revise existing guidance to identify OCO transactions to improve the accuracy and timeliness of reporting.³²⁵

Afghan Defense Funding

Congress appropriated \$4.3 billion to support the ANDSF through the ASFF in FY 2017. Other international donors provided \$900 million, and the Afghan government provided \$500 million.³²⁶ Of this funding, \$993.1 million was provided directly to the Afghan government to fund salaries, equipment, and facilities maintenance. The remaining U.S. assistance was provided in the form of contracts executed by the DoD, with goods and

Table 11.

DoS and USAID OCO Funding for Afghanistan and Pakistan (in millions)

	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2015 Actual	FY 2016 Actual	FY 2017 Estimate	FY 2017 Request
Afghanistan	\$1,637.6	\$1,853.9	\$1,791.0	\$2,129.8	\$1,705.9
Pakistan	\$586.0	\$821.6	\$590.6	\$578.2	\$417.4
TOTAL	\$2,223.6	\$2,675.5	\$2,381.6	\$2,708.0	\$2,123.3

Sources: DoS, 5/23/2017, 10/5/2017, 2/9/2016, 2/23/2015.

services delivered to ANDSF.³²⁷ This quarter, CSTC-A reported that U.S. and coalition advisors made no new efforts to increase the amount of security assistance funding executed by the Afghan government.³²⁸

For FY 2018, the DoD requested \$4.9 billion in ASFF funding to support ongoing operations as well as the air force modernization and growth of special operations forces. The DoD expects international donors to provide \$789 million, primarily to support the ANP, information technology, and aviation training. The Afghan government will provide \$500 million, primarily for food and subsistence.³²⁹

DoS and USAID Status of Funds

The President's FY 2018 budget request for the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Agencies includes \$12 billion in OCO funding for the DoS and USAID, a reduction of \$8.8 billion (-42 percent) compared to the funding enacted for FY 2017. From FY 2014 to 2017, the DoS and USAID expended more than \$7.4 billion in Afghanistan and nearly \$2.6 billion in Pakistan. The FY 2018 budget request includes \$1.7 billion in OCO funds for Afghanistan and \$417.4 million for Pakistan, as shown in Table 11.³³⁰

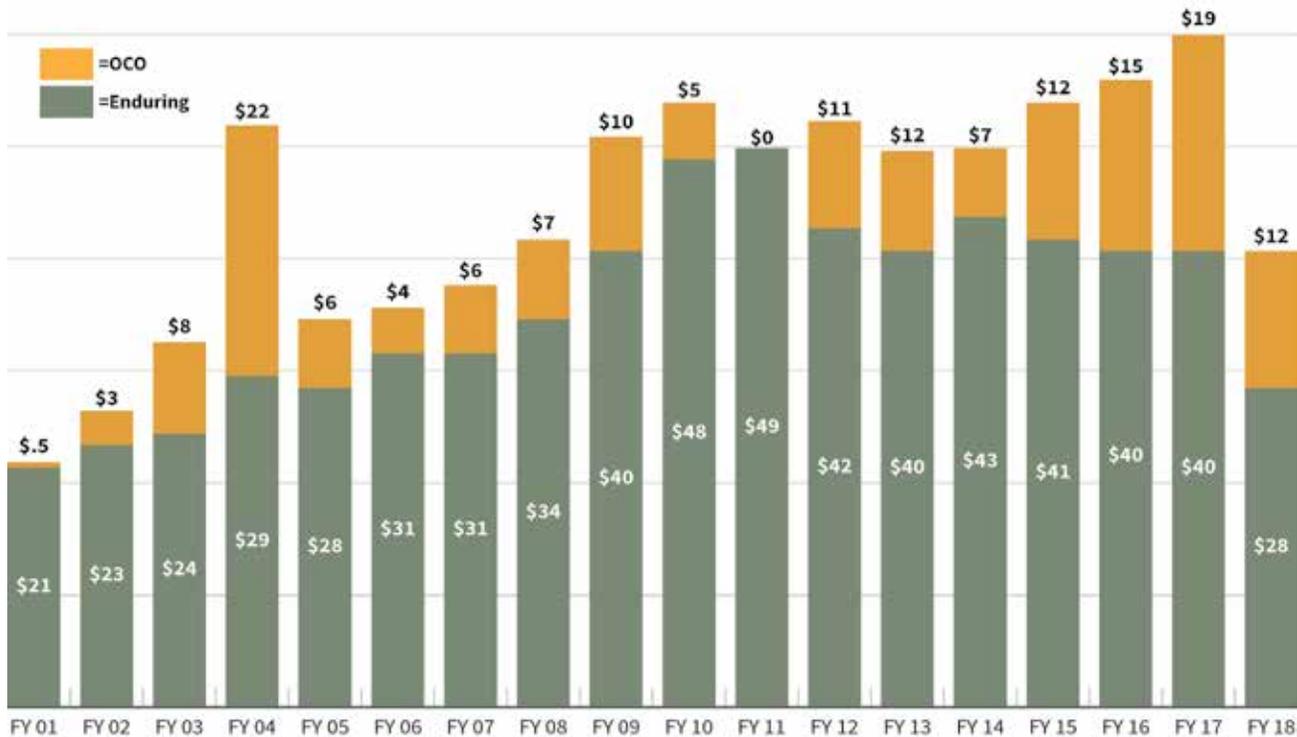
Between FY 2001 and FY 2017, total funding for the DoS and USAID grew by \$37.1 billion (168%). Figure 9 provides the funding levels for enduring funds and OCO funds in the DoS, Foreign Operations and Related Programs for FY 2001-2017. The funding level shown for FY 2018 is the Administration's request, which is pending before Congress.³³¹

DoS Personnel

DoS reported that it has reduced the number of DoS personnel in Afghanistan. All U.S. consulates in the country are closed, and the only DoS presence is in Kabul. The DoS reported two problems resulting from the hiring freeze. The first problem was that the embassy was unable to hire Eligible Family Members in a sufficiently timely fashion to ensure that they were able to receive security clearances in time to travel to post with their spouses.³³²

The second problem was that the DoS Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations was unable to hire a contracting officer's representative (COR) for a \$200 million operations and maintenance contract.³³³ DoS regulations highlight the critical role played by the

Figure 9.
DoS/USAID Enduring and OCO Funding from FY 2001-FY 2018



Source: DoS, 5/23/2017; Congressional Research Service, 9/15/2016.

COR to ensure that the contractor meets the technical requirements of the contract and the Department receives what it pays for in a timely manner.³³⁴ The DoS OIG recently reported significant weaknesses that occurred when a COR was not appointed and on site to oversee a construction contract at Embassy Islamabad, Pakistan. In that audit, the DoS OIG found poor and uncoordinated interaction and communication between the contractor and the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, including the failure of the contractor to obtain the contracting officer’s prior approval for making changes in the contract requirements.³³⁵

DoD Expands Footprint in Afghanistan

In line with the new South Asia strategy, the DoD increased U.S. military and contractor personnel in Afghanistan this quarter. According to the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, from September 30 to December 31, the number of U.S. troops in Afghanistan rose from 11,000 to 14,000. The number of U.S. contractors increased from 9,418 to 10,189, and the number of non-U.S. contractors grew from 14,241 to 15,854 over that same period. The DoD civilian presence remained level this quarter at 750, and the coalition military presence went from 7,000 to 6,900 as shown in Figure 1.³³⁶



U.S. Army Corps of Engineers along with a team of program managers and engineers, conducts aerial inspections of Charikar Substation, power lines and other project sites. (DoD photo)

Most of the approximately 3,500 additional U.S. personnel deploying to Afghanistan will support the Resolute Support train, advise, and assist operations at the tactical level. While additional coalition troops have not yet arrived, 27 partner nations have also pledged to increase their personnel contributions.³³⁷

On November 6, 2017, the President amended his budget request to include an additional \$1.2 billion in OCO funding for the DoD to support this increase in deployments. Specifically, this funding would cover salaries, transportation, communications, intelligence, facilities, and base support for the additional personnel in Afghanistan.³³⁸

Most of the approximately 3,500 additional U.S. personnel deploying to Afghanistan will support the Resolute Support train, advise, and assist operations at the tactical level.

U.S. to Audit Afghan Finances

According to a DoD report released this quarter, President Ghani granted permission to the United States to audit the Afghan Ministry of Finance and the Afghan central bank. The DoD stated that the purpose of this audit is improve transparency in the Afghan government, increase international donor confidence, and provide an accounting to both U.S. taxpayers and international contributors of how their assistance to Afghanistan is being used.³³⁹

Insurgency Threatens Construction Projects

This quarter, USFOR-A reported that fighting and other security issues affected construction projects throughout Helmand and Kandahar provinces. Specifically, contractors working on and near the Kajaki Dam and other projects related to the power grid in the southeastern portion of the country had to evaluate job sites on a daily basis and relocate because of insurgent hostilities. De-mining operations routinely delayed the start of work at new sites. USFOR-A stated that these challenges affected project completion dates but it could not precisely calculate the extent of the delays.³⁴⁰





An Afghan National Security and Defense Forces honor guardsman stands beside a ceremonial flag during the UH-60 Black Hawk arrival ceremony at Kandahar Airfield. (U.S. Air Force photo)

COMPLETED OVERSIGHT ACTIVITIES

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A KC-135 Stratotanker refuels a U.S. Navy F/A-18E/F Super Hornet over the skies of Afghanistan. (U.S. Air Force Photo)



COMPLETED OVERSIGHT ACTIVITY

As required by Section 8L of the Inspector General Act of 1978, the Lead IG, in coordination with the other Lead IG agencies, prepares comprehensive joint strategic oversight plans of, and reports to Congress and the public on all aspects of overseas contingency operations. Together and in close coordination with other IGs, the Lead IG agencies also conduct audits, inspections, and investigations to ensure independent and effective oversight of all Federal programs and operations supporting overseas contingency operations. This section of the report provides information on Lead IG staffing; outreach efforts by Lead IG agencies; completed Lead IG and partner agencies' oversight work related to audits, inspections, and evaluations; Lead IG investigative activity; and the OIGs' hotline activities from October 1 through December 31, 2017.

USAID OIG conducts audits and investigations of USAID's activities in Afghanistan, which do not involve OFS-related programs or activities. USAID OIG coordinates these efforts as appropriate with other audit and law enforcement organizations. This oversight activity is included in this report to provide a more comprehensive update on the oversight of U.S. Government programs in Afghanistan, including those not directly related to OFS.

LEAD IG AGENCY STAFFING

The Lead IG agencies use dedicated, rotational, and temporary employees as well as contractors to conduct oversight projects, investigate fraud and corruption, and perform other functions, such as strategic planning and reporting. Oversight teams from the Lead IG agencies regularly travel to Afghanistan and other locations in the region on a temporary basis to conduct the fieldwork for their projects.

Lead IG Team Travels to Southwest Asia

In November 2017, a Lead IG team traveled to Afghanistan, Kuwait, and Iraq to meet with senior military, diplomatic, and development officials executing U.S. interagency strategy in Operation Inherent Resolve (OIR) and OFS. The team included the DoD Deputy Inspector General for Overseas Contingency Operations, the USAID Deputy Inspector General, and the DoS Assistant Inspector General for Overseas Contingency Operations.

The team stopped first at Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan, where they, with senior U.S. Forces – Afghanistan staff, learned about current military operations. After traveling to Kabul, the team received several classified operational and intelligence briefings with senior U.S. and NATO officials, and met with U.S. Embassy officials. DoS and USAID officials at the embassy provided the team with a series of briefings regarding political, economic, and anti-corruption initiatives in Afghanistan.

The team then traveled to Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, to meet with senior Combined Joint Task Force–OIR staff. The staff provided an operational status update of activities meant to defeat ISIS in Iraq and Syria. The team proceeded to Baghdad to meet with the OIR Commander and the Deputy Chief of Mission, U.S. Embassy Baghdad. The discussions covered the planned Iraqi elections, and economic and development initiatives undertaken by the United States, coalition partners, and the United Nations, including the care of internally displaced persons returning to areas liberated from ISIS.

In addition, in January 2018, just after the quarter ended, the Inspectors General from DoD, DoS, and USAID traveled to Afghanistan, Qatar, and Iraq to gain a better understanding on the status of overseas contingency operations. The IGs met with military commanders, the U.S. Ambassadors in Iraq and Afghanistan, the USAID Mission Directors, many other civilian and military officials, senior Afghan government officials, the President of Afghanistan, and OIG staff deployed to the region. The IGs sought to obtain a better understanding of the status of U.S. efforts in the region, to assess the whole-of-government approach to succeeding in the OFS and OIR areas of responsibility, and to help develop oversight plans for overseas contingency operations. The meetings were candid, productive, and comprehensive. We will provide more details regarding this trip, and the key issues that emerged, during it in the next quarterly report.

The IGs met with military commanders, the U.S. Ambassadors in Iraq and Afghanistan, the USAID Mission Directors, many other civilian and military officials, senior Afghan government officials, the President of Afghanistan, and OIG staff deployed to the region.

OUTREACH

Outreach and coordination continue to be important aspects of the Lead IG agencies' mission. In early November, senior officials from the Lead IG agencies travelled to Afghanistan, Kuwait, and Iraq to meet with senior military, diplomatic, and development officials executing U.S. interagency strategy in OFS and OIR. The IGs also held high-level meetings with their oversight partners to coordinate oversight efforts and they participated in activities to share the Lead IG model. Lead IG officials, representing the DoD OIG, DoS OIG, and USAID OIG, regularly meet in Washington, D.C., and elsewhere with policy officials, collect information, and conduct research related to OFS activities in Afghanistan.

COMPLETED AUDIT, INSPECTION, AND EVALUATION REPORTS

The Lead IG agencies and their partner agencies released ten reports relating to OFS during the period of October 1, 2017, through December 31, 2017. The reports examined allegations of child sexual abuse by members of the ANDSF; DoD contracting officer representative responsibility for the oversight of invoices for overseas contingency operations; the oversight of CENTCOM and AFRICOM counternarcotics activities; contract terms and guidance for approving student-training expenses related to the Justice and corrections programs in Afghanistan; the oversight of antiterrorism assistance program activities in Afghanistan that are under the DoS Bureaus of Near Eastern Affairs and South and Central Asian Affairs; the lapse in oversight of construction at Embassy Islamabad, Pakistan, that allowed design change to proceed without the contracting officer's knowledge; Afghan MoD Headquarters Security and Support Brigade facilitates construction; absent without leave U.S.-based Afghan security personnel and the impact their absence has on readiness and morale as well as the security concerns they create; Kabul military training center Phase IV contract compliance; and the unused DoD-procured non-intrusive inspection equipment at borders in Afghanistan.

The DoD OIG also released a redacted version of a previously classified report on U.S. and Coalition efforts to enable the Afghan MoD to develop its oversight and internal control capability.

Final Reports

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

Implementation of the DoD Leahy Law Regarding Allegations of Child Sexual Abuse by Members of the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces

DODIG-2018-018, November 16, 2017

The DoD OIG conducted an evaluation to assess the DoD's implementation of the Leahy Law regarding child sexual abuse as it applies to DoD interaction with, and Title 10 support of, the Afghan security ministries and the ANDSF.

The DoD OIG report contained several significant findings. First, prior to specific command guidance issued to U.S. personnel in Afghanistan in September 2015, there existed no guidance that identified child sexual abuse as a gross violation of human rights that should be reported. As a result, U.S. military personnel in Afghanistan may not have known to report child sexual abuse allegations to their chains of command. The DoD OIG did not identify official guidance that discouraged DoD-affiliated personnel from reporting incidents of child sexual abuse. However, in some cases, DoD personnel interviewed explained that they, or someone whom they knew, were told informally that nothing could be done about child sexual abuse because of Afghanistan's status as a sovereign nation, that it was not a priority issue for the command, or that it was best to let the local police handle it.

Between 2010 and 2016, the DoD OIG identified 16 allegations of child sexual abuse against Afghan government officials that were reported to U.S. officials. Of the 16 allegations, 11 were reported to Afghanistan government officials. The classified appendix contains a list of the reported allegations.

In addition, the DoD OIG found there were inconsistencies in the data provided and in the records about reported allegations of child sexual abuse involving the ANDSF. The evaluation team was unable to confirm the completeness and accuracy of information on allegations of child sexual abuse involving ANDSF personnel being tracked by the DoD.

The evaluation also found that the DoD did not conduct training for personnel deployed or deploying to Afghanistan before 2015 on identifying, responding to, or reporting suspected instances of child sexual abuse. Additionally, the DoD did not have standardized guidance or a process for determining whether information regarding allegations of gross human rights violations was being tracked.

Lastly, the DoD's decisions to withhold funding or apply the notwithstanding authority for gross violations of human rights only occurred about once a year. As a result, the DoD was not applying the Leahy Law in a timely manner.

The DoD OIG made eight recommendations to the DoD. The report recommended that the Secretary of Defense develop procedures for the application of the Leahy Law with respect to gross violations of human rights allegations involving members of the ANDSF by designating an office of primary responsibility to develop and implement detailed procedures on gross violations of human rights reporting within the DoD; define "credible information" as it applies to gross violations of human rights determinations and the Leahy Law; establish the specific process by which Leahy Law credible information determinations are made; establish and implement a records-management policy for all alleged gross violations of human rights in Afghanistan; and issue guidance specifying the requirements for creating and maintaining an official system to track gross violations of human rights information. The DoD OIG also recommended that Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Central Asia review the United States Central Command and United States Special Operations Command historical records containing allegations of child sexual abuse by ANDSF personnel to determine whether any gross violations of human rights allegations require further review by USFOR-A or the Gross Violations of Human Rights

Forum. The DoD OIG also recommended that the Commander, USFOR-A establish more detailed procedures for DoD-affiliated personnel in Afghanistan to report allegations of child sexual abuse committed by ANDSF personnel and other human rights violations, including procedures that verify that the USFOR-A Staff Judge Advocate receives such reports.

The Assistant Secretary of Defense, International Security Affairs, answered on behalf of the Secretary of Defense and agreed to implement the recommendations.

Army Oversight of Logistics Civil Augmentation Program Government-Furnished Property in Afghanistan

DODIG-2018-040; December 11, 2017

The DoD OIG conducted this audit of the Logistics Civil Augmentation Program (LOGCAP) Government-furnished property in Afghanistan. LOGCAP is an Army program that uses contractors to provide logistical and sustainment services to deployed forces. The Army has issued four LOGCAP contracts around the world, including Afghanistan. Services provided in the LOGCAP contract include dining and laundry facilities, housing, construction, transportation, and facilities maintenance.

The DoD OIG found that the Army did not perform effective oversight of LOGCAP Government-furnished property in Afghanistan. The Army Sustainment Command property records did not include at least 26,993 items provided to the LOGCAP IV contractors. These accountable records were incomplete because the Army Contracting Command–Rock Island did not properly modify the LOGCAP IV contract for Government-furnished property transfers and did not coordinate Government-furnished property transfers with the property book officer. In addition, Army guidance did not include sufficient controls for identifying and resolving Government-furnished property accountability deficiencies.

Because of the Army's poor accountability, at least \$100 million in property was at increased risk of being lost, stolen, or unaccounted for without Army detection. While LOGCAP contractors have self-reported more than \$9.7 million in Government-furnished property losses since 2012, without an accurate list of all Government-furnished property, Army officials cannot be certain that all contractor Government-furnished property losses have been identified, investigated, and reported. In addition, the contractors' records contained 4,019 controlled inventory items, valued at \$1.5 million that were not included in the Army's accountable records. Finally, the lack of accountability of LOGCAP Government-furnished property limited the Army's ability to plan and execute base sustainment in Afghanistan. Specifically, the Army had to rely on the contractor's records rather than the Army's for procurement-related decision-making.

The DoD OIG recommended that the Commanding General, Army Contracting Command, coordinate with the Commander, Expeditionary Contracting Command–Afghanistan, to review and validate the contractors' Government-furnished property listings, modify LOGCAP task orders to ensure all Government-furnished property in the possession of the LOGCAP contractors is included in the contract, and provide the property book officer with the updated contract modification; develop a Government-furnished property training manual

and train personnel on the Army guidance and processes for LOGCAP accountability; and ensure corrective actions implemented on LOGCAP IV are effectively included in the establishment and execution of the LOGCAP IV contract. The DoD OIG also recommended that the Commanding General, Army Sustainment Command, task the Commander, 401st Army Field Support Brigade, use the contract modification referenced in the first recommendation to update the Army's official Government-furnished property accountable records; and update the Theater-Provided Equipment standard operating procedures to require the theater property book officer coordinate with Expeditionary Contracting Command–Afghanistan to reconcile, at least twice per year, the Army Government-furnished property accountable record with the contractors' records and address any discrepancies.

The Commanding General, Army Contracting Command and the Executive Director, Acquisition Integration and Management Center agreed with the recommendations.

U.S. Central and U.S. Africa Commands' Oversight of Counternarcotics Activities
DODIG-2018-059; December 26, 2017

The DoD OIG conducted this audit to assess whether CENTCOM and U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) provided effective oversight of counternarcotics activities in their areas of responsibility. These activities include tracking funds after they were transferred to the Combatant Commands and maintaining reliable data for the completion status and funding for training, equipping, and construction activities.

The DoD OIG determined that the CENTCOM and AFRICOM did not provide effective oversight of counternarcotics activities in FYs 2014 through 2016. Specifically, neither organization maintained reliable data for the completion status (whether activities were planned, executed, or canceled) and funding of counternarcotics training, equipping, and construction activities.

In addition, the DoD OIG found that CENTCOM could have more effectively planned its counternarcotics activities by identifying its theater campaign plan objectives for each activity. As a result, neither organization could determine whether its programs effectively used the \$496 million reported as transferred from Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Counternarcotics and Global Threats to counter illicit drug trafficking in FYs 2014 through 2016. Without effective program management at the DoD's strategic and operational levels, the DoD lacks the ability to make informed decisions and hold agency officials accountable for mismanaged funds.

The DoD OIG recommended that the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Counternarcotics and Global Threats define the combatant commanders' and military services' roles and responsibilities for oversight of counternarcotics activities, including tracking the completion status and funding of individual counternarcotics activities. The DoD OIG also recommended that CENTCOM and AFRICOM develop and formalize procedures to track the completion status and funding of counternarcotics activities and that CENTCOM develop and formalize procedures to link each activity to the theatre campaign plan objectives.

The DoD OIG considered management comments on the draft report when preparing the final report. Comments from the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Counternarcotics and Global Threats addressed the recommendations, concurred with them, and is taking action to address the findings. The recommendations to the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Counternarcotics and Global Threats is considered resolved and will be closed upon receipt of the signed DoD instruction. For the recommendations made to CENTCOM, they were asked to provide additional comments. AFRICOM was not required to comment on the report because the recommendation to it was considered closed.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

Management Assistance Report: Contract Terms and Guidance for Approving Student Training Expenses Relating to the Justice and Corrections Programs in Afghanistan Require Attention

AUD-MERO-18-14; October 27, 2017

The Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs established the Justice Sector Support Program and the Corrections Systems Support Program to increase the government of Afghanistan's ability to enforce the rule of law. The support includes, among other things, training for Afghan government institutions. To implement these programs, the Bureau of Administration, Office of Logistics Management, Office of Acquisitions Management in support of the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, awarded a series of contracts to a single contractor between 2005 and 2017.

During the DoS OIG's ongoing audit of the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs' invoice-review process for contracts in Afghanistan, the DoS OIG noted that some training expenses were being paid in support of the Justice Sector Support Program and Corrections Systems Support Program even though such expenses were not explicitly authorized in the contract. The Federal Acquisition Regulation states that for a cost to be allowable, it must be authorized by the terms of the contract. The DoS OIG found that, except for transportation expenses that are explicitly authorized under the Corrections Systems Support Program contract, no other student-training expenses were authorized for payment. Specifically, neither the Justice Sector Support Program nor the Corrections Systems Support Program contract authorized student-training expenses, such as per diem or other support stipends, refreshments, or training venue rentals. Nevertheless, the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs approved approximately \$5 million in payments to the contractor for these types of training expenses between 2011 and 2016. The DoS acquisition officials told the DoS OIG that the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs did intend to pay these training expenses but acknowledged that the contracts did not explicitly state that these expenses were authorized for reimbursement. The DoS acquisition officials stated that they would modify both contracts to specify clearly the extent to which student-training expenses are allowable, and did so in September 2017.

The DoS OIG also found that the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs paid invoices for student training without complete supporting documentation. The DoS requires such supporting document to ensure that all payments are authorized, accurate, legal, correct, and that the goods were actually received or services actually performed. The

DoS OIG reviewed seven invoices for expenses incurred between 2007 and 2016 and found that student-training expenses lacked supporting documentation. This occurred, in part, because neither the Justice Sector Support Program nor the Corrections Systems Support Program contract provide specific instructions on invoicing such expenses and how they should be supported. In addition, the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs' invoice-review standard operating procedure does not address the appropriate manner of reviewing student-training expenses. The DoS OIG made six recommendations to address the deficiencies identified in this report.

Both the Bureau of Administration, Office of Logistics Management, Office of Acquisitions Management, and the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs concurred with the six recommendations offered and have taken steps to implement them. In particular, the DoS acquisition office has modified the follow-on Justice Sector Support Program and Corrections Systems Support Program contracts to specify the extent to which student-training expenses are allowable. The DoS Acquisition office also stated that it would review the costs questioned by the DoS OIG and make a decision regarding any part of the \$5 million paid to the contractor that should be recovered. In addition, the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs stated that it was developing Kabul-specific invoice-review guidance, including how to review student-training expenses. The DoS OIG therefore considers two of the recommendations offered closed and four resolved, pending further action.

Management Assistance Report: Although Progress Has Been Made, Challenges Remain in Monitoring and Overseeing Antiterrorism Assistance Program Activities in Afghanistan

AUD-MERO-18-16; November 9, 2017

The DoS OIG conducted a compliance follow-up review to determine whether the closed recommendations from the DoS OIG's April 2012 audit report on the DoS Antiterrorism Assistance (ATA) program had improved management and oversight of that program. The 2012 report identified several deficiencies that limited the ability of DoS officials to determine the ATA program's effectiveness, and it contained six recommendations that applied to ATA programs in Afghanistan. The recommendations were intended to improve management and oversight of the ATA program and were addressed to the two DoS bureaus that have overlapping responsibilities for the ATA program—the Bureau of Diplomatic Security and the Bureau of Counterterrorism and Countering Violent Extremism.

In this compliance follow-up review of the ATA program in Afghanistan, the DoS OIG found that the actions taken to address those recommendations had incrementally improved the management and oversight of the Afghanistan program. Specifically, the DoS OIG found that ATA program sustainment by the Afghan government had progressed; consultation with the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor on Afghanistan's eligibility for participation in the ATA program had increased; the database for tracking equipment was current and was being periodically validated; and a process for ensuring equipment compatibility had been implemented. However, because of competing priorities, a robust ATA program monitoring and evaluation system to assess program progress has not been established and implemented

as recommended in the 2012 report. In addition, required reports that are necessary to provide information on program progress were not being prepared, in part, because the contracting officer elected to receive updates through weekly phone conferences rather than through formal, written reports. Finally, in-country oversight was lacking for a long period because the individual assigned to oversee ATA activities in Afghanistan was not formally designated to report to the contracting officer on the quality of contractor performance. This issue was corrected in September 2016.

In this follow-up report, the DoS OIG made one recommendation to the Bureau of Diplomatic Security to address the deficiencies identified in this report. In addition, the DoS OIG has previously offered recommendations that will benefit the ATA program in Afghanistan. Specifically, four of the five recommendations made in a May 2017 report regarding the ATA program in Pakistan, when fully implemented, will also address deficiencies identified with the ATA program in Afghanistan. Those recommendations called on the relevant bureaus to 1) implement a monitoring and evaluation system; 2) develop and implement procedures to verify compliance with reporting requirements; 3) develop and implement procedures to verify that the contracting officer's representative has appropriate documentation to support the receipt and payment of goods or services prior to approving invoices for payment; and 4) develop and implement procedures to verify that the ATA program contracting officer prepares and issues written contract modifications when necessary. As of October 16, 2017, three of the four recommendations remained open and are were considered resolved pending further action.

The Bureau of Diplomatic Security concurred with the new recommendation offered in the November 2017 compliance follow-up review report and has taken steps to implement it. Based on actions taken by the Bureau of Diplomatic Security, the DoS OIG considered this recommendation closed, and no further action was required. However, the three open recommendations relating to the ATA program in Pakistan that also apply to the ATA program in Afghanistan will continue to be monitored through the OIG's audit-compliance process until fully implemented.

Management Assistance Report: Lapse in Oversight at Embassy Islamabad, Pakistan, Allowed Design Change to Proceed without the Contracting Officer's Knowledge

AUD-MERO-18-01; December 12, 2017

In September 2010, the Bureau of Administration, Office of Logistics Management, Office of Acquisitions Management, on behalf of the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, awarded a firm-fixed-price, design-build contract to a construction firm to build several structures at Embassy Islamabad, Pakistan, including three staff diplomatic apartment buildings.

In a design-build contract, the DoS provides a scope of work in the request for proposal that defines its needs along with any specific requirements or criteria. The contractor is then responsible for developing the final design documents, which should reflect the requirements set forth in the request for proposal.

During fieldwork for an ongoing audit of the contract to design and build the \$852.8 million New Embassy Compound and Housing Project in Islamabad, the DoS OIG learned that the contractor was planning to make adjustments or alterations to the building materials on the façades of three buildings. The contractor set forth this change, among others, in an April 2016 internal document titled Bulletin 29. The DoS OIG alerted the Bureau of Administration and the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations in a draft of this report that a substitution of materials would require the approval of the contracting officer. The materials that the contractor intended to use for the façades of the staff diplomatic apartment buildings deviated from the final design documents that the contractor prepared under the terms of the contract and that were approved by the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations and the contracting officer in December 2012. The contractor intended to decrease the use of metal panels and stone and increase the use of stucco in the façade. Stucco is less expensive than metal or stone.

The DoS OIG found that the contractor did not seek or receive approval for the changes. The contractor was not authorized to make these adjustments unilaterally, regardless of the reason for doing so. Interaction and communications between the contractor, the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, and the contracting officer in the Bureau of Administration were generally poor and uncoordinated and were not documented in the contract file as required. The DoS OIG only learned of the changes in the building material through interviews with Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations architects at the embassy during a site visit 10 months after the contractor unilaterally decided to make the changes. The contracting officer in the Bureau of Administration did not know about the changes until he spoke with the DoS OIG, following the DoS OIG staff's return from Islamabad. The communication and documentation confirming the communications is important to ensure that all stakeholders (including DoS officials in Washington; current and future officials assigned to oversee the contract; and the contractor) are aware of activities conducted under the contract. The DoS OIG also found that for a year, the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations did not have a contracting officer's representative in place to oversee the contract.

In response to a draft of this report, the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations stated that according to the contract, the contractor could unilaterally make the changes without the contracting officer's involvement, a reading that the DoS OIG does not believe the contract supports. According to the Federal Acquisition Regulation, the contracting officer is responsible for administering, modifying, and making related contract determinations and findings on behalf of the U.S. Government. The contracting officer cannot consistently comply with these responsibilities without being aware of changes in planned construction.

To ensure that the oversight of the New Embassy Compound and Housing Project in Islamabad is robust, the DoS OIG made five recommendations to the Bureau of Administration, four of which were in coordination with the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations.

The Bureau of Administration, in coordination with the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, concurred with four recommendations and did not concur with one recommendation. At the time the report was issued, based on the agency responses and actions taken and planned, the DoS OIG considered four recommendations closed, and one recommendation unresolved.

SPECIAL INSPECTOR GENERAL FOR AFGHANISTAN RECONSTRUCTION

Afghan Ministry of Defense Headquarters Security and Support Brigade: Facility Construction Generally Met Contract Requirements, but Three Safety-Related Concerns Need to Be Addressed

SIGAR-18-09-IR; October 31, 2017

SIGAR conducted this inspection to determine whether construction of MoD Headquarters Security and Support Brigade facilities was completed in accordance with contract requirements and applicable construction standards, and the facilities were being used and maintained.

SIGAR determined that the facilities generally met contract requirements, but the report identified three construction deficiencies: 1) three electric heaters in the administration/barracks building restrooms were installed above the ablution washing stations; 2) 60 circuit breakers—59 in the administration/barracks building and 1 in the fire station—and 2 main breakers in the administration/barracks building had a higher amperage rating than required; and 3) exposed hot water pipes in the medical clinic were not insulated.

Despite the construction deficiencies and late completion, the ANA was using all of the Headquarters Security and Support Brigade facilities. SIGAR determined that the MoD's engineering department manages the operations and maintenance for the headquarters facilities and its staff is maintaining the facilities adequately. However, the lack of adequate planning and coordination between the Air Force and Afghan officials during early stages of the Headquarters Security and Support Brigade medical clinic's design ultimately resulted in the building not meeting all of the user's needs.

The Air Force did not concur with SIGAR's findings and draft recommendations. It stated that there were no safety concerns regarding electric heaters, breakers, and pipes that these items were constructed in accordance with the codes applicable at the time of construction. After considering the Air Force's response to the draft report, SIGAR recommended that the Air Force take the following actions: 1) develop an accurate set of as-built drawings for all systems that includes the locations of the electric heaters without ground fault circuit interrupter protection, the oversized circuit breakers, and the exposed hot water pipes; 2) provide updated as-built drawings to the Headquarters Security and Support Brigade facility managers; and 3) inform the Afghan facility managers of the potential risks to ANA personnel.

U.S.-Based Training for Afghanistan Security Personnel: Trainees Who Go Absent Without Leave Hurt Readiness and Morale, and May Create Security Risks

SIGAR-18-03-SP; October 31, 2017

SIGAR conducted a review of U.S.-based training for Afghan security personnel to 1) determine the extent to which Afghan trainees went absent without leave (AWOL) while training in the United States, and why; 2) examine the processes for vetting and selecting Afghans for training in the United States and for investigating their disappearance once

they have gone AWOL; and 3) assess any impact that AWOL trainees have on U.S. and Afghan training and reconstruction efforts.

SIGAR's analysis found that 253,977 foreign trainees from all countries came to the United States for training between 2005 and 2017, and of those, 2,537 were from Afghanistan. During this period, 320 foreign trainees went AWOL while training in the United States; 152 (47.5 percent) of these trainees were from Afghanistan. According to the analysis, 83 of the AWOL Afghan trainees fled the United States after going AWOL or they remain unaccounted.

SIGAR recommended that U.S. Government agencies develop policies or procedures to ensure improved communication throughout the investigatory and potential asylum processes. SIGAR also recommended that the DoS, in coordination with DoD and the Department of Homeland Security, evaluate policies regarding visas and registration as alien residents. Finally, SIGAR recommended that the DoS, in coordination with DoD and the Department of Homeland Security, determine whether requiring all Afghan trainees to complete an in-person interview prior to being granted a visa would help to mitigate unauthorized absences or assist in U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement investigations when unauthorized absences occur.

The DoS disagreed with SIGAR's recommendation to examine whether an in-person interview prior to granting a visa would help in mitigating unauthorized absences or in assisting with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement investigations. The DoS neither agreed nor disagreed with SIGAR's recommendation regarding the provisions pertaining to registration as alien residents in the United States and the evaluation of the benefits of providing greater granularity on biographical and background information for all Afghan security trainees in the United States. Finally, the DoS disagreed with the phrasing used in the draft SIGAR report related to improving coordination between U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. Accordingly, SIGAR revised the recommendation.

The Department of Homeland Security stated that it had a number of mechanisms in place to identify and remove aliens who overstay their period of lawful admission in the United States, and that they had a U.S. Immigration and Customs unit that focuses on preventing criminals and terrorists from exploiting the U.S. immigration system by proactively developing cases for investigation on individuals who violate the conditions of their status or overstay their period of admission.

Kabul Military Training Center Phase IV: Poor Design and Construction, and Contractor Noncompliance Resulted in the Potential Waste of as Much as \$4.1 Million in Taxpayer Funds

SIGAR-18-01-IP; October 10, 2017

SIGAR conducted this inspection to determine whether the Kabul Military Training Center's Phase IV facilities were constructed in accordance with contract requirements and applicable construction standards, and were being actively used and maintained properly.

SIGAR determined that the training center facility construction and renovation project was completed, facilities were largely being utilized, and most were well maintained. However, SIGAR identified deficiencies and safety issues in multiple facilities, including inadequate project oversight, unapproved product substitution, and noncompliance with the National Fire Protection Association standards. SIGAR estimated that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers potentially wasted as much as \$4.1 million in taxpayer funds.

SIGAR recommended that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers eliminate the unsafe conditions at the training center facilities and bring all construction into compliance with contract requirements.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers concurred with two recommendations, did not concur with five recommendations, and is conducting further reviews of two recommendations.

DOD Procured Non-Intrusive Inspection Equipment: \$9.48 Million Worth of Equipment Sits Unused at Borders in Afghanistan

SIGAR-18-14-SP; November 27, 2017

SIGAR conducted a review of Afghan border crossing points non-intrusive inspection equipment to identify the amount of DoD funds spent to procure, operate, and maintain the equipment installed at Afghan border crossings and customs depots, and examine the extent to which that equipment is being maintained and used for its intended purpose.

SIGAR found that CENTCOM purchased eight pieces of non-intrusive inspection equipment that were supposed to assist the Afghan government in reducing smuggling and improve its ability to efficiently and effectively collect customs duties—a key source of Afghan government income. The total U.S. Government investment to procure, operate, maintain this equipment, and to train Afghan government officials in the use of the equipment is between \$59 million and \$62.6 million. SIGAR noted that while this was a well-intended program, it appeared that much of the U.S. Government's investment in the program was wasted because the equipment sits unused at all but one location. SIGAR reported that it appeared that the Afghan government had been unable or unwilling to sustain that investment. SIGAR further reported that without the use of the non-intrusive inspection equipment, there is little to prevent the commercial smuggling and cross-border narcotics trade that has continually plagued Afghan borders.

In its response to this report, CENTCOM concurred with SIGAR's assessment. CENTCOM questioned SIGAR's calculation of the total U.S. Government investment to procure, operate, maintain the equipment, and to train Afghan government officials in the use of the equipment because the Border Management Task Force had multiple roles at the Afghan borders. SIGAR believes CENTCOM's assertion that only a small fraction would have been non-intrusive inspection related is unsupported.

Redacted Report: U.S. and Coalition Efforts to Enable Afghan Ministry of Defense to Develop its Oversight and Internal Control Capability Released

A report on the DoD's evaluation of the U.S. and coalition efforts to enable the MoD to develop its oversight and internal control capability was released to authorized recipients on August 4, 2017, and a recently redacted version of the report was released publically on December 6, 2017. The DoD OIG conducted the evaluation in Afghanistan from May 2016 through November 2016 to determine whether U.S. Government and coalition train, advise, and assist efforts will enable the Afghan MoD and subordinate organizations to develop transparency, accountability, and oversight capability.

The DoD OIG determined that insufficient level of training for Resolute Support advisors who work with MoD directors delayed progress toward building the MoD's and its subordinate commands' internal-controls. The DoD OIG determined that the Resolute Support advisors needed to place more emphasis on the Ministerial Internal Control Program advisory efforts at the MoD and subordinate commands to meet the transparency, accountability, and oversight of Essential Function milestones.

The DoD OIG recommended that CSTC-A advise the MoD and the ANA Chief of the General Staff to update their policies so they are plainly written and contain clearly articulated roles and responsibilities. DoD OIG recommended that they should also advise the MoD and ANA Chief of the General Staff to emphasize the importance of the implementation plans for the Ministerial Internal Control Program, ensure the timely development of these plans and policies, and ensure that the polices are enforced. Additionally, the DoD OIG recommended that the reports by ANA Corps Inspectors General about alleged corruption be processed in accordance with Afghan law.

The DoD OIG also recommended that the Chief of Staff, Resolute Support, in coordination with the Deputy Advisor to the MoD, review and update the Essential Function coordination processes to ensure that they support the development and implementation of plans for the Ministerial Internal Control Program and are integrated with advisory efforts at the MoD, ANA Corps, and subordinate commands.

Finally, the DoD OIG made recommendations related to personnel staffing and management. The Chief of Staff, Resolute Support, in coordination with the Commanding General, CSTC-A, should review the staffing levels and capacity of the Resolute Support Defense National Logistics Directorate to support the transparency, accountability, and oversight effort at MoD national-level logistics institutions.

(continued on next page)

Redacted Report: U.S. and Coalition Efforts to Enable Afghan Ministry of Defense to Develop its Oversight and Internal Control Capability Released *(continued from previous page)*

CSTC-A agreed or partially agreed with the DoD OIG recommendations. The agreed-upon actions included, but were not limited to, communicating to Afghan partners the importance of fully implementing the Ministerial Internal Control Program, developing clearly written implementation plans, and completing annual statements of assurance in a timely manner. The Chief of Staff, Resolute Support ordered all Essential Functions advisors to assist their Afghan partners with mapping high-risk processes for their functional areas, and identifying and implementing internal controls to support those processes. In addition, CSTC-A agreed to advise ANA Corps Commanders to take action to enhance the ability of ANA Corps Inspectors General to combat corruption and report any unresolved high-risk areas through their statement of assurance to their leadership.

CSTC-A's comments were responsive to the report's recommendations, at the time the report was issued, and all recommendations were considered resolved, but open. The recommendations can be closed when CSTC-A completes the actions it has proposed.

INVESTIGATIONS

The investigative components of the Lead IG agencies and partner agencies conducted criminal investigations related to OFS during the quarter. The Lead IG agencies use criminal investigators forward-deployed to the region, as well as criminal investigators in the United States, to investigate OFS-related fraud and corruption. The Defense Criminal Investigative Service (DCIS), the criminal investigative component of the DoD OIG, has an office in Bagram and in Kabul, within the NATO Resolute Support Compound. The DoS OIG maintains a regional office in Germany from which investigators travel to Afghanistan.

Investigative Activity

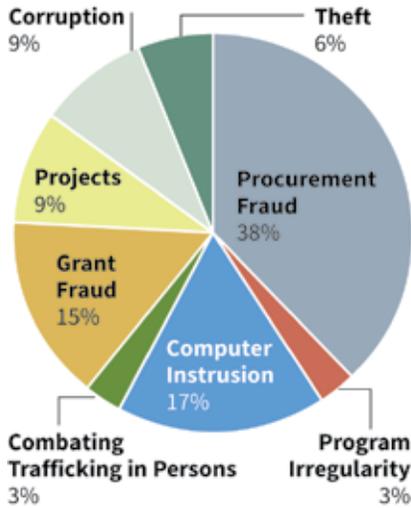
Between October 2017 and December 2017, Lead IG agency investigations resulted in one criminal charge, one misdemeanor conviction, seven suspensions, six debarments, seven personnel actions, two other administrative actions, and the removal of one employee from Federal employment. The Lead IG investigative components and the military investigative organizations also initiated 10 new investigations and closed 7 investigations during the quarter.

As of December 31, 2017, there were 34 open investigations involving OFS-related programs and operations, including allegations of procurement, grant, and other program fraud; corruption; theft; trafficking-in-persons; and other offenses. In addition, the Fraud and Corruption Investigative Working Group conducted 23 fraud awareness briefings in Afghanistan for 314 participants.

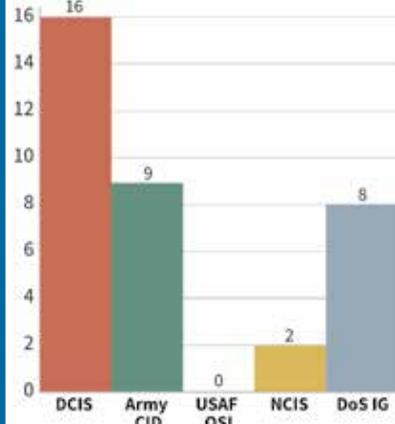
A consolidated depiction of the OFS-related activities of these investigative components during this quarter is shown in the following dashboard.

ACTIVITY BY FRAUD AND CORRUPTION INVESTIGATIVE WORKING GROUP

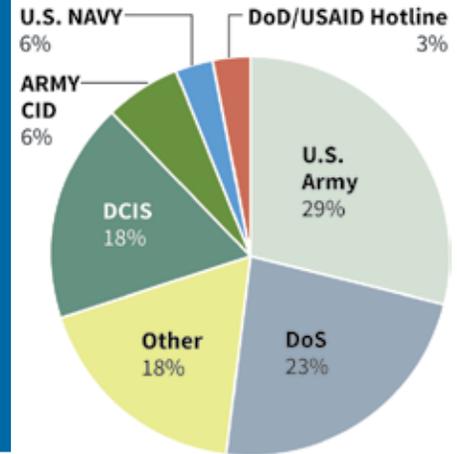
OPERATION FREEDOM'S SENTINEL
As of December 31, 2017



OPEN INVESTIGATIONS BY WORKING GROUP MEMBER*



SOURCES OF ALLEGATIONS



OPEN INVESTIGATIONS

34

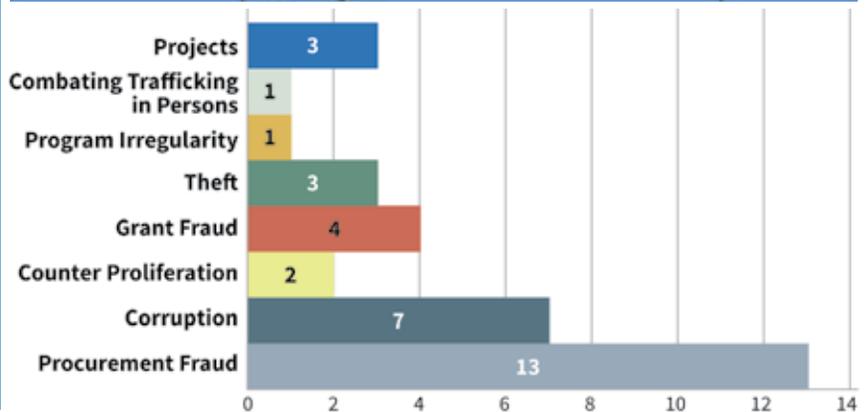
Q1 FY 2018 RESULTS

Arrests	—
Criminal Charges	1
Savings/Recoveries	\$19,289
Job Terminations	1
Personnel Actions	7
Other Administrative	2
Forfeitures	\$180,000

Q1 FY 2018 BRIEFINGS

No. of Briefings	23
No. of Attendees	314

PRIMARY OFFENSES



*Some investigations are being worked jointly by more than one agency. Therefore, the total number of open cases by FCIWG Agency may not equal the total number of open investigations. **Note:** Cumulative since Jan. 1, 2015

FORMER EMPLOYEE OF U.S. GOVERNMENT CONTRACTOR IN AFGHANISTAN SENTENCED TO PRISON FOR ACCEPTING \$250,000 IN KICKBACKS FROM SUBCONTRACTOR

In November 2017, Nebraska McAlpine, an employee of a U.S. Government contractor in Afghanistan, was sentenced to 21 months in prison for accepting more than \$250,000 in illegal kickbacks from an Afghan subcontractor in return for his assistance in obtaining subcontracts on U.S. Government contracts.

We reported on this case last quarter, when McAlpine plead guilty to one count of accepting illegal kickbacks. As part of his guilty plea, McAlpine admitted that while he was employed as a project manager for an American defense contractor (the Prime Contractor) in Kabul, Afghanistan, he and an Afghan executive agreed that in exchange for illicit kickbacks, McAlpine would ensure that the Prime Contractor awarded lucrative subcontracts to the executive's companies. McAlpine admitted that he repeatedly told his supervisors that these companies should be awarded "sole source" subcontracts, which allowed them to supply services to the Prime Contractor without having to competitively bid on them. Because of the kickback scheme, the Prime Contractor paid more than \$1.6 million to the subcontractor to assist with maintaining a radio communication system used by the MoI in Kabul, McAlpine admitted.

McAlpine further admitted that the Afghan executive agreed to pay kickbacks to McAlpine totaling approximately 15 percent of the value of the subcontracts, and that in 2015 and 2016, he accepted over \$250,000 in kickbacks from the Afghan executive. McAlpine also admitted that he hid the kickbacks from his employer by storing the cash payments in his personal effects and by physically transporting the cash to the United States. McAlpine then deposited the majority of these funds into his accounts at bank branches in the Atlanta metropolitan area, he admitted.

DCIS, SIGAR, and Army Criminal Investigation Command jointly investigated the case.

FORMER EMPLOYEE OF U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS IN AFGHANISTAN PLEADS GUILTY, THEN FORFEITS PROPERTY AND FUNDS FOR SOLICITING APPROXIMATELY \$320,000 IN BRIBES FROM CONTRACTORS

On November 30, 2017, Mark Miller, a former employee of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers based in Afghanistan, was ordered to forfeit \$180,000 and his motorcycle. The forfeiture, which was ordered by the U.S. District Court, Central District of Illinois, was based on Miller's July 26, 2017, guilty plea and agreement that Miller solicited approximately \$320,000 in bribes from Afghan contractors in return for his assistance in U.S. Government contracts.

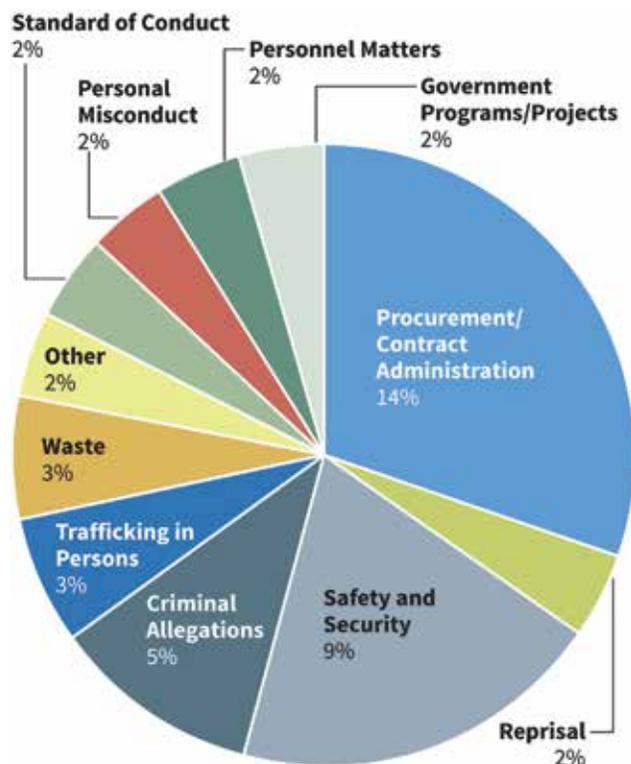
Miller worked for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers from 2005 until 2015, including in Afghanistan from 2009 to 2012. While in Afghanistan, Miller was the site manager and a contracting officer representative for a number of construction projects. Specifically, Miller admitted that on December 10, 2009, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers awarded a contract worth approximately \$2.9 million to an Afghan construction company to build

a road from eastern Afghanistan to the Pakistani border. The contract later increased in value to \$8,142,300. Miller oversaw the work of the Afghan company on the road project, which included verifying that the company performed the work called for by the contract and authorizing progress payments to the company by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Miller admitted that he solicited approximately \$280,000 in bribes from the owners of the company, in return for assisting the company in connection with the road project, including making sure the contract was not terminated. Further, after the contract was no longer active, Miller solicited an additional \$40,000 in bribes in return for the possibility of future contract work and other benefits. Miller is scheduled to be sentenced in February 2018. The DCIS, SIGAR, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and Army Criminal Investigation Command investigated this matter.

HOTLINE ACTIVITY

Each Lead IG agency maintains its own hotline to receive complaints and contacts specific to its agency. The OIGs’ hotlines provide a confidential, reliable means for individuals to report violations of law, rule, or regulation; mismanagement; gross waste of funds; and abuse of authority for independent review.

Figure 10.
Hotline Activity

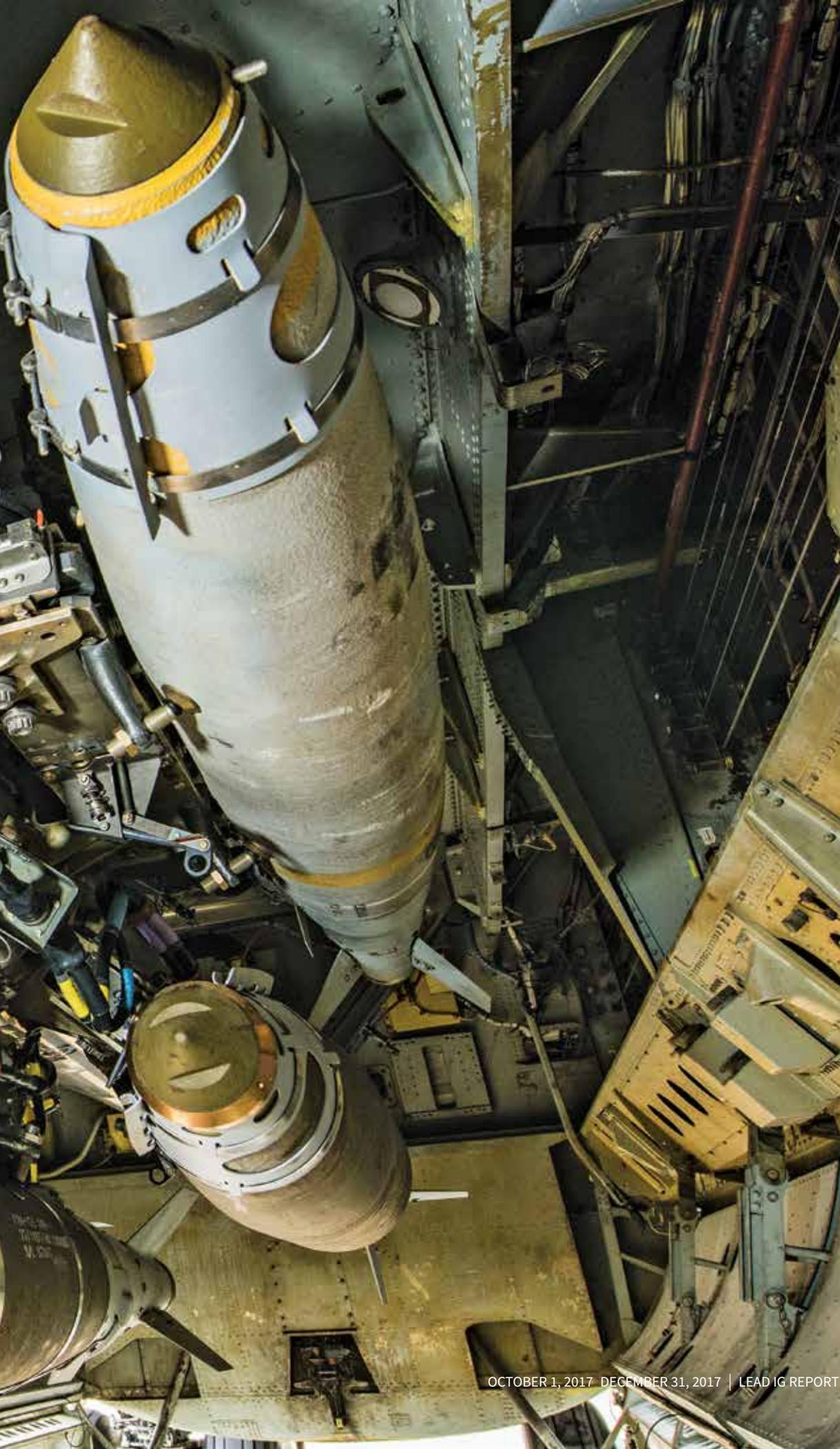


The DoD OIG hotline representatives process the complaints they receive and refer these complaints to the appropriate entity in accordance with their respective protocols. Any hotline complaint that merits referral is sent to the responsible organization for investigation or informational purposes.

The DoD OIG employs an investigator to coordinate the hotline contacts received among the Lead IG agencies and others, as appropriate. During the reporting period, the investigator received and coordinated numerous complaints, which subsequently resulted in the opening of 34 cases. Not all complaints lead to an open case. The cases were referred within the DoD OIG, other Lead IG agencies, and the Service IG entities. Some complaints include numerous allegations that result in multiple cases.

As noted in Figure 10, the majority of the complaints received during this quarter related to procurement or contract administration irregularities, safety and security, criminal allegations, trafficking-in-persons, and waste.





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An Afghan Air Force maintainer cleans the outside of an Mi-17 helicopter at Kandahar Airfield. (U.S. Air Force photo)

ONGOING AND PLANNED OVERSIGHT ACTIVITIES

This section of the report discusses the Lead IG strategic planning activities, as well as ongoing and planned audit, inspection, and evaluation projects. The ongoing and planned oversight projects related to OFS activities, as of December 31, 2017, are listed in separate tables, beginning on page 98.

USAID OIG has ongoing and planned oversight projects related to USAID's activities in Afghanistan, which do not involve OFS-related programs or activities. These ongoing and planned oversight projects audit USAID efforts in Afghanistan related to agriculture, democracy and governance, economic growth, education, gender promotion, health, infrastructure, and humanitarian assistance. These projects are listed in separate tables on pages 104 and 112.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Pursuant to Section 8L of the Inspector General Act, the Lead IG is required to develop and carry out a joint strategic plan to guide comprehensive oversight of programs and operations for each OCO. This planning process includes reviewing and analyzing completed oversight, management, and other relevant reports to identify systemic problems, trends, lessons learned, and best practices to inform future oversight projects.

The Overseas Contingency Operations Joint Planning Group Meets Quarterly

The Overseas Contingency Operations Joint Planning Group, which began in 2008, informs the planning activities and coordinates projects among oversight entities. It serves as a venue to coordinate Lead IG agencies and partner agencies' audits, inspections, and evaluations throughout Southwest Asia, including Iraq, Syria, and Afghanistan.

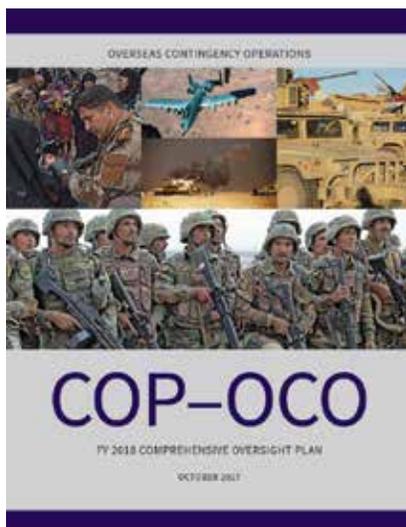
This quarter, a new OCO was announced—Operation Pacific Eagle-Philippines, which is included in the Joint Planning Group process.

The group provides a forum for information sharing and coordination of the broader Federal oversight community, including the Military Service IGs and Service audit agencies, the GAO, and OIGs from other Federal agencies such as SIGAR, the Departments of Justice, Treasury, and Homeland Security.

In October 2017, the DoD OIG hosted the 40th quarterly Overseas Contingency Operations Joint Planning Group Meeting. The guest speaker for this meeting was Jessica P. Powers, the Deputy Director of the Defeat ISIS Core Task Force, which helps coordinate defeat ISIS activities within the Department of Defense.

Lead IG Planning Summit

In December 2017, the DoD OIG hosted a Lead IG Planning Summit. Participants discussed the development of the *FY 2019 Comprehensive Oversight Plan for Overseas Contingency Operations (COP-OCO)*. The first portion of the summit focused on OIR, and the second portion focused on OFS. Participants from each of the Lead IG agencies and their partner agencies discussed the definition of an OCO project, lessons identified from the FY 2018 COP-OCO development process, OCO oversight project typology and gaps, strategic oversight areas, and proposed out-of-cycle FY 2018 oversight projects.



FY 2018 Comprehensive Oversight Plan for Overseas Contingency Operations

FY 2018 Oversight Plan

The FY 2018 oversight planning process includes reviewing and analyzing completed oversight, management, and other relevant reports to identify systemic problems, trends, lessons learned, and best practices to inform future oversight projects. The FY 2018 *Joint Strategic Oversight Plan for Afghanistan*, effective October 1, 2017, was included in the *FY 2018 Comprehensive Oversight Plan for Overseas Contingency Operations*. The plan organizes OFS-related oversight projects into five strategic oversight areas, which are discussed on the next page.

SECURITY

Security focuses on determining the degree to which OFS is accomplishing its missions of counterterrorism, and training, advising, and assisting the Afghan security forces in activities that may include:

- Establishing transitional public order
- Countering illegal combatants and criminal elements
- Protecting key personnel and facilities
- Establishing and strengthening relationships with host-nation military and police
- Enforcing cessation of hostilities and promoting peace processes
- Disarming, demobilizing, and reintegrating combatants
- Building or enhancing the capacity and capabilities of the Afghan security institutions and sustainability of such institutions

GOVERNANCE AND CIVIL SOCIETY

Governance and Civil Society focuses on the ability of the Afghan government, at all levels, to represent and serve its citizens. Activities that fall under this strategic oversight area may include:

- Building or enhancing Afghan governance capacity, including the capacity to sustainably resource its activities and services
- Promoting inclusive and effective democracy, and civil participation and empowerment
- Promoting reconciliation, peaceful resolution of conflict, demobilization and reintegration of armed forces, and other rule of law efforts
- Fostering sustainable and appropriate reconstruction activities
- Fostering fair distribution of resources and provision of essential services
- Countering and reducing corruption, inequality, and extremism

HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE AND DEVELOPMENT

Humanitarian Assistance and Development focuses on ensuring that the population's basic needs are met, transitioning to peaceful coexistence in communities, and providing long-term development supporting health, education, and the empowerment of women. Activities that fall under this strategic oversight area may include:

- Providing food, water, medical care, emergency relief, and shelter to people affected by crisis
- Building resilience by supporting community-based mechanisms that incorporate disaster risk reduction and emergency preparedness, and supporting coherent and coordinated national disaster preparedness and humanitarian response systems

- Supporting healthcare, education, and the empowerment of women
- Assisting and protecting returning Afghan refugees
- Strengthening Afghanistan's capacity to absorb returning refugees
- Helping refugee-assisting communities in Pakistan and Iran to preserve asylum space for Afghan refugees

STABILIZATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Stabilization and Infrastructure focuses on efforts to provide the people of Afghanistan the opportunity to pursue sustainable livelihoods in peaceful communities with effective economic systems and essential public services. Activities that fall under this strategic oversight area may include:

- Repairing or building infrastructure and buildings such as schools, hospitals, and government facilities
- Establishing or reestablishing public utilities that provide services such as water and electricity
- Removing explosive remnants of war
- Promoting an economic system that fosters basic commerce, free markets, and employment generation through sound legal frameworks, outside investment, and the reduction of corruption

SUPPORT TO MISSION

Support to Mission focuses on administrative, logistical, and management efforts that enable the United States to conduct military operations, empower host-nation governance, and provide humanitarian assistance to the local population. Activities that fall under this strategic oversight area may include:

- Security of U.S. personnel and property on U.S. installations
- Occupational health and safety of personnel on U.S. installations
- Logistical support to U.S. installations
- Grant and contract management
- Program administration

ONGOING OVERSIGHT ACTIVITIES

Ongoing OFS Projects

As of December 31, 2017, the Lead IG agencies and their partner agencies had 39 ongoing projects related to OFS. Figure 11 describes the ongoing projects by strategic oversight area, and the discussion that follows highlights some of the ongoing projects by these strategic areas. Tables 12 and 13 list the project title and objective for each of these projects.

SECURITY

The **DoD OIG** is evaluating airborne intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance supporting counterterrorism operations in Afghanistan. The DoD is also preparing a summary report on U.S. direct funding provided to Afghanistan.

The **DoS OIG** is reviewing the explosives-detection dogs in Afghanistan Program as a follow-on review.

The **GAO** is evaluating advise and assist lessons learned and the ANDSF's equipment and capability.

SIGAR is evaluating DoD oversight of infrastructure projects transferred to the Afghan government; and DoD's efforts to advise the Afghan MoD and MoI. SIGAR is also reviewing the G222 Aircraft program, processes and procedures for blood type collection for ANDSF personnel; DoD procurement of Humvees for the ANDSF; Army's Technical Equipment Maintenance Program contracts for vehicle spare parts costs, and the Alaska Tents program.

GOVERNANCE AND CIVIL SOCIETY

The **DoS OIG** is evaluating the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs Aviation program administration.

SIGAR is evaluating the implementation and effectiveness of on-budget assistance to the Afghan government and fuel accountability.

HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE AND DEVELOPMENT

SIGAR is inspecting the Women's Participation Program—MoI Headquarters Gender Compound barracks, gym, and daycare.

STABILIZATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

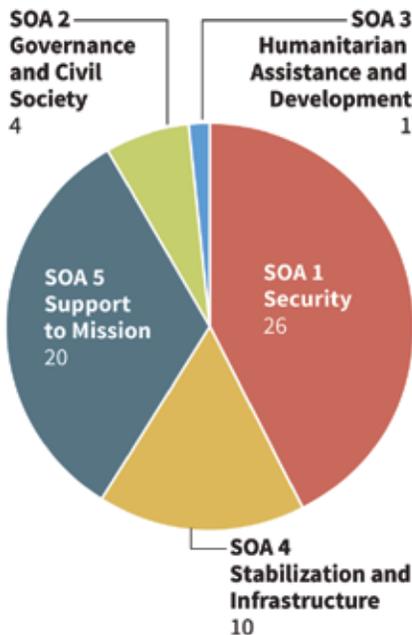
SIGAR is inspecting the ANA Ground Forces Command Garrison Support Unit and Army Support Command; the ANA Camp Commando Phase III and IV projects; the MoI’s complex support structure; and construction and utility upgrades for the ANA Garrison at South Kabul International Airport. SIGAR is also evaluating the Commander’s Emergency Response Program bridges in Baghlan.

SUPPORT TO MISSION

The **DoD OIG** is inspecting military facilities at Kandahar Air Field in Afghanistan. The DoD OIG is also auditing the DoD’s oversight of the Logistics Civil Augmentation Program invoice-review and payment process, and is evaluating the readiness of U.S. Air Force’s C-5 Galaxy aircraft to determine if the U.S. Air Force C-5 squadrons have adequate mission-capable aircraft and training to support U.S. Transportation Command readiness mission requirements.

The **DoS OIG** is reviewing the processes and procedures for Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs OCO contracts, and Embassy Kabul’s physical security features.

Figure 11.
Ongoing Projects, as of
December 31, 2017



Note: Projects may focus on more than one SOA; therefore, totals do not represent a one-to-one correlation with the count of total projects.

The **Air Force Audit Agency** is auditing emergency contingency-allowance equipment, contract administration in contingency environments, and the Air Force *Cost of War* Report for OFS.

The **Army Audit Agency** is auditing the Army’s reporting of obligations and expenditures for OFS and downrange civilian overtime pay and entitlements.

GAO is evaluating the procedures for the disposal of excess equipment in Afghanistan.

The **Naval Audit Service** is auditing the Department of the Navy’s obligations and disbursements supporting OCOs and the reliability of Marine Corps financial data reported for OFS.

Table 12.

Ongoing Oversight Projects by Lead IG Agencies, as of December 31, 2017

Project Title	Objective
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL	
<i>Audit of U.S. Air Force C-5 Galaxy Readiness</i>	To determine if the U.S. Air Force C-5 squadrons have adequate mission capable aircraft and training to support U.S. Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM) readiness mission requirements.
<i>Evaluation of Airborne Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance Supporting Counterterrorism Operations in Afghanistan</i>	To evaluate the airborne, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance supporting counterterrorism operations in Afghanistan to determine if U.S. Forces-Afghanistan's airborne, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance allocation process is supporting U.S. counterterrorism operations.
<i>Evaluation of U.S. and Coalition Efforts to Train, Advise, and Assist the Afghan Air Force</i>	To evaluate the U.S. and coalition efforts to train, advise, assist, and equip the Afghan Air Force.
<i>Summary of Audit of U.S. Direct Funding Provided to Afghanistan</i>	To audit the U.S. direct funding provided to Afghanistan to determine whether the DoD has provided effective oversight of the Afghanistan Security Forces Fund. The auditors will also follow up on the status of the implementation of recommendations from five prior DoD IG reports in this series.
<i>Military Facilities Evaluation Follow-up Kandahar Air Field Afghanistan</i>	To determine whether U.S. military-occupied facilities supporting Operation Freedom's Sentinel comply with DoD health and safety policies and standards regarding electrical distribution and fire protection systems.
<i>Audit of DoD Oversight of Logistics Civil Augmentation Program Invoice Review and Payment</i>	To audit DoD's oversight of the Logistics Civil Augmentation Program's invoice review and payment process to determine whether the DoD adequately monitored contractor performance and conducted sufficient invoice reviews for services provided under the Logistics Civil Augmentation Program IV contract.
DEPARTMENT OF STATE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL	
<i>Audit of the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs Aviation Program</i>	To determine whether the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs is administering its aviation program, including key internal controls such as inventory management, aviation asset usage, aircraft maintenance, and asset disposal, in accordance with Federal requirements and DoS guidelines.
<i>Follow-up Review of Explosives-Detection Dogs in Afghanistan</i>	To determine whether the Bureau of Diplomatic Security is managing and overseeing the Explosives-Detection Dog program in accordance with the DoS guidance and selected contractors are complying with contract terms and conditions.

Project Title	Objective
<i>Audit of the Invoice Review Process for OCO Contracts–Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs</i>	To determine whether invoice review policies, procedures, training, staffing, invoice review practices, and accountability measures at the DoS Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs are sufficient to 1) support OCOs; and 2) ensure invoice payments are reviewed in accordance with Federal requirements and DoS guidance.
<i>Audit of Construction of the New Embassy Compound–Islamabad</i>	To determine whether the Department is effectively administering the construction contracts for the new Embassy compound in Islamabad. This is a second report planned under project 17AUD019 and focuses on product substitution.
<i>Audit of Embassy Kabul Construction and Commissioning</i>	To determine whether the Bureau of Overseas Building Operations and other DoS stakeholders managed the construction of physical security features at U.S. Embassy Kabul’s newly constructed facilities to ensure that they met industry standards and contract requirements.

Table 13.

Ongoing Oversight Projects by Lead IG Partner Agencies, as of December 31, 2017

Project Title	Objective
AIR FORCE AUDIT AGENCY	
<i>Emergency Contingency-Allowance Equipment, 380th Air Expeditionary Wing</i>	To determine whether Wing personnel properly managed emergency contingency-allowance equipment. The auditors will discuss and examine topics related to accountability, maintenance, and authorizations during this planning phase.
<i>Contract Administration in a Contingency Environment, 380th Air Expeditionary Wing</i>	To determine whether Wing personnel properly managed contract activities in the area of responsibility. Specifically, evaluate whether personnel 1) properly planned, competed, and awarded contingency contracts (including trafficking-in-persons clauses); 2) provided oversight and quality assurance over contractor performance (including trafficking-in-persons); and 3) appropriately responded to potential trafficking-in-persons violations.
<i>Emergency Contingency-Allowance Equipment, 455th Air Expeditionary Wing</i>	To determine whether Wing personnel properly managed emergency contingency-allowance equipment. The auditors will discuss and examine topics related to accountability, maintenance, and authorizations during the planning phase.
<i>Air Force Cost of War Report- Operation Freedom’s Sentinel</i>	To determine whether Air Force personnel accurately reported OFS obligations and disbursements on the <i>Cost of War</i> report.
ARMY AUDIT AGENCY	
<i>Audit of the Army’s Reporting of Obligations and Expenditures for Operation Freedom’s Sentinel</i>	To audit the Army’s reporting of obligations and expenditures for OFS to determine the accuracy of information reported in the OFS <i>Cost of War</i> Report.

Project Title	Objective
<i>Audit of Downrange Civilian Overtime Pay and Entitlements</i>	To audit the Army's downrange civilian overtime pay and entitlements program to determine whether overtime was effectively managed and downrange entitlements (including danger and post differential pay) were accurately paid to civilians deployed in support of OFS and OIR.
GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE	
<i>Institutionalizing Advise-and-Assist Lessons Learned</i>	To determine to what extent the DoD has 1) modified its approach for planning for, training, and utilizing U.S. military personnel to advise and assist partner forces based on lessons learned from advise-and-assist efforts in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria; 2) incorporated lessons learned from challenges the DoD has faced in providing and utilizing U.S. military personnel to carry out their assigned advise-and-assist missions in support of geographic combatant commands; 3) incorporated lessons learned from past challenges it has experienced in providing key enablers for the advise-and-assist missions, including air support; intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance; logistics; or other enabling capabilities; and 4) assessed and institutionalized specific lessons from Operation Inherent Resolve, Operation Freedom's Sentinel, and other past and present advise-and-assist missions in various geographic combatant commands to identify and implement necessary changes to doctrine, training, and force structure to support ongoing and future advise-and-assist missions.
<i>Afghan National Defense & Security Forces' Equipment and Capability</i>	To audit the performance of the ANDSF's equipment and capability and summarize how such weapon systems and equipment support ANDSF capability given the evolving security situation and overall strategy.
<i>Disposal of Excess Equipment in Afghanistan</i>	To audit the performance of the disposal of excess equipment in Afghanistan activities to determine 1) the volume/value of new/otherwise useable equipment being disposed in Afghanistan; 2) the procedures the DoD has to ensure that items designated for disposal are not in demand elsewhere in Afghanistan; and 3) to what extent are potential future orders/requirements in Afghanistan considered in decisions to dispose of new/useable items.
NAVAL AUDIT AGENCY	
<i>Department of the Navy Overseas Contingency Operations</i>	To audit the Department of the Navy overseas contingency operations to determine if the Department of the Navy's obligations and disbursements supporting overseas contingency operations are in compliance with applicable laws and regulations, and that internal controls were in place and functioning as intended.
<i>Reliability of Marine Corps Financial Data Reported for OFS</i>	To audit the reliability of the Marine Corps' financial data reported for OFS and determine the accuracy of the Marine Corps' obligations and disbursements supporting OFS as reported in the <i>Cost of War</i> report.

Project Title	Objective
SPECIAL INSPECTOR GENERAL FOR AFGHANISTAN RECONSTRUCTION	
<i>Inspection of Construction and Utility Upgrades for the Afghan National Army Garrison at South Kabul International Airport</i>	To inspect the construction and utility upgrades at the ANA garrison. Specifically, we plan to assess whether 1) the construction and upgrades were completed in accordance with contract requirements and applicable construction standards, and 2) the facilities and utilities are being used and maintained.
<i>DoD Efforts to Advise the Afghan Ministries of Defense and Interior</i>	To audit the DoD's efforts to advise the Afghan Ministries of Defense and Interior to determine the 1) extent to which the DoD has clearly articulated the goals, objectives, and strategy of its advisory efforts; 2) the DoD's advisory efforts, including funding; the number of advisors and contractors; their assigned locations; and criteria for selecting the advisors, among other things; and 3) the methods the DoD uses to measure success.
<i>DoD Oversight of Infrastructure Projects Transferred to the Afghan Government</i>	To audit the DoD's oversight of infrastructure projects transferred to the Afghan government to determine the 1) extent to which the Afghan government uses and sustains assets transferred from the DoD; and 2) challenges, if any, that DoD faces in overseeing the use and sustainment of infrastructure that has been transferred to the Afghan government.
<i>Lessons Learned Review of the G222 (C-27A) Aircraft Program</i>	To perform a lessons learned review of the G222 (C-27A) Aircraft Program to 1) determine the total amount spent to procure, operate, sustain, and dispose of the G222s; 2) review future plans (disposal or otherwise) for the G222s; and 3) evaluate what processes and controls have been put in place to prevent similar challenges from affecting future Afghan Air Force purchases.
<i>Processes and Procedures for Blood Type Collection of ANDSF Personnel</i>	To review the processes and procedures for blood type collection of ANDSF personnel to 1) identify the entity responsible for the collection of ANDSF soldiers' blood types, and determine how these blood types are captured and then recorded in Afghan Personnel Pay System and Afghan Human Resource Information Management System; 2) determine who is responsible for paying for the collection of blood samples for ANDSF soldiers and how payment for services is collected; 3) identify CSTC-A's role, if any, in collecting and recording blood types for ANDSF soldiers; and, 4) assess the processes used to ensure that recorded blood types for ANDSF soldiers are accurate.

Project Title	Objective
<i>Afghan Air Force's Ability to Operate and Maintain U.S.-Provided Aircraft</i>	To determine the extent to which 1) the aircraft the United States plans to provide the Afghan Air Force address validated capability gaps identified by both the DoD and the Ministry of Defense; 2) the DoD synchronized the recruitment and training of aircrews and other critical personnel with estimated aircraft delivery schedules; and 3) the DoD and the Ministry of Defense have developed and implemented a plan to support the operation and maintenance of Afghan Air Force aircraft provided by the United States that includes steps to address capability gaps within the Afghan Air Force.
<i>DoD Procurement of Humvees for the ANDSF</i>	To review the DoD's procurement of Humvees for the ANDSF's processes used to develop the requirement for providing the ANDSF with Humvees in 2017, and compare and evaluate the selected course(s) of action to available alternatives.
<i>Fuel Accountability in Afghanistan Review</i>	To audit the performance of the 1) prior work regarding efforts to procure, distribute, and account for fuel in Afghanistan, as well as related investigative work; 2) current challenges associated with overseeing and accounting for fuel; and 3) ongoing initiatives to ensure appropriate accountability of fuel procurement and distribution.
<i>Implementation and Effectiveness of On-Budget Assistance</i>	To audit the implementation and effectiveness of on-budget assistance to 1) determine the amount of on-budget assistance provided to Afghanistan from 2001 to 2014 and the mechanisms used to provide the assistance; 2) assess the impact of on-budget assistance provided to develop the capacity of Afghan ministries; and 3) evaluate potentially negative issues that affected on-budget assistance, e.g., corruption, and how these issues were mitigated.
<i>Inspection of Afghan National Army Camp Commando Phase IV</i>	To inspect the Afghan National Army Camp Commando Phase IV to determine whether the 1) work was completed in accordance with contract requirements and applicable construction standards; and 2) project is being maintained and used as intended.
<i>Inspection of the Afghan National Army's Ground Forces Command, Garrison Support Unit, and Army Support Command</i>	To inspect the Afghan National Army's Ground Forces Command, Garrison Support Unit, and Army Support Command to determine whether the 1) work was completed in accordance with contract requirements and applicable construction standards; and 2) project is being maintained and used as intended.
<i>Inspection of Afghan National Army Camp Commando Phase III</i>	To inspect the Afghan National Army Camp Commando Phase III project to determine whether the 1) work was completed in accordance with contract requirements and applicable construction standards; and 2) project is being maintained and used as intended.

Project Title	Objective
<i>Ministry of Interior's Complex Support Structures</i>	To inspect the Ministry of Interior's Complex support structures to determine whether 1) the work was completed in accordance with contract requirements and applicable construction standards; and 2) the complex is being maintained and used as intended.
<i>AISS-ATEMP Contract Follow-Up – Vehicle Spare Part Cost</i>	To review the ATEMP contract to 1) determine Afghanistan Integrated Support Services' requirements for the purchase of spare parts for vehicle maintenance under the National Army's Technical Equipment Maintenance Program contract; 2) describe weaknesses in ANHAM FZCO's purchasing practices, and identify the steps taken to minimize the impact of spare part cost increases; 3) determine the costs of spare parts purchased by Afghanistan Integrated Support Services over the course of the contract and compare costs of those spare parts to spare parts purchased through the Foreign Military Sales system; and 4) assess additional costs paid by CSTC-A for Afghanistan Integrated Support Services' maintenance practices.
<i>Alaska Tents</i>	To review the Alaska Tents program to determine 1) the requirements generation and procurement processes related to the purchase of Alaska Structures for the ANDSF; and 2) the cost of purchasing these structures.
<i>Inspection of the Women's Participation Program– Ministry of Interior Headquarters Gender Compound Barracks, Gym, and Daycare in Kabul</i>	To assess whether 1) the construction was completed in accordance with contract requirements and applicable construction standards; and 2) the building is being used and maintained.
<i>Commander's Emergency Response Program Bridges in Baghlan</i>	To 1) determine if the location on record reflects the actual location of the bridges; and 2) assess the overall condition of the bridges.

Ongoing USAID Office of Inspector General Projects in Afghanistan

As of December 31, 2017, USAID OIG had 14 ongoing non-OFS-related projects in Afghanistan. Table 14 provides the project title and objective for each of these ongoing projects.

Table 14.

Ongoing USAID Oversight Projects in Afghanistan, as of December 31, 2017

Project Title	Objective
U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL	
<i>ACA Financial Audit on Jhpiego Corporation</i>	To audit the Helping Mothers and Children Thrive project, AID-306-A-15-00002, for the period from January 7, 2015, to June 30, 2015.
<i>ACA Financial Audit on Chemonics International, Inc.</i>	To audit 1) Regional Agriculture Development Program West, AID-306-C-14-00007, for the period from August 10, 2014, to December 31, 2015; 2) Promote-Component 3 (Women in Government) program, AID-306-TO-15-00044, for the period from April 21, 2015, to December 31, 2015; 3) Famine Early Warning System Network III, AID-OAA-TO-12-00003, for the period from January 1, 2015, to December 31, 2015; 4) Regional Agriculture Development Program, 306-C-13-00018, for the period from January 1, 2015, to December 31, 2015; and 5) Afghanistan Trade and Revenue Project, AID-306-TO-13-00009, for the period from January 1, 2015, to December 31, 2015.
<i>ACA Financial Audit on Partnership for Supply Chain Management</i>	To audit the Partnership for Supply Chain Management, AID-GPO-I-03-05-00032, for the period from June 1, 2009, to September 26, 2015.
<i>ACA Financial Audit of Development Alternatives Inc.</i>	To audit the Driving Economic Alternative for the North, East, and West program 306-A-00-09-00508, for the period from December 1, 2014, to September 30, 2015; the Stabilization in Key Areas contract AID-306-C-12-00003, for the period from December 1, 2014, to May 31, 2015; the Regional Agriculture Development Program AID-306-C-14-00002, for the period from December 1, 2014, to December 31, 2015; the Strong Hubs for Afghan Hope and Resilience Program AID-306-C-14-00016, for the period from November 30, 2014, to December 31, 2015; and the Assistance to Legislative Bodies of Afghanistan project AID-306-TO-13-00004, for the period from December 1, 2014, to December 31, 2015.
<i>ACA Financial Audit on International Relief and Development</i>	To audit the Engineering, Quality Assurance, and Logistical Support program, 306-C-00-11-00512, for the period from April 1, 2015, to December 31, 2015.

Project Title	Objective
<i>Follow-up Audit of USAID's Multi-Tiered Monitoring Strategy for Afghanistan</i>	To audit USAID's Multi-Tiered Monitoring Strategy for Afghanistan to determine the extent that USAID has used its multi-tiered monitoring strategy to manage programs and serve as the basis for informed decision-making.
<i>RCA Financial Audit on the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation & Livestock</i>	To audit the Agriculture Development Fund, 306-IL-12-OAG-21, for the period from January 1, 2014, to December 31, 2014.
<i>Audit of USAID/Afghanistan's New Development Partnership</i>	To audit USAID/Afghanistan's New Development Partnership to determine if USAID/Afghanistan has 1) adequately verified the achievement of completed indicators under the New Development Partnership for any payments made to date; and 2) adopted internal policies and procedures to adequately verify the achievement of New Development Partnership indicators contained in the July 25, 2015, New Development Partnership results framework.
<i>ACA Financial Audit on Management Science for Health</i>	To audit the Sustainable Leadership Management and Governance, AID-OAA-A-11-00015, for the period from July 1, 2014, to December 31, 2015.
<i>ACA Financial Audit on New York University</i>	To audit the Assessment of Learning and Outcomes and Social Effects in Community-Based Education grant, AID-306-G-13-00004, for the period from January 1, 2014, to August 31, 2015.
<i>ACA Financial Audit on Amec Foster Wheeler Environment & Infrastructure, Inc.</i>	To audit the Technical Assistance to Ministry of Public Works AID-306-C-14-00011, for the period from August 31, 2014, to December 31, 2015.
<i>ACA Financial Audit on AECOM International Development, Inc.</i>	To audit the Stabilization in Key Areas - East program AID-306-C-12-00002; for the period from September 1, 2014, to September 6, 2015; the Stabilization in Key Areas - West program AID-306-C-12-00004; for the period from September 1, 2014, to August 31, 2015; and the Stabilization in Key Areas - South program AID-306-C-13-00003; for the period from September 4, 2014, to July 31, 2015.
<i>ACA Financial Audit of ICF Macro, Inc. Demographic and Health Surveys</i>	To audit Contract AID-OAA-C-13-00095, for the period from January 1, 2016, to December 31, 2016.
<i>ACA Financial Audit of Tetra Tech ARD</i>	To audit the Initiative to Strengthen Local Administration Contract AID-306-C-15-00005 for the period from October 1, 2015, to September 30, 2016, and the Women's Leadership Development Contract AID-306-TO-14-00031 for the period from October 1, 2015, to September 30, 2016.

PLANNED OVERSIGHT ACTIVITIES

Planned OFS Projects

As of December 31, 2017, the Lead IG agencies and their partner agencies had 30 planned oversight projects related to OFS. The discussion that follows highlights some of these planned projects by oversight area. Some projects related to more than one SOA. Tables 15 and 16 provide the project title and objective for each of the planned projects. Please note that USAID OIG planned projects, unrelated to OFS are listed in Table 16.

SECURITY

The **DoD OIG** will evaluate whether recommendations from prior DoD OIG reports regarding intelligence programs and operations have been implemented; DoD biometric-enabled intelligence operations for OFS; and U.S. and coalition efforts to enable Afghan MoI oversight and internal control capabilities. The DoD OIG will also audit unmanned aerial vehicle systems cybersecurity controls; and the National Maintenance Strategy Contract in Afghanistan. SIGAR will evaluate Counternarcotics Police of Afghanistan Specialized Units; the Afghan Air Force's use and maintenance of its aircraft; the procurement, use, and maintenance of intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance for the ANDSF; and CSTC-A's efforts to implement conditionality through its commitment letters with the MoD and MoI.

GOVERNANCE AND CIVIL SOCIETY

The **DoS OIG** will evaluate the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor programs and operations.

SIGAR will evaluate DoD, DoS, and USAID programs that focus on improving governance in Afghanistan and the DoD's efforts to combat corruption within the MoD and MoI.

HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE AND DEVELOPMENT

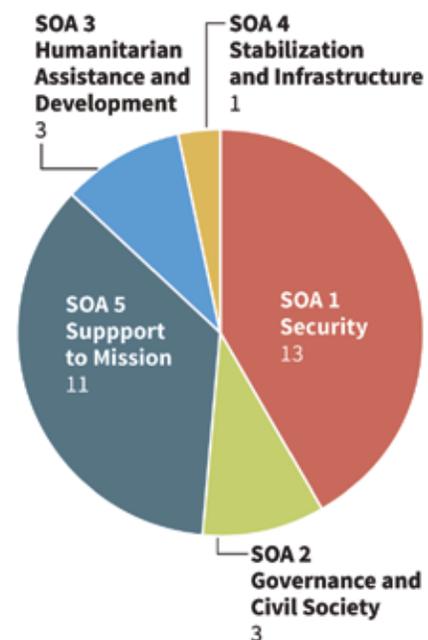
SIGAR will inspect the Women's Participation Program – Regional Training Center Jalalabad barracks, daycare, and dining facilities in Nangarhar. SIGAR will also evaluate the DoD's gender advising programs for the MoD and MoI

STABILIZATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

SIGAR will inspect Afghan National Army South KAIA Utilities power distribution, grid connection, and water and sewer upgrades. SIGAR will also evaluate the implementation of DoD's follow-on contract to operate and maintain critical ANDSF infrastructure. SIGAR will also review the planning and use of ANA and ANP facilities built for female members of the ANDSF and their families.

Figure 12.

Planned Projects per SOA



Note: Projects may focus on more than one SOA; therefore, totals do not represent a one-to-one correlation with the count of total projects.

SUPPORT TO MISSION

The **DoD OIG** will inspect military facilities. The DoD OIG will also evaluate theater linguist support for OIR and OFS; U.S. host-tenant agreements for Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti; and Combined Joint Task Force–Horn of Africa’s planning and execution of civil-military operations. Additionally, the DoD OIG will audit DoD military payroll for combat zone entitlements and the DoD management of the Enhanced Army Global Logistics Enterprise contract in Afghanistan.

The **DoS OIG** will audit the DoS’ armored vehicle procurement process and the Aviation Working Capital Fund. The DoS OIG will also inspect Office of Overseas Buildings Operations construction and commissioning of Staff Diplomatic Apartment projects.

Table 15.

Planned Oversight Projects by Lead IG Agencies, as of December 31, 2017

Project Title	Objective
DEPARTMENT OF THE DEFENSE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL	
<i>Audit of the DoD Management of the Enhanced Army Global Logistics Enterprise (EAGLE 2) Maintenance Contract in Afghanistan</i>	To determine whether the Army monitored contractor performance and costs of the EAGLE 2 maintenance contract to ensure the contractor is properly maintaining tactical vehicles and weapons while keeping costs to a minimum.
<i>Summary Report of Recommendations from OCO Intel Evaluations</i>	To determine if recommendations from DoD Lead Inspector General for Overseas Contingency Operations intelligence evaluations affecting Operation Inherent Resolve and Operation Freedom’s Sentinel have been implemented.
<i>Evaluation of DoD Biometric-Enabled Intel Operations for OFS</i>	To determine whether biometric-enabled intelligence effectively supports the Operation Freedom’s Sentinel Commander’s requirements.
<i>Assessment of U.S. and Coalition Efforts to Enable the Afghan Ministry of Defense to Develop its Oversight and Internal Control Capability</i>	To determine whether the U.S. Government and coalition train, advise, and assist efforts will enable the Afghan Ministry of Defense and subordinate organizations to develop a transparent and accountable oversight capability that helps the Ministry of Interior run efficient and effective operations, report reliable information about its operations, and comply with applicable laws and regulations.
<i>Audit of the Unmanned Aerial Vehicles Systems Cybersecurity Controls</i>	To determine whether the effective cybersecurity programs protect unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) systems from unauthorized access and use.
<i>Audit of the National Maintenance Strategy Contract in Afghanistan</i>	To determine whether DoD effectively developed the requirements for the National Maintenance Strategy contract.
<i>U.S. Military Facility Follow-Up Evaluation-Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan</i>	To determine if U.S. military-occupied facilities comply with DoD health and safety policies and standards regarding electrical distribution, fire protection, and fuel systems.

Project Title	Objective
<i>Evaluation of Theater Linguist Support for Operation Inherent Resolve and Operation Freedom's Sentinel</i>	To review policies and procedures impacting the recruitment, hiring, and employment of military and contract linguists on the conduct of the Operation Inherent Resolve and Operation Freedom's Sentinel campaigns.
<i>Audit of the Department of Defense Military Payroll for Combat Zone Entitlements</i>	To determine whether the DoD Military Components and the Defense Finance and Accounting Service accurately calculated Hostile Fire Pay/Imminent Danger Pay, Family Separation Allowance, and Combat Zone Tax Exclusion for combat zone deployments.
<i>U.S. Host-Tenant Agreements for Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti</i>	To determine whether the U.S. Navy has effectively developed host-tenant agreements and cost allocation methodologies for reimbursement of support services provided at Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti.
<i>Follow-up Audit on the Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa's Planning and Execution of Civil-Military Operations</i>	To determine whether the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy; Commander, U.S. Africa Command; and Commander, CJTF-HOA implemented the agreed upon corrective actions for recommendations 1, 2, and 3 of DoDIG Report No. DoDIG-2014-005, "Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa Needed Better Guidance and Systems to Adequately Manage Civil-Military Operations."
DEPARTMENT OF STATE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL	
<i>Audit of the Office of Overseas Buildings Operations Construction and Commissioning of the Staff Diplomatic Apartment-2 and Staff Diplomatic Apartment-3 in Kabul, Afghanistan</i>	To determine whether OBO and other Department stakeholders managed the construction and commissioning of the Staff Diplomatic Apartment-2 and Staff Diplomatic Apartment-3 projects to ensure that they meet industry standards and contract requirements.
<i>Inspection of the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor</i>	To evaluate the programs and operations of the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor.
<i>Audit of Embassy Kabul Physical Security Features</i>	To determine whether the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations and other DoS stakeholders managed the construction of physical security features at U.S. Embassy Kabul's newly constructed facilities to ensure that they met industry standards and contract requirements.
<i>Audit of the Aviation Working Capital Fund</i>	To determine whether the fees collected by the Aviation Working Capital Fund cost center were sufficient to cover all costs required to sustain operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.
<i>Audit of DoS Armored Vehicle Procurement Process</i>	To determine whether DoS contractors providing armoring services to the Department comply with contract terms and conditions.

Table 16.

Planned Oversight Projects by Lead IG Partner Agencies, as of December 31, 2017

Project Title	Objective
SPECIAL INSPECTOR GENERAL FOR AFGHANISTAN RECONSTRUCTION	
<i>Review of Counternarcotics Police of Afghanistan Specialized Units</i>	To audit Counternarcotics Police of Afghanistan Specialized Unit to 1) determine the extent to which counternarcotic police specialized units are achieving their goals; 2) assess the oversight of salary payments made to personnel in the specialized units; and 3) assess the long-term sustainability of the specialized units.
<i>Afghan Air Force Use and Maintenance of its MD-530 Fleet</i>	To audit the performance of the AAF's use and maintenance of its MD-530 fleet to 1) describe the DoD's process for selecting the MD-530 as a platform for the AAF; 2) assess the extent to which the AAF can operate and maintain the MD-530 currently in its fleet, including the DoD's measures for success; 3) assess the DoD's efforts to ensure that the AAF can operate and maintain the MD-530, including any contracts the DoD is funding or plans to fund to provide those services; and 4) determine the extent to which the AAF will be able to sustain this fleet in the future.
<i>Afghan Air Force Use and Maintenance of its A-29 Fleet</i>	To 1) describe the DoD's process for selecting the A-29 as a platform for the Afghan Air Force; 2) assess the extent to which the Afghan Air Force can operate and maintain the A-29 currently in its fleet, including the DoD's measures for determining success; 3) assess the DoD's efforts to ensure that the Afghan Air Force can operate and maintain the A-29, including any contracts the DoD is funding or plans to fund to provide those services; and 4) determine the extent to which the Afghan Air Force will be able to sustain this fleet in the future.
<i>Afghan Air Force Use and Maintenance of its PC-12s</i>	To review lessons learned for the Afghan Special Mission Wing's use and maintenance of its PC-12s currently in its fleet and 1) assess the extent to which the Wing can operate and maintain the PC-12s currently in its fleet; and 2) the DoD's efforts to ensure that the Wing can operate and maintain the PC-12s, including any contracts the DoD is funding or plans to fund to provide those services.
<i>Combined Security Transition Command – Afghanistan's Efforts to Implement Conditionality through its Commitment Letters with the Ministries of Defense and Interior</i>	To 1) identify the conditions CSTC-A has included in its commitment letters with the Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of Interior, and how these conditions have changed over time; 2) assess the extent to which the ministries met those conditions; and 3) assess the extent to which CSTC-A implemented the penalties described in the commitment letters when the ministries did not meet those conditions.

Project Title	Objective
<i>Procurement, Use, and Maintenance of Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance for the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces</i>	To 1) describe the process(es) by which the DoD develops ISR for the ANSDF; 2) assess the extent to which the DoD oversees these procurement processes; 3) assess the extent to which the DoD evaluates the performance of ISR once fielded and makes adjustments, if needed; and 4) review the DoD's plans for sustaining this equipment once fielded.
<i>DoD's Procurement, Oversight, and Disposal of the G222s</i>	To 1) describe the DoD's process for selecting the G222 for the Afghan Air Force and the need they were expected to fulfill; 2) determine why the planes did not ultimately meet this need and what, if any, conditions changed between their selection and arrival in country; and 3) determine why they were scrapped and what alternative disposal methods were considered.
<i>DoD's Efforts to Combat Corruption within the Ministries of Defense and Interior</i>	To 1) determine the extent to which the DoD has incorporated anti-corruption goals and objectives into its train, advise, and assist efforts; 2) describe the activities the DoD is implementing to address corruption within the Ministries of Defense and Interior, including the personnel, resources, and training allocated to these efforts; 3) assess the DoD's mechanisms for measuring the results of these activities and whether they are achieving the Department's anti-corruption goals and objectives; and 4) assess the extent to which the DoD coordinates these activities with its coalition and other international partners.
<i>DoD's Gender Advising Programs for the Ministries of Defense and Interior</i>	To 1) identify the DoD's gender-related goals for the Ministries of Defense and Interior and determine how the DoD has incorporated these goals in its strategies, plans, and other directives related to its ministry advising efforts; 2) identify how the DoD measures the results of its gender-advising efforts and the extent to which these efforts have been met and are effective; and 3) identify what impediments, if any, may be prohibiting greater success in gender-related areas of improvement at the Ministries of Defense and Interior, and how the DoD is addressing those issues.
<i>Inspection of the Women's Participation Program – Regional Training Center Jalalabad Barracks, Daycare, and Dining Facility in Nangarhar</i>	To assess whether 1) the construction was completed in accordance with contract requirements and applicable construction standards; and 2) the building is being used and maintained.
<i>Assistance to Improve Governance in Afghanistan</i>	To 1) identify the DoD, DoS, and USAID programs focused on improving governance in Afghanistan; 2) assess how these efforts contributed to improvements in Afghan government institutions; and 3) determine lessons learned for future governance efforts in conflict-affected countries.

Project Title	Objective
<i>Inspection of Afghan National Army South KAIA Utilities Power Distribution, Grid Connection, and Water and Sewer Upgrades</i>	To assess whether 1) the construction was completed in accordance with contract requirements and applicable construction standards; and 2) the building is being used and maintained.
<i>Implementation of DoD's Follow-on Contract to Operate and Maintain Critical ANDSF Infrastructure</i>	To assess the extent to which 1) the follow-on national maintenance contract for critical ANDSF infrastructure is achieving its contractual requirements and the DoD's broader goal of developing the ANDSF's capacity to independently operate and maintain this infrastructure; and 2) USACE developed measurable performance standards for the follow-on national maintenance contract to enable evaluation of work performed against those standards, and assess the contractor's performance.
<i>Audit of DOD's Women Participation Projects</i>	To review the planning and use of ANA and ANP facilities built for female members of the ANDSF and their families.



ISIS-K defensive fighting positions targeted in Achin District, Nangahar province. (U.S. Army photo)

Planned USAID Office of Inspector General Projects in Afghanistan

As of December 31, 2017, USAID OIG has 19 non-OFS-related projects planned in Afghanistan. Table 17 provides the project title and objective for each of the planned project.

Table 17.

Planned USAID OIG Oversight Project in Afghanistan, as of December 31, 2017

Project Title	Objective
U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL	
<i>ACA Financial Audit of American University of Afghanistan</i>	To audit Cooperative Agreement No. 306-A-13-00004 for the period from August 1, 2015, to July 31, 2016.
<i>ACA Financial Audit on Roots of Peace</i>	To audit Afghan Agricultural Research and Extension Development, AID-306-C-12-00006, for the period from January 1, 2015, to December 31, 2015.
<i>ACA Financial Audit on Tetra Tech ARD</i>	To audit Tetra Tech ARD to determine if the schedule of costs incurred in Afghanistan by Tetra Tech ARD fairly present, in all material respects, program revenues, costs incurred and reimbursed, and commodities and technical assistance directly procured by USAID for the periods in question, in accordance with the terms of Under Women's Leadership Development, AID-306-I-TO-14-00031; and Initiative to Strengthen Local Administrations, AID-306-C-15-00005, for the period from September 23, 2014, to September 30, 2015.
<i>ACA Financial Audit on ICF Macro, Inc.</i>	To audit Demographic and Health Surveys, AID-OAA-C-13-00095, for the period from September 9, 2013, to December 31, 2015.
<i>ACA Financial Audit on Jhpiego Corporation</i>	To audit Hemayat, AID-306-A-15-00002, for the period from January 7, 2015, to June 30, 2015.
<i>ACA Financial Audit of Da Afghanistan Breshna Sherkat</i>	To audit Power Transmission Expansion and Connectivity for the period from January 1, 2015, to December 31, 2015.
<i>ACA Financial Audit of The Asia Foundation</i>	To audit Strengthening Education in Afghanistan Cooperative Agreement, AID-306-A-14-00008; Survey of the Afghanistan People Grant, 306-G-12-00003; Ministry of Women's Affairs Organizational Restructuring; and Empowerment Cooperative Agreement, AID-306-A-13-00001, for the period from April 30, 2015, to December 31, 2016.
<i>ACA Financial Audit of ABT Associates, Inc.</i>	To audit the Shop Plus Cooperative Agreement, 306-AID-OAA-A-15-00067, for the period from June 1, 2016, to December 31, 2016.
<i>ACA Financial Audit of Purdue University</i>	To audit the Strengthening Afghanistan Agricultural Faculties Grant, 306-A-00-11-00516, for the period from July 1, 2015, to December 31, 2016.

Project Title	Objective
<i>ACA Financial Audit of Volunteers for Economic Growth Alliance</i>	To audit Capacity Building and Change Management Program-II Cooperative Agreement, AID-306-A-14-00010; and Assistance in Building Afghanistan by Developing Enterprise Cooperative Agreement, AID-306-LA-13-00001, for the period from January 1, 2016, to December 31, 2016.
<i>ACA Financial Audit on Development Alternatives, Inc.</i>	To audit the Driving Economic Alternative for the North, East, and West program 306-A-00-09-00508, for the period from December 1, 2014, to September 30, 2015; the Stabilization in Key Areas contract AID-306-C-12-00003, for the period from December 1, 2014, to May 31, 2015; the Regional Agriculture Development Program AID-306-C-14-00002, for the period from December 1, 2014, to December 31, 2015; the Strong Hubs for Afghan Hope and Resilience Program AID-306-C-14-00016, for the period from November 30, 2014, to December 31, 2015; and the Assistance to Legislative Bodies of Afghanistan project AID-306-TO-13-00004, for the period from December 1, 2014, to December 31, 2015.
<i>ACA Financial Audit of ICF Macro, Inc.</i>	To audit Demographic and Health Surveys Contract, AID-OAA-C-13-00095, for the period from January 1, 2016, to December 31, 2016.
<i>ACA Financial Audit of National Academy of Science</i>	To audit PEER Grants Cooperative Agreement, 306-AID-OAA-A-11-00012, for the period from September 25, 2011, to September 24, 2016.
<i>ACA Financial Audit of Futures Group International, LLC Health Sector Resiliency</i>	To audit contract AID-306-C-15-00009, for the period from September 28, 2015, to December 31, 2016.
<i>ACA Financial Audit of Roots of Peace</i>	To audit the Commercial Horticulture and Agriculture Marketing Program, cooperative agreement 306-A-00-10-00512, for the period January 1, 2016, to December 31, 2016.
<i>ACA Financial Audit of Management Systems International Inc.</i>	To audit Monitoring Support Project-North Provinces contract, AID-306-TO-15-00072, for the period from August 9, 2015, to December 31, 2016.
<i>ACA Financial Audit of Da Afghanistan Breshna Sherkat</i>	To audit Kajaki Dam Hydropower Plant Project, Implementation Letter #56, for the period from January 1, 2015, to December 31, 2015.
<i>ACA Financial Audit of Ministry of Education</i>	To audit the Basic Education, Learning, and Training Program, for the period from December 21, 2014, to June 30, 2017.
<i>ACA Financial Audit of KNCV Tuberculosis Foundation</i>	To audit Challenge Tuberculosis Cooperative Agreement, AID-OAA-A-14-00029, for the period from January 1, 2015, to September 28, 2016.





Afghan children watch as Afghan Special Security Forces conduct a patrol in Nangarhar province. (U.S. Army photo)

APPENDICES

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APPENDIX A

Methodology for Preparing This Lead IG Quarterly Report

This report is issued pursuant to sections 2, 4, and 8L of the Inspector General Act of 1978, which requires that the designated Lead IG provide a quarterly report, available to the public, on an overseas contingency operation. The DoD IG is the designated Lead IG for OFS. The DoS IG is the Associate Lead IG for the operation.

The USAID IG is designated by the Inspector General Act as the third IG responsible for overseas contingency operations, but USAID has no OFS-related programs or activities. However, the USAID OIG does conduct audits, investigations, and other activities in Afghanistan which we have listed in this report. USAID OIG coordinates those activities as appropriate, with other oversight entities.

This report contains information from the Lead IG agencies as well as from partner oversight agencies. This unclassified report covers the period from October 1, 2017, through December 31, 2017.

To fulfill its congressional mandate to produce a quarterly report on OFS, the Lead IG agencies gather data and information from Federal agencies and open sources. Data and information used in this report are attributed to their source in endnotes to the text or notes to the tables and figures. Except for references to Lead IG and oversight partner agency audits or investigations in the text or in sidebars, the Lead IG agencies have not independently verified and assessed all the data included in this report.

In addition to the unclassified quarterly report, the Lead IG agencies produce an appendix containing classified information about the counterterrorism mission and mission results of the Afghan Special Security Forces as well as other previously unclassified or publicly releasable information related to OFS, such as ANDSF force strength, casualties, and equipment readiness. The Lead IG provides the classified appendix separately to relevant agencies and congressional committees.

Data Call

Each quarter, the Lead IG agencies direct a series of questions, or data calls, to federal agencies about their programs and operations related to OFS. The Lead IG coordinates with SIGAR, which also issues a data call to support its quarterly report, in developing the OFS data call to avoid duplication and minimize the burden on reporting agencies while maximizing the collective yield of the data calls. The Lead IG agencies use responses to these data calls to develop sections of the OFS quarterly report, as well as to inform decisions concerning future audits and evaluations. Various DoD commands and offices and DoS offices participated in the data call for OFS this quarter.

Open-Source Research

This report also draws on current, publicly available information from reputable sources. Sources used in this report include the following:

- Information publicly released by U.S. agencies included in the data call
- Congressional testimonies
- Press conferences, especially DoD and DoS briefings
- United Nations (and relevant branches)
- Reports issued by non-governmental organizations
- Media reports



F-16 Fighting Falcons from the 77th Expeditionary Fighter Squadron deployed to Bagram Airfield. (U.S. Air Force photo)

The use of media reports in this quarterly report included information from AP, Reuters, the New York Times, the Washington Post, the Wall Street Journal, Voice of America, Radio Free Europe/Radio Free Liberty, CBS News, Al Jazeera, The Guardian, Stars and Stripes, the Long War Journal, the Bureau of Investigative Journalism, Newsweek, Business Standard, Agence France-Presse, TOLONews, Ariana News, Khaama Press, and Pajhwok Afghan News.

Materials collected through open source research provide information to describe the status of the operation and help the Lead IG agencies assess information provided in their agency data calls. However, the Lead IG agencies have not tested, verified, or independently assessed the assertions made by these agencies.

Report Production

The Lead IG is responsible for assembling and producing this report, and coordinates with the DoS OIG and the USAID OIG, which drafted sections of the report related to the activities of their agencies. Every Lead IG agency participates in reviewing and editing the entire quarterly report.

The Lead IG agencies provide the offices who have responded to the data call with opportunities to verify and clarify the content of the report. During the first review, the Lead IG asks agencies to correct inaccuracies and provide additional documentation. The Lead IG incorporates agency comments and sends the report back to the agencies for a final review. Each OIG coordinates the review process with its own agency.

APPENDIX B

Classified Appendix to this Operation Freedom's Sentinel Quarterly Report to Congress

This appendix on counterterrorism efforts in Afghanistan is classified and will be delivered to appropriate government agencies and congressional committees.

APPENDIX C

Resolute Support Essential Functions

The Resolute Support Mission focuses on eight essential functions (EFs) and associated sub-functions in order to develop capable and sustainable Afghan security ministries and forces. These EFs are:

Essential Function 1: Plan, Program, Budget, and Execute

EF 1 has three priorities: increase resource management capability within the ministries; build donor confidence and trust that the Afghan resource management process is transparent, accountable, and effective; and set conditions to sustain an effective Afghanistan National Defense Security Force (ANDSF) in the future. EF 1 resource management includes formulating a defense strategy, generating requirements by determining the products and services that need to be purchased to support that strategy, developing a resource-informed budget to meet prioritized requirements, executing a spend plan by awarding contracts to purchase items from the budget, and monitoring the status of funds being spent.

Essential Function 2: Transparency, Accountability, and Oversight

Ensuring third-party oversight of the planning, programming, budgeting, and execution process is an international community-stipulated requirement for continued funding. EF 2 advisors work with the MoD and the MoI to help improve internal controls, as well as maintain accountability and oversight to improve transparency. Under EF 2, Combined Security Transition Command—Afghanistan administers measures, such as financial commitment letters, that establish performance expectations and implement internal controls over all aspects of resource management, to ensure the Afghan government's proper use of funds from the United States and international donors.

Essential Function 3: Civilian Governance of the Afghan Security Institutions and Adherence to Rule of Law

An ANDSF that operates effectively and respects human rights is central to the U.S. strategy in Afghanistan, as these traits are integral to a professional ANDSF's ability to provide security, retain public support, and instill confidence in Afghanistan's institutions of governance. EF 3 advisors work with the MoD and the MoI to help ensure the ANDSF respect and adhere to the rule of law and operate in accordance with Afghanistan's constitution, domestic laws, and international obligations. Efforts focus primarily on preventing and responding properly to gross violations of human rights, such as extra-judicial killings, and significant acts of corruption.

Essential Function 4: Force Generation

EF 4 advisors work with the MoD and the MoI to build combat power through recruiting, training, retaining, managing, and developing a professional security force. The ANA and ANP utilize the Afghan Human Resource Information Management System to store human resources information, track recruits, record training, and assign qualified personnel into needed assignments based on force requirements. The force generation train, advise, and assist mission is grounded in an interconnected and mutually supportive fivefold effort: recruit, train, retain, manage, and develop. These five focus areas help the ANDSF build a more professional force.

Essential Function 5: Sustain the Force

EF 5 advisors work to help the ANDSF sustain combat power through maintenance, medical support, and logistics systems. EF 5 is divided into three parts. First, advisors assist the ANP and ANA in logistics and maintenance of vehicles, equipment, and weapons predominantly at the corps and national levels. Second, advisors assist the ANP and ANA on point of injury care, ground medical evacuation, medical logistics, equipment maintenance, medical support planning, and medical staffing. Third, advisors assist in the fields of communications, information, and infrastructure to develop a sustainable communications network.



An Afghan A-29 pilot prepared for flight in the cockpit of his aircraft at Kandahar Airfield. (U.S. Air Force photo)

Essential Function 6: Plan, Resource, and Execute Effective Security Campaigns

EF 6 advisors work to help the ANDSF effectively employ combat power in support of the Afghan government. It is divided into two parts: strategic planning and policy, and execution and employment of the force. In support of developing strategic planning and policy, advisors assist with strategic planning efforts at the Office of the National Security Council, the MoD, and the MoI. These efforts are designed to develop the capability of the MoD and the MoI to coordinate, plan, and execute in support of national-level objectives while strategic guidance and objectives are in turn translated into operational and seasonal plans supported by effective security campaigns.

Essential Function 7: Develop Sufficient Intelligence Capabilities and Processes

EF 7 advisors work to help the ANDSF develop and integrate intelligence into operations. Advisors work with several organizations, including the Assistant MoD for Intelligence, the ANA General Staff Intelligence Directorate, the MoI Directorate of Police Intelligence, and the National Threat Intelligence Center, also known as the Nasrat. The goal of this effort is to ensure that the ANDSF collect, process, analyze, and disseminate intelligence effectively and integrate intelligence into combat operations.

Essential Function 8: Maintain Internal and External Strategic Communication Capability

EF 8 advisors work with the Afghan government to counter insurgent messaging and offer a positive narrative to the Afghan people and the international community. Efforts seek to help Afghan partners speak with one consistent voice, both within their own organizations and externally. Advisors focus on bridging gaps and overcoming challenges to improved communications within the Afghan security ministries and forces while continuing to reinforce successes and look for opportunities to improve.

Resolute Support Gender Office

In addition to the eight EFs, the Resolute Support Gender Office seeks to train, advise, and assist Afghan leadership to ensure that an appropriate gender perspective is incorporated into planning for all policies and strategies within the security ministries and through implementation at the ANA and ANP levels. Since gender issues cross all EFs, advising in this area is not restricted to one EF.

Source: DoD, 6/2017.

ACRONYMS AND DEFINITIONS

Acronym	Definition
AAF	Afghan Air Force
ABF	Afghan Border Force
ABP	Afghan Border Police
ACEP	Afghan Civic Engagement Program
ACJC	Anti-Corruption Justice Center
AETF-A	Air and Space Expeditionary Task Force
AFCENT	U.S. Air Forces Central Command
AFRICOM	United States Africa Command
ALP	Afghan Local Police
ANA	Afghan National Army
ANATF	Afghan National Army Territorial Force
ANDSF	Afghan National Defense and Security Forces
AQ	Al Qaeda
AQAP	Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula
AQIS	Al Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent
AQS	Al Qaeda in Syria
CENTCOM	United States Central Command
COP-OCO	Comprehensive Oversight Plan–Overseas Contingency Operations
COR	Contracting Officer Representative
CSTC-A	Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan
DCIS	Defense Criminal Investigative Service
DEA	Drug Enforcement Agency
DoD	Department of Defense
DoS	Department of State
EF	Essential Function
FFP	Food for Peace
FTO	Foreign Terrorist Organization
FY	Fiscal Year
GVHR	Gross Violations of Human Rights
IEC	Independent Election Committee
IED	Improvised Explosive Device
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IMU	Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan

Acronym	Definition
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
ISIS-K	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria-Khorasan
ISR	Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance
JN	Jabhat al Nusrah
<i>kandaks</i>	battalions
Lead IG	Lead Inspector General
Lead IG agencies	DoD OIG, DoS OIG, and USAID OIG
LeT	Lashkar-e Tayyiba
LOGCAP	Logistics Civil Augmentation Program
MoD	Ministry of Defense
MoI	Ministry of Interior Affairs
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
OCO	Overseas Contingency Operation
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OFDA	Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance
OFS	Operation Freedom's Sentinel
OIG	Office of Inspector General
OIR	Operation Inherent Resolve
OPE-P	Operation Pacific Eagle-Philippines
SFAB	Security Force Assistance Brigade
SIGAR	Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction
SMW	Special Mission Wing
SOA	Strategic Oversight Area
TAAC	Train, Advise, and Assist Command
<i>tashkil</i>	the official list of ANDSF personnel and equipment requirements
TTP	Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan
UN	United Nations
UNAMA	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
UNHCR	UN High Commissioner for Refugees
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USFOR-A	United States Forces-Afghanistan

ENDNOTES

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U.S. Army Soldiers fire an 81mm mortar in support of the ANA in Helmand Province. (U.S. Marine Corps photo)

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