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SECURITY

KEY ISSUES & EVENTS

On February 29, 2020, the United States signed an agreement with the Taliban and issued a parallel joint declaration with the Afghan government. The agreement followed a week-long “reduction in violence” (RIV) by U.S., Coalition, Afghan government, and Taliban forces.

The NATO Resolute Support (RS) mission restricted from public release enemy-initiated attacks data, a metric for tracking the levels and locations of violence in Afghanistan. Instead, RS told SIGAR that from March 1–31, “the Taliban . . . increased attacks against ANDSF to levels above seasonal norms.”

RS Commander General Austin Scott Miller and Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation Zalmay Khalilzad met with Taliban leaders in Doha in mid-April about reducing the level of violence.

On February 29, 2020, the United States signed an agreement with the Taliban and issued a parallel joint declaration with the Afghan government. The agreement followed a week-long “reduction in violence” (RIV) by U.S., Coalition, Afghan government, and Taliban forces.⁷⁷

The U.S.-Taliban agreement provides for the withdrawal of all U.S. troops and associated nondiplomatic personnel from Afghanistan within 14 months, provided that the Taliban meets a number of conditions. The agreement commits the Taliban to prevent its members and other individuals or groups from using Afghan soil “to threaten the security of the United States or its allies,” and to enter into negotiations with the Afghan government to determine “the date and modalities of a permanent and comprehensive ceasefire” and to reach “agreement over the future political roadmap of Afghanistan.” The joint declaration of the United States and the Afghan government reaffirms U.S. support for the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF) and for continued military cooperation against international terrorist groups.⁷⁸

The NATO Resolute Support (RS) mission said that during the RIV week “the Taliban reduced violence to historic lows.”⁷⁹ After the signing of the U.S.-Taliban agreement, U.S. officials said they expected the level of Taliban attacks, and violence generally, to remain low.⁸⁰ However, almost immediately afterward, the Taliban increased attacks against the ANDSF. On March 4, RS Commander General Austin Scott Miller said the Taliban “need to

lower their violence. The agreement is fragile if the Taliban is not going to lower their violence,” and said the United States would continue to defend its Afghan partners from Taliban attacks using air strikes as necessary.⁸¹ As the Taliban continued attacking into April, General Miller met with Taliban leadership in Doha on April 10 and April 13 “as part of the military channel established in the agreement . . . about the need to reduce the violence,” and discussed both parties’ concerns over potential violations of the agreement and possible solutions to a prisoner-release dispute that has delayed the start of intra-Afghan negotiations.⁸²

This quarter, RS for the first time restricted from public release the enemy-initiated attacks (EIA) and effective enemy-initiated attacks (EEIA) data that RS uses to track the levels and locations of violence in Afghanistan. According to RS, the data is being withheld from public release because “EIA are now a critical part of deliberative interagency discussions regarding ongoing political negotiations between the U.S. and the Taliban.” Instead, RS told SIGAR that from March 1–31, “the Taliban refrained from attacks against Coalition Forces; however they increased attacks against ANDSF to levels above seasonal norms.”⁸³

Under the U.S.-Taliban agreement, the United States has committed to reducing its troop levels in Afghanistan to 8,600 within 135 days of its signing. If the Taliban meet their commitments, all U.S. troops would be withdrawn within 14 months.⁸⁴ On March 10, General Kenneth F. McKenzie Jr., commanding general of U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM), testified that the Department of Defense (DOD) has begun implementing the draw-down to 8,600 troops, but has not yet ordered reductions below that level.⁸⁵

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, on March 20, CENTCOM issued a “stop movement” order preventing U.S. forces from deploying to their areas of responsibility (including Afghanistan) without first quarantining for 14 days. However, CENTCOM said the stop-movement order is “not expected to delay the drawdown in forces from Afghanistan as part of the U.S. agreement with the Taliban.”⁸⁶

Defense Secretary Mark Esper and General Miller have said they believe that a force of 8,600 is adequate to undertake both U.S. missions in Afghanistan outlined under Operation Freedom’s Sentinel (OFS): the unilateral U.S. counterterrorism mission and the U.S. contribution to NATO’s Resolute Support (RS) mission to train, advise, and assist (TAA) the ANDSF. Defense officials have not yet articulated how an eventual drawdown below the 8,600 level might impact both missions.⁸⁷

Substantial and continued U.S. and international financial, military and contractor support is required to sustain the ANDSF as it is currently constituted. Without support, the ANDSF will struggle to maintain and operate certain types of equipment, vehicles, and aircraft; provide consistent logistics support across the force; and root out fuel-related and other corruption across its ranks. However, DOD reported that the ANDSF has made some

recent, notable improvements in implementing systems such as the Afghan Personnel and Pay System (APPS), which accounts for ANDSF personnel and generates payroll calculations for the MOD, as well as the continuing growth and increasing capabilities of the Afghan Air Force (AAF) and the Afghan Special Security Forces (ASSF).⁸⁸

ANDSF Data Classified or Not Publicly Releasable

This quarter, RS for the first time restricted from public release all data on enemy-initiated attacks (EIA) and effective enemy-initiated attacks (EEIA).⁸⁹

USFOR-A continued to classify or otherwise restrict from public release the following types of data due to Afghan government classification guidelines or other restrictions (mostly since October 2017).⁹⁰

- ANDSF casualties, by force element and total
- most unit-level ANDSF authorized and assigned strengths
- detailed Ministry of Defense (MOD), Ministry of Interior (MOI), and ANDSF performance assessments
- information about the operational readiness of ANA and ANP equipment
- some Special Mission Wing (SMW) information, including the number and type of airframes in the SMW inventory, the number of pilots and aircrew, and the operational readiness (and associated benchmarks) of SMW airframes

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

U.S. Reconstruction Funding for Security

As of March 31, 2020, the U.S. Congress had appropriated roughly \$86.4 billion to help the Afghan government provide security in Afghanistan. This accounts for 63% of all U.S. reconstruction funding for Afghanistan since fiscal year (FY) 2002. Of the nearly \$4.2 billion appropriated for the Afghanistan Security Forces Fund (ASFF) in FY 2020, only about \$118.6 million had been obligated and \$3.2 million had been disbursed, as of March 31, 2020.⁹¹

Congress established the ASFF in 2005 to build, equip, train, and sustain the ANDSF, which comprises all forces under the MOD and MOI. A significant portion of ASFF money is used for Afghan Air Force (AAF) aircraft maintenance, and for ANA, AAF, ASSF, and Afghan Local Police (ALP) salaries. The ALP falls under the authority of the MOI, but is not included in the authorized ANDSF force level that donor nations have agreed to fund; only the United States and Afghanistan fund the ALP. The funding for the

ALP will expire at the end of FY 2020.⁹² The rest of ASFF is used for fuel, ammunition, vehicle, facility and equipment maintenance, and various communications and intelligence infrastructure. A detailed ASFF FY 2019 budget breakdown is presented in Table 3.4 on page 45.⁹³

ASFF monies are obligated by either CSTC-A or the Defense Security Cooperation Agency. Funds that CSTC-A provides to the Afghan government to manage (on-budget) are provided directly to the Ministry of Finance. The Ministry of Finance then transfers those funds to the MOD and MOI based on submitted funding requests.⁹⁴ While the United States funds most ANA salaries, a significant share of ANP personnel costs is paid by international donors through the United Nations Development Programme's multidonor Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan (LOTFA). The United States had been, but is no longer, the largest contributor to LOTFA.⁹⁵ A discussion of on-budget (Afghan-managed) and off-budget (U.S.-managed) expenditures of ASFF is found on pages 111–112.

Violence Increases after U.S.-Taliban Deal, Despite U.S. Expectations

This quarter, U.S., Coalition, ANDSF, and Taliban forces implemented a week-long reduction in violence (RIV) beginning February 22, ahead of the February 29 signing of the U.S.-Taliban agreement and the finalization of a joint U.S.-Afghanistan declaration. The U.S.-Taliban agreement centered on the phased withdrawal of international forces, on the Taliban preventing the use of Afghan soil for attacks on the United States and its allies, and on Taliban participation in negotiations with the Afghan government.⁹⁶

RS told SIGAR that, prior to the RIV period, “In early to mid-February, the Taliban increased violence against the United States and Coalition forces.”⁹⁷ During the RIV period, U.S., Coalition, ANDSF, and Taliban forces changed their fighting posture. President Ashraf Ghani ordered the ANDSF to assume a defensive posture against the Taliban while continuing operations against other militants.⁹⁸ The State Department said “the Taliban had pledged to not undertake major attacks of any sort, including car bomb attacks, suicide bombings, rocket attacks, [and attacks using] IEDs,” and the United States agreed not to carry out air strikes against the Taliban or to raid Taliban facilities.⁹⁹ According to Secretary of State Michael R. Pompeo, the result was that the RIV period saw the lowest levels of violence of the preceding four years.¹⁰⁰

Following the RIV period and the signing of the agreement on February 29, U.S. officials said they expected the level of Taliban attacks, and violence generally, to remain low, with Secretary Pompeo saying that the Taliban had “made commitments to continue to reduce the violence level.”¹⁰¹

However, immediately after the agreement was signed, the Taliban increased attacks on ANDSF positions. After the Taliban attacked an



RS and USFOR-A Commander General Scott Miller (right) speaks at a press conference at the beginning of the reduction in violence period with Acting Minister of Interior Massoud Andarabi (left) and Acting Minister of Defense Asadullah Khaled (center). (Resolute Support photo)

ANDSF security checkpoint in Helmand Province on March 4, U.S. forces responded with their first air strike against the Taliban in 11 days.¹⁰² That same day, General Miller said the RIV had been “a start for the peace pathway, and ... the military of all sides have obligations to make sure that pathway is achievable.” He added that the United States would continue to conduct defensive air strikes in support of the ANDSF when they were attacked by the Taliban.¹⁰³

Aside from public statements made by U.S. officials and Taliban leaders, the *New York Times* reported that specifications about the level of violence, the prohibited types and targets of attacks, and other security and operational details of the U.S.-Taliban agreement are stipulated in the classified “implementing arrangements,” to which SIGAR has not received access.¹⁰⁴ The public version of the U.S.-Taliban agreement requires the Taliban to take a number of steps “to prevent any group or individual, including al-Qa’ida, from using the soil of Afghanistan to threaten the security of the United States and its allies.”¹⁰⁵

In an April 16 email to SIGAR, the State Department made it clear that it does not consider all Taliban attacks on the ANDSF a violation of the agreement, saying, “The U.S.-Taliban agreement does not prohibit all Taliban attacks against Afghan security forces, nor does it preclude the United States from acting in defense of Afghan forces.” State added that “Secretary Pompeo noted that the United States retained the right to defend Afghan government forces when attacked, a point further underscored by Ambassador Khalilzad in a March 12 interview with TOLONews and reaffirmed in the U.S.-Afghanistan Joint Declaration.”¹⁰⁶

On March 3, 2019, SIGAR’s chief of staff requested from State’s Office of Afghanistan Affairs copies of and/or access to the classified annexes to the agreement between the United States and the Taliban. The office responded that they “do not have a copy of the implementing arrangements” and noted the classified security annexes “deal with operational and security matters and distribution is restricted accordingly.” They suggested SIGAR follow up with the office of Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation (SRAR), Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad. The SRAR’s office was included on the response for additional follow-up, and SIGAR also made a direct request, but SRAR failed to respond at the time this report was published.

Source: SIGAR, email correspondence with State, 3/3/2020 and 3/4/2020.

UNAMA vs. RS Collection Methodology

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

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

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

RS Restricts Public Release of Enemy-Initiated Attack Data

This quarter RS restricted from public release its data on enemy-initiated attacks (EIA), an important metric the command uses to track the levels and locations of violence across Afghanistan. This is the first time RS has restricted the release of this data since it began providing it to SIGAR in September 2018. RS explained its decision by saying “EIA are now a critical part of deliberative interagency discussions regarding ongoing political negotiations between the U.S. and the Taliban.” The Pentagon’s Afghanistan policy office added that after the deliberative process ends, the data could again become releasable to the public.¹⁰⁷

RS did provide the following unclassified narrative about enemy-initiated attacks during the month of March:

Between March 1 and 31, the Taliban refrained from attacks against Coalition forces; however they increased attacks against ANDSF to levels above seasonal norms.

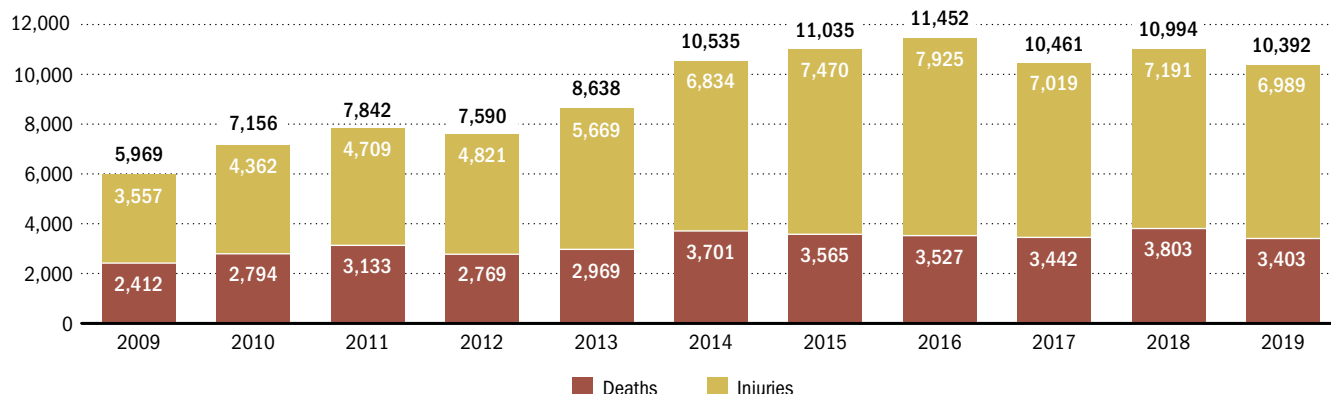
The Afghan Government maintains control of Kabul, provincial capitals, major population centers, most district centers, and most portions of major ground lines of communications (GLOCs). The Taliban contest several portions of main GLOCs, contest district centers in vicinity of Taliban strongholds, and in late March overtook Yamgan District, Badakhshan. Since the [RIV] period, the Taliban reduced violence against ANDSF in provincial capitals, likely to avoid risking the United States-Taliban agreement.¹⁰⁸

RS’s statement about the violence level from March 1–31 corresponds with the publicly available data from open sources. The *New York Times* reported on March 4 that Taliban violence against the ANDSF had increased after the signing of the U.S.-Taliban agreement, as they conducted 76 attacks across 24 Afghan provinces in four days.¹⁰⁹ The Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED), partly funded by the State Department, attributed 538 violent incidents to the Taliban from March 1–31, a 42% increase in incidents compared to February 2020 (which included the RIV week), and an 11% increase compared to March 2019. TOLONews also reported an increase in Taliban attacks following the signing of the U.S.-Taliban agreement (31–96 attacks per day between March 3 and April 7 versus around 70 attacks per day before the RIV), though they did not indicate the source of their data.¹¹⁰

After concluding that there had been no post-agreement reduction in Taliban attacks, on March 19, Afghanistan’s Acting Minister of Defense Asadullah Khalid ordered MOD forces “to return to [an] active defense position from [a] defensive position,” meaning they had “the right to attack the enemy where they are preparing to attack.”¹¹¹ As Taliban attacks on the ANDSF continued into early April, a USFOR-A spokesperson reported that General Miller met with Taliban leadership in Doha on April 10 and 13 “as part of the military channel established in the agreement ... about the need to reduce the violence.”¹¹²

FIGURE 3.30

UNAMA CIVILIAN CASUALTIES FROM 2009-2019



Note: This chart also appears in UNAMA's report.

Source: UNAMA, Annual Report on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict: 1 January to 31 December 2019, 2/22/2020, p. 5.

Civilian Casualties

SIGAR analyzes Afghan civilian-casualty data from two different sources, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and RS. These organizations use different definitions of combatants (or noncombatants), and different methodologies to collect and assess civilian-casualty data, with RS consistently reporting fewer civilian casualties than UNAMA.¹¹³ However, comparing both sources, including the overall increase or decrease of civilian casualties, the breakdown of casualties by type, and the breakdown of casualties by party attribution, can provide helpful insights into civilian-casualty trends over similar reporting periods.

UNAMA: Civilian Casualties in 2019 Lowest Since 2013

UNAMA documented 10,392 civilian casualties (3,403 deaths and 6,989 injuries) in Afghanistan in 2019, a 5% decrease compared to 2018. As seen in Figure 3.30, 2019 was the sixth consecutive year in which over 10,000 civilian casualties were recorded in Afghanistan, though it had the lowest number of civilian casualties since 2013. UNAMA said the reduction of civilian casualties in 2019 reflected fewer casualties caused by Islamic State-Khorasan (IS-K), but more casualties caused by the Taliban and international military forces.¹¹⁴

Civilian Casualties by Parties Responsible

UNAMA continued to attribute the majority of civilian casualties (6,447, or 62%) in 2019 to antigovernment elements (47% to the Taliban, 12% to IS-K, and 3% to undetermined and other elements). The 4,904 casualties attributed to the Taliban represent a 21% increase compared to 2018, mainly

String of Defeats for IS-K

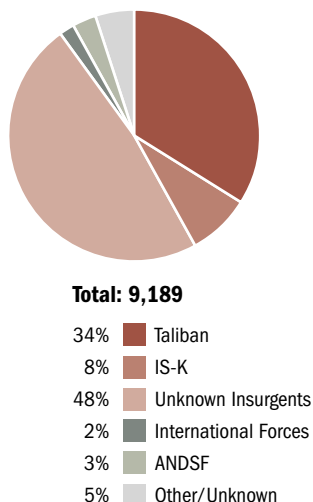
On April 4, the National Directorate of Security, Afghanistan's intelligence service, arrested and detained Abdullah Orakzai (known as Aslam Farooqi), the leader of Islamic State's affiliate in Afghanistan, Islamic State-Khorasan (IS-K).

This is the latest in a string of recent defeats for the group. According to the UN, since October 2019, over 1,400 IS-K fighters and affiliates have surrendered to the ANDSF or Coalition forces. IS-K largely lost its stronghold in Nangarhar Province in November 2019, and the group's presence has been reduced to pockets in western Kunar Province. As a result, the number of security incidents attributed to IS-K from November to February, declined considerably compared to the preceding three months and to the same period in 2019.

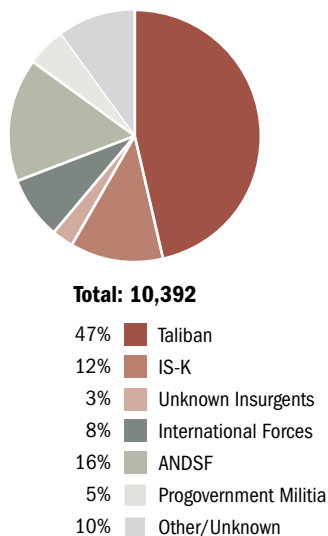
Source: Stars and Stripes, "Leader of ISIS in Afghanistan Arrested, Security Officials Say," 4/4/2020; UN, Report of the Secretary-General, The Situation in Afghanistan and its Implications for International Peace and Security," 3/17/2020, p. 6.

FIGURE 3.31

RS CIVILIAN CASUALTIES BY PARTY ATTRIBUTION



UNAMA CIVILIAN CASUALTIES BY PARTY ATTRIBUTION

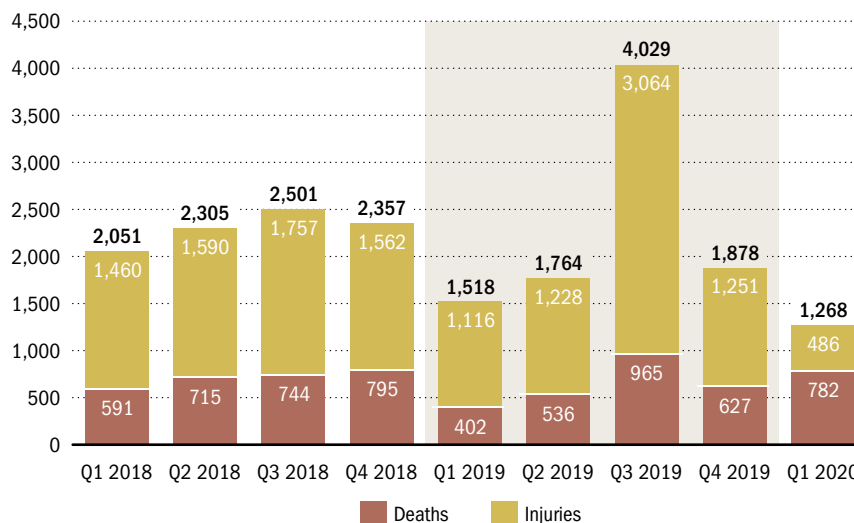


Note: Casualties include dead and wounded. "Other/unknown" for UNAMA data includes civilian casualties resulting from crossfire. "Progovernment militia" includes casualties attributed to unknown and multiple progovernment forces. "Unknown insurgent" includes casualties attributed to undetermined antigovernment elements. "Other/unknown" for RS data civilian casualties caused by undetermined elements, local militia, and the Pakistani military.

Source: RS, response to SIGAR data call, 1/7/2020; UNAMA, Annual Report on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict: 1 January to 31 December 2019, 2/22/2020, p. 10; SIGAR, analysis of UNAMA and RS-provided data, 4/2020.

FIGURE 3.32

RS-REPORTED CIVILIAN CASUALTIES BY QUARTER



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

due to more non-suicide IED attacks. UNAMA attributed 2,933 (27%) of civilian casualties to progovernment forces (16% to the ANDSF, 8% to international military forces, 2% to progovernment armed groups, and 3% to undetermined or multiple progovernment forces). This is a 13% increase in casualties caused by progovernment forces compared to 2018, driven by international military forces' ground engagements and air strikes. (Air strikes remained at record-high levels.)¹¹⁵

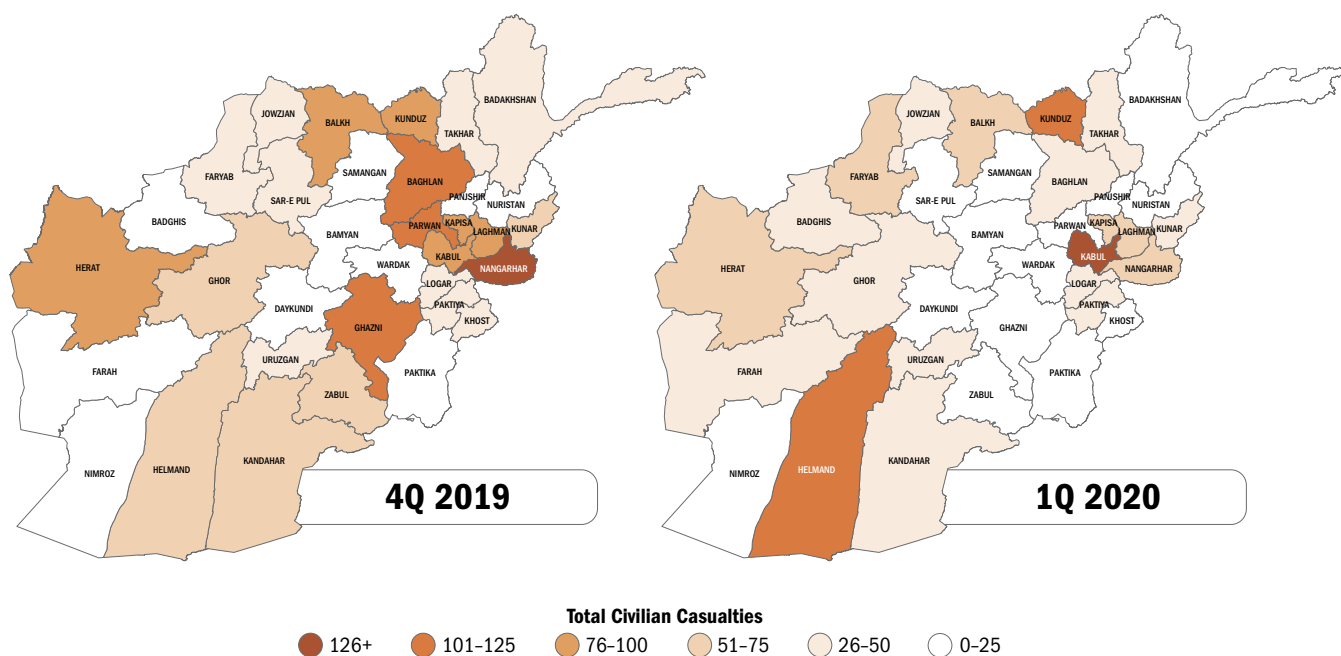
Figure 3.31 shows that UNAMA's attribution of casualties differs significantly from RS's. RS attributed 90% of the 9,189 civilian casualties it recorded in 2019 to antigovernment forces, 5% to progovernment forces, and 5% to other and unknown parties.¹¹⁶

Civilian Casualties by Incident Type

As has been the pattern in recent years, UNAMA reported the greatest number of civilian casualties in 2019 (4,336, or 42%) were caused by suicide and non-suicide improvised-explosive devices (IEDs), a 6% decrease from 2018. Ground engagements caused 29% of the civilian casualties in 2019, followed by air strikes (10%), targeted and deliberate killings (8%), explosive remnants of war (5%), search operations (3%), with the remaining 3% due to other causes.¹¹⁷ The breakdown of incident types causing civilian casualties is similar between UNAMA and RS, with the notable exception of air strikes. RS recorded that 2% of civilian casualties in 2019 were caused by air strikes.¹¹⁸

FIGURE 3.33

RS-REPORTED CIVILIAN CASUALTIES: COMPARING 4Q 2019 AND 1Q 2020



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

RS Reports Decline in Civilian Casualties in Early 2020

RS reported 32% fewer civilian casualties in Afghanistan this quarter (January 1–March 31, 2020) compared to last quarter (October 1–December 31, 2019), and a 16% decrease compared to last year (January 1–March 31, 2019). Figure 3.32 shows that the 1,268 civilian casualties this quarter were 610 fewer than last quarter and 250 fewer than the same period last year.¹¹⁹

RS attributed 88% of this quarter's civilian casualties to antigovernment forces, which include the Taliban (37%), IS-K (10%), Haqqani Network (0%), and unknown insurgents (41%). Another 7% were attributed to progovernment forces (6% to ANDSF and 1% to Coalition forces), and 5% to other or unknown forces. These RS-provided percentages were similar to last quarter. However, in contrast to last quarter when improvised-explosive devices caused most civilian casualties, this quarter it was direct fire (47%), followed by improvised-explosive devices (32%), and indirect fire (6%).¹²⁰

Figure 3.33, shows that civilian casualties declined or remained the same in most provinces (23 of 34) compared to last quarter. While Nangarhar, Ghazni, and Parwan Provinces experienced the highest number of civilian casualties last quarter, this quarter, civilian casualties in these provinces declined dramatically (by an average of 83%), and Kabul, Kunduz, and

SIGAR typically analyzes Afghan civilian-casualty data from RS and UNAMA, but UNAMA did not issue a quarterly report covering early 2020 within this reporting period.

Helmand Provinces experienced the highest numbers of civilian casualties. Kabul Province suffered the most civilian casualties (208), and had one of the most substantial increases (151%) since last quarter.¹²¹

UNITED STATES FORCES-AFGHANISTAN

United States Begins Phased Troop Withdrawal

On March 2, Defense Secretary Mark Esper confirmed he ordered USFOR-A to begin a phased drawdown of U.S. troops from Afghanistan, as stipulated in the agreement signed between the United States and the Taliban on February 29.¹²² The United States has committed to drawing down its number of troops in Afghanistan to 8,600 within 135 days of the agreement's signing and to withdraw all troops within 14 months, if the Taliban meet the conditions outlined in the agreement.¹²³

On March 18, USFOR-A spokesperson Colonel Sonny Leggett confirmed that the drawdown of U.S. troops was proceeding, but did not specify how many had already been withdrawn or how many remained in country.¹²⁴ Secretary Esper said that once U.S. troops are at 8,600, “we’re going to stop, and we’ll assess the situation, not just tactically on the ground but also are all the parties living up to their obligations, their commitments? Are they acting in good faith and showing good effort?”¹²⁵

The new troop-level target is a roughly 4,000-person reduction from the 12,000–13,000 personnel reported by DOD on December 7, 2019.¹²⁶ For several months, Secretary Esper has said a force of 8,600 represents a force optimization, and can perform both U.S. missions in Afghanistan outlined under Operation Freedom’s Sentinel (OFS): the unilateral U.S. counterterrorism mission and the U.S. contribution to NATO’s RS mission to train, advise, and assist (TAA) the ANDSF.¹²⁷ Defense officials have not yet articulated how an eventual drawdown below the 8,600 level could impact both missions.

NATO’s latest reported figure for the RS mission is 16,551 Coalition military personnel as of February 2020, including 8,000 U.S. personnel and 8,551 military personnel from NATO and non-NATO partner nations.¹²⁸ Other U.S. troops in the OFS mission in Afghanistan serve in supporting roles, train Afghan special forces, or conduct air and counterterror operations.¹²⁹ These figures were published before the U.S. troop drawdown began in earnest, as well as before the commensurate drawdown of other Coalition nations’ forces, meaning that the current RS mission is likely smaller. Referring to the RS mission’s size in a meeting of NATO foreign ministers in early April, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said “to support the peace efforts, we are reducing our presence to around 12,000 by the summer,” but “no decision for a further reduction has been taken and all of our steps will be conditions-based.”¹³⁰



A U.S. Army medical logistician stocks medical supplies at a warehouse in Bagram Airfield that will be used to protect service members, civilians, and Coalition partners from COVID-19. (U.S. Army photo)

Separate from U.S. military personnel in Afghanistan are the DOD contractors who provide essential in-country support to U.S. forces and the ANDSF. As of April 2020, 27,641 contractors were serving in Afghanistan, about 40% (11,077) of whom were third-country nationals, 39% (10,711) were U.S. citizens, and 21% (5,853) were local nationals, or more than twice the number of U.S. troops currently in country. These contractors fulfill an array of important responsibilities, with most providing logistics and maintenance support (34%), security (19%), and support for U.S. military bases (14%), and the rest providing construction, translation and interpretation, transportation, training, and other services.¹³¹

The U.S.-Taliban agreement provides that “The United States is committed to withdraw from Afghanistan all military forces of the United States, its allies, and Coalition partners, including all non-diplomatic civilian personnel, private security contractors, trainers, advisors, and supporting services personnel” within 14 months.¹³² State declined to comment publicly on the issue of whether U.S.-funded contractors and other support personnel for the ANDSF are among those to be withdrawn.¹³³ Contractors provide mission-essential support to the ANDSF in a number of areas, including some critical and costly U.S.-funded programs, such as Afghan Air Force (AAF) aircraft and ANDSF ground vehicles.¹³⁴

U.S. and Coalition Forces Casualties and Insider Attacks

This quarter (January 1–March 31, 2020), there were seven American military deaths in Afghanistan (four hostile and three non-hostile), and 11 service members injured. Two American soldiers were killed January 11 by a roadside bomb in Kandahar Province and another two were killed February 8 by a man in an ANA uniform in Nangarhar Province.¹³⁵ These bring the total number of U.S. military casualties in Afghanistan from

October 1, 2001, through April 17, 2020, to 1,909 hostile deaths (1,409 personnel killed in action, 497 died of combat wounds, and three died in other attacks), and another 530 personnel died from non-hostile causes. A total of 20,663 personnel were wounded in action.¹³⁶

This quarter's figures reflect a small increase in military deaths (three hostile and one non-hostile deaths more) over last quarter (October 1, 2019–December 31, 2019), but a significant decline in injuries (57 fewer). Compared to the same period last year (January 1, 2019–March 31, 2019), American military deaths and injuries have remained approximately the same (four hostile deaths, zero non-hostile deaths, and 13 injuries).¹³⁷

According to RS, there were no confirmed insider attacks in which ANDSF personnel attack U.S. and Coalition personnel, this reporting period (January 1–March 31, 2020). The attack that killed two U.S. Special Forces soldiers in Nangarhar Province on February 8, 2020, is under investigation as a possible insider attack.¹³⁸

Changes to U.S. and Coalition Forces' Advising Efforts

New Assessment, Monitoring, and Evaluation Method for ANDSF Performance

CSTC-A is adopting a new method for assessing, monitoring, and evaluating ANDSF performance to enable RS to “assess the people, places (units), and processes that are most vital to the viability of the ANDSF.” The new method, like the prior one, is built into the Advisor Network (ANET), the electronic system used by RS advisors to track engagements with and assess the performance and progress of their ANDSF counterparts.¹³⁹ It is slated to become available for advisor inputs in April, with baseline assessments expected to be available to CSTC-A in May 2020.¹⁴⁰

CSTC-A told SIGAR this quarter that it believes the new evaluation method will be a significant improvement over the previous, narrative-only advisor evaluations. The old narrative assessments made it difficult for advisors and RS staff and leadership to use ANET in any meaningful way because the assessments were too subjective, or lacked historical context.¹⁴¹ To increase rigor and reduce the possibility of arbitrary evaluations, the new method uses a Likert scale—a tool commonly used in surveys to measure respondents' attitudes, perceptions, or opinions, as in the common strongly agree/agree/neutral/disagree/strongly disagree rating questions.¹⁴² CSTC-A believes that using the Likert scale will generate quantifiable performance data that can reflect historical trend lines, making assessments useful for the command.¹⁴³

CSTC-A hopes this will improve U.S. and Coalition TAA efforts by focusing them on the **Top 10 Challenges and Opportunities** that must be addressed in order for the ANDSF to become “institutionally viable,” meaning effective, affordable, and sustainable. However, CSTC-A said some

The Top 10 Challenges and Opportunities are the focal point of CSTC-A's TAA efforts for the ANDSF and include:

- (1) Leader development
- (2) Reducing the number of vulnerable checkpoints
- (3) Countering corruption
- (4) Improving logistics
- (5) Improving accountability of equipment
- (6) Reducing attrition through better care of soldiers and police
- (7) Standardization of training
- (8) Better MOD and MOI budget execution
- (9) Improving processes for paying soldier and police salaries
- (10) Improving ANDSF facilities

Source: DOD, Enhancing Security and Stability in Afghanistan, 12/2019, p. 31.

objectives and efforts measured in the revamped ANET are not based solely on the Top 10 Challenges and Opportunities.¹⁴⁴ For example, progress on ANDSF gender-related efforts are not specifically identified as one of the Top 10 Challenges and Opportunities, but are included in ANET because CSTC-A sees them as “important measures that help RS understand the overall progress of the ANDSF’s manner of governance.”¹⁴⁵

This new method is the latest in a long history of DOD changing the methods it uses to assess ANDSF performance. Since 2010, U.S. and Coalition forces in Afghanistan have used at least four different methods, including the Commander’s Unit Assessment Tool (CUAT) from roughly 2010 to 2013, the Regional Command Assessment Report (RASR) from 2014 to 2015, the Monthly ANDSF Assessment Report (MAAR) from 2015 to 2016, and the security tracker for the Afghanistan Compact from late-2017 until recently. SIGAR has reported issues with each of these past systems, including that they did not provide a clear picture of ANDSF capabilities, had methodological inconsistencies that prevented identifying performance trend lines, or that data gathered on ANDSF performance using these systems became classified.¹⁴⁶

Optimizing Train, Advise, and Assist Efforts through Force Realignment

This quarter, DOD reported on RS efforts to optimize its TAA efforts and achieve unity of effort by empowering its **Ministerial Advisory Groups for Defense (MAG-D) and Interior (MAG-I)**, and by realigning the 12 branches conducting ministerial advising under the direction and guidance of the MAGs. RS advisors who routinely engage with the MOD and MOI will now coordinate efforts through the MAGs to ensure consistency when communicating with Afghan officials.¹⁴⁷

The empowered MAGs have been able to better synchronize their advisory efforts from the ministerial level down to the corps and provincial levels through a series of forums designed to increase communication and cooperation among CSTC-A, DCOS Ops, and the TAACs and Task Forces (TFs), including elements of the Security Force Assistance Brigade (SFAB) that are distributed among the TAACs and TFs. DOD reported that by the end of 2019, the TAA optimization effort had already “increased proficiency across the spectrum of warfighting functions, including helping to generate ANDSF combat and policing power, improve ANDSF accountability of personnel, ensure soldiers and police are paid, and reform logistics.”¹⁴⁸

Ministerial Advisory Groups for Defense (MAG-D) and Interior (MAG-I): U.S. or Coalition general officers who serve as the senior advisor to the Minister of Defense (MAG-D) or Minister of Interior (MAG-I). Both general officers, with their staff, coordinate and align advising efforts across the Resolute Support mission.

Source: DOD, *Enhancing Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, 12/2019, p. 6.

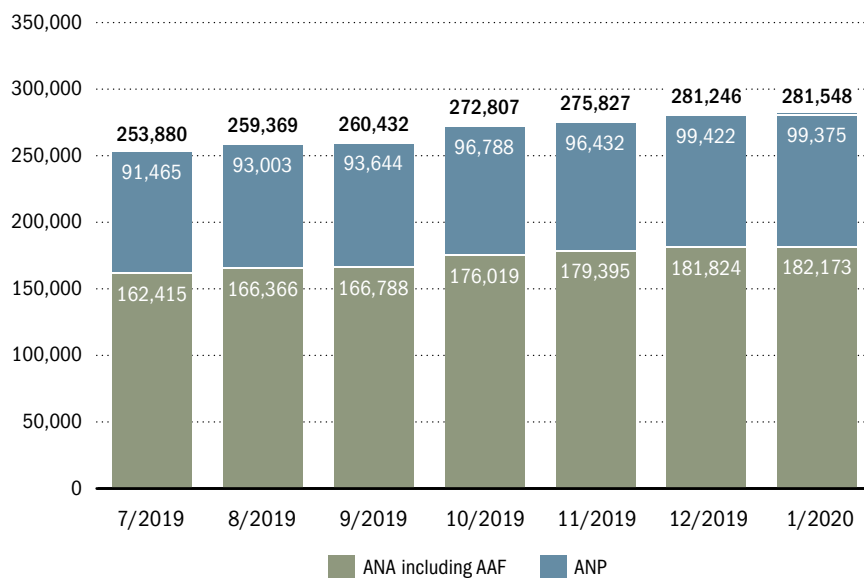
AFGHAN NATIONAL DEFENSE AND SECURITY FORCES

Reported ANDSF Force Strength Increased This Quarter

Reported ANDSF personnel strength increased by 3% since last quarter—the second consecutive quarterly increase—as Coalition and Afghan

FIGURE 3.34

REPORTED ANDSF ASSIGNED STRENGTH FROM APPS



Note: This quarter's data is as of January 26, 2020. The "as of" date of the data each quarter is between the 25th and 31st of the indicated month. ANA = Afghan National Army; AAF = Afghan Air Force; ANP = Afghan National Police; ANDSF = Afghan National Defense and Security Forces. No civilians are included in the strength numbers.

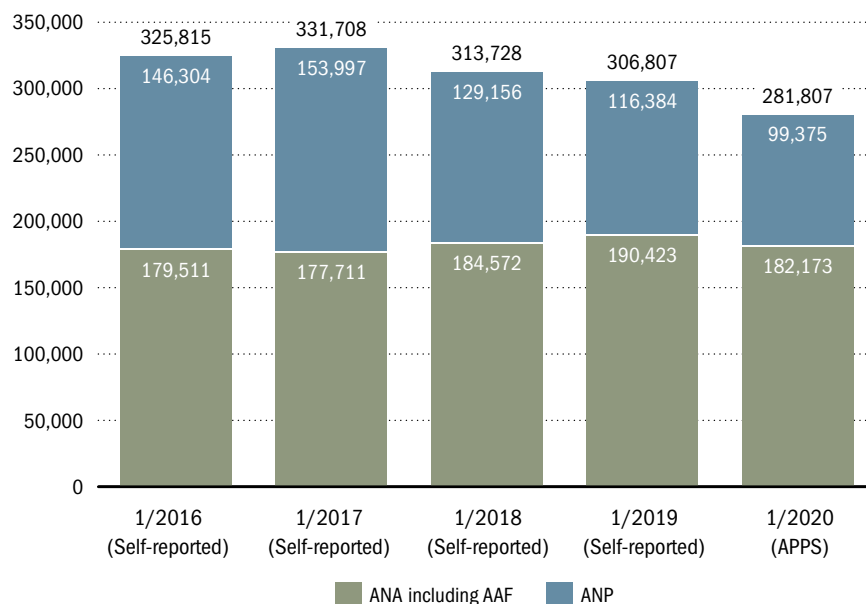
Source: CSTC-A response to SIGAR data call, 3/17/2020, 12/19/2019, and 9/18/2019; SIGAR, analysis of CSTC-A-provided data, 4/2020.

counterparts continue working to more accurately determine the actual size of the force by using the Afghan Personnel and Pay System (APPS). As of January 26, 2020, CSTC-A reported 281,548 ANDSF personnel (182,173 MOD and 99,375 MOI) biometrically enrolled and eligible for pay in APPS. This does not include 7,395 civilians (3,238 MOD and 4,157 MOI) or roughly 19,000 Afghan Local Police (ALP). Figure 3.34 shows this is an increase of 8,741 personnel since last quarter's APPS-reported strength (October 2019), mainly driven by 6,154 more personnel reported in the MOD elements (ANA, Afghan Air Force, and MOD special forces).¹⁴⁹

As of December 2019, the ANDSF's total authorized strength is roughly 352,000 (227,103 MOD and 124,626 MOI) plus 30,000 ALP funded by the United States and the Afghan government. The authorized strength includes 11,663 civilians (5,790 MOD and 5,873 MOI). This quarter's ANDSF assigned strength stands at 80% (roughly 70,000 personnel short) of its 352,000 authorized strength.¹⁵⁰

According to CSTC-A, this quarter's strength numbers increased due to ongoing enrollment and personnel data-cleansing actions in APPS. CSTC-A said fluctuations will continue "until the backlog of personnel actions level off and APPS reaches 100% enrollment of the ANDSF."¹⁵¹ CSTC-A continues

FIGURE 3.35

REPORTED ANDSF ASSIGNED STRENGTH SINCE 2016

Note: This quarter's data is as of January 26, 2020. ANA = Afghan National Army; AAF = Afghan Air Force; ANP = Afghan National Police; ANDSF = Afghan National Defense and Security Forces. No civilians are included in strength numbers. ANA strength numbers include the AAF and trainees, transfers, holdees, and student personnel. ANP strength numbers do not include "standby" personnel, generally reservists, or personnel not in service while completing training. The change in strength numbers from 2019 to 2020 is due to the transition of strength reporting from ANDSF-reported figures to reporting from the Afghan Personnel and Pay System (APPS). The strength numbers reported here should not be viewed as exact: CSTC-A and SIGAR have long noted many data-consistency issues with ANDSF strength numbers, and CSTC-A always provides the caveat that it cannot validate ANDSF strength data for accuracy.

Source: CSTC-A response to SIGAR data call, 3/17/2020; SIGAR, Quarterly Report to the United States Congress, 4/30/2016, 4/30/2017, 4/30/2018, 4/30/2019; SIGAR, analysis of CSTC-A-provided data, 4/2020.

to believe that "the data provided by APPS is more accurate than data previously provided manually by the MOD and MOI."¹⁵² According to DOD, "APPS is a major shift in the ministries' traditional way of managing pay and personnel, and challenges are expected. APPS will take time to mature, but the current assigned-strength reporting from APPS represents another step towards improved accountability of personnel and is a reflection of continued efforts by the MOD and MOI to implement APPS."¹⁵³

ANDSF Force Strength Remains Lower Year-on-Year

Seen in Figure 3.35, ANDSF personnel strength numbers sourced from APPS is 8% lower (roughly 25,000 personnel) than the Afghan-provided strength data reported during the same period in 2019 under the previous Afghan Human Resource Information Management System (AHRIMS). This is significant because assigned-strength numbers help inform CSTC-A's decision-making on how much money to provide for ANDSF salary and incentive payments, as well as for certain types of equipment.¹⁵⁴

MOI and MOD Continue to Improve Personnel Accountability

MOI, MOD, and CSTC-A continue to undertake three efforts to improve the accuracy of ANDSF personnel data in APPS: (1) “slotting” or matching ANDSF personnel to authorized positions in the system, (2) “data cleansing” or correcting and completing key personnel data or deactivating entries for inactive personnel, and (3) physically accounting for personnel through site visits called personnel asset inventories (PAIs) and personnel asset audits (PAAs).¹⁵⁵

This quarter, CSTC-A reported that from November 1, 2019, to January 26, 2020, the ANA, Afghan Air Force (AAF), and ANA Special Operations Corps (ANASOC) processed 2,694 promotions, 11,540 reassignments, 7,475 initial assignments, and 10,054 separations in APPS. Separately, the ANP and ALP processed 1,007 promotions, 6,860 reassignments, 3,039 initial assignments, and 61 separations in APPS. These personnel actions resulted in a net increase in personnel for both MOD and MOI force elements (see previous section). However, CSTC-A said neither they nor the ANDSF conducted PAIs or PAAs this quarter. CSTC-A could not conduct them due to staff reductions from the force-optimization efforts described on page 73, as well as security-related travel restrictions. CSTC-A said it had no insight about why the MOD and MOI did not perform any PAIs.¹⁵⁶

SIGAR asked CSTC-A this quarter if there are any remaining exceptions to CSTC-A’s policy of paying only ANDSF personnel who are enrolled and meet the criteria to be eligible for pay in APPS. They responded that as of January 31, 2020, CSTC-A provides funds only for salaries and incentives of 3,630 MOD trainees and cadets outside of the APPS-generated payroll numbers. A technical issue in APPS has prevented these trainees and students from being slotted. CSTC-A anticipates this technical issue will be resolved by the end of June. CSTC-A also reported that for the MOD, personnel not meeting the criteria to be active and slotted in APPS have been changed to an inactive status, rather than being completely removed from the system. CSTC-A said it has deactivated 59,777 MOD and 6,539 MOI personnel records in APPS from July 1, 2018, through January 26, 2020.¹⁵⁷

CSTC-A told SIGAR there are several reasons why ANDSF personnel records are retained in APPS after an individual is deactivated. First, it is very common for soldiers and police to return after long breaks in service. Retaining all personnel records within APPS makes it easier to reintegrate returning personnel. Second, if an individual is released for misconduct and tries to rejoin or join another service, the system can flag it. Third, as in the U.S. and other militaries around the world, retaining personnel records in the system allows for future verification of an individual’s service if needed.¹⁵⁸

ANDSF Attrition – Some Data Classified

USFOR-A continued to classify detailed ANDSF attrition information this quarter because the Afghan government classifies it.¹⁵⁹ SIGAR’s questions

about ANDSF attrition can be found in Appendix E. Due to public-health measures to combat the COVID-19 pandemic, SIGAR will not publish a classified annex to this report. A detailed analysis of attrition by ANDSF force element will be provided in a future classified annex once these public-health measures are lifted.

DOD and RS have identified attrition as one of the “Top 10 Challenges and Opportunities” for building the capacity of the ANDSF.¹⁶⁰ According to DOD, personnel dropped from the rolls (DFR) account for the greatest portion of ANA and ANP attrition rates, but DFR rates for both have been improving. DOD said the most common reasons for DFRs are poor unit leadership (generally the biggest contributor), low pay or delays in pay, austere living conditions, denial of leave, and intimidation by insurgents. ANDSF advisors are tackling these problems by focusing on encouraging key reforms, leadership development, properly handling ANDSF pay, and reducing the use of checkpoints, which all have the secondary effect of improving care for soldiers and police, and reducing factors that negatively impact attrition.¹⁶¹

CSTC-A reported last quarter that the ministers of defense and interior have ordered MOD and MOI personnel to improve attrition by reducing absence without leave and increasing the re-enlisting of personnel separated from the force.¹⁶² These efforts may take time to yield results. Both MOD and MOI elements usually self-report an average quarterly attrition of about 2–3% of the force. This quarter, MOD reported 2.1% attrition, and MOI reported 2.6% attrition, both in line with usual levels of 2–3%.¹⁶³

ANDSF Casualties

USFOR-A classified all ANDSF casualty information this quarter because the Afghan government classifies it.¹⁶⁴ SIGAR’s questions about ANDSF casualties can be found in Appendix E. SIGAR will provide a detailed analysis of ANDSF casualties in a future classified annex once public-health measures related to the COVID-19 pandemic are lifted.

ANDSF Insider Attacks

According to RS, there were 17 insider attacks on the ANDSF this reporting period (January 1, 2020–March 31, 2020), resulting in 54 casualties, continuing the high levels seen last quarter.¹⁶⁵

ANDSF Performance – Some Data Classified

USFOR-A continued to classify detailed assessments of ANDSF performance because the Afghan government classifies them.¹⁶⁶ SIGAR’s questions about ANDSF performance can be found in Appendix E of this report. SIGAR will provide detailed ANDSF performance assessments in a future classified annex once public health measures to combat the COVID-19 pandemic are lifted.

Persistent advising: Defined as daily or routine engagements conducted with partnered Afghan National Defense Security Forces (ANDSF) to provide advisors the ability to build rapport and establish trust with Afghan partners. Advising engagements can be conducted through multiple methods such as by phone, walking to meet with a partner, hosting a meeting with a partner, or operations to drive or fly to advise a partner. Proximity of partnered ANDSF and security requirements determine the method and frequency of advising.

Periodic advising: Defined as targeted engagements conducted with partnered ANDSF over time to establish relationships and develop rapport. The frequency and method of engagements is determined by advised unit needs and the required method of advising. While periodic advising varies, one or two engagements per week can be considered typical. Periodic advising requires more time to establish trust and rapport between advisors and Afghan partners but enables advisors to maintain relationships across multiple ANDSF units simultaneously.

Source: USFOR-A, response to SIGAR vetting, 4/13/2020.

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

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

According to USFOR-A, the ANDSF this quarter “continued to build capacity to self-sustain through persistent Coalition-force advising of the ANA and ANP,” with all the ANA corps and 30% of the ANP provincial chiefs of police (PCOPs) identified as the “targeted echelons for **persistent advising**” and the other PCOPS and ANA brigades as the targeted echelon for “**periodic advising**.”¹⁶⁷

A key area of ANDSF performance improvement due to Coalition TAA this quarter was in **checkpoint** reduction, which RS has long identified as a priority. Dispersing troops among scattered checkpoints reduces overall combat power and offers targets for insurgent attacks. USFOR-A reported that the ANDSF is implementing its checkpoint-reduction plan based on intelligence estimates and analysis of enemy activity. USFOR-A says that the checkpoint-reduction plan has enhanced security in key districts while simultaneously reducing checkpoints that are less operationally important. They also said reducing the number of checkpoints has helped the ANDSF plan and execute operations to deny the enemy key terrain. These factors were “significant contributors” to higher ANDSF performance ratings.¹⁶⁸

As of late March, MOD has reduced 220 checkpoints and repositioned its soldiers into 49 newly built **patrol bases** (the new standard fortified fighting structures for the MOD) or 19 checkpoints that were improved to become patrol bases. MOI has closed approximately 197 of the 200 checkpoints initially identified as the most dangerous for their personnel. While CSTC-A said checkpoint-reduction efforts have a long way to go—the ANDSF began with over 10,000 checkpoints locations across Afghanistan—CSTC-A assesses that its TAA efforts have “resulted in a marked improvement with respect to [its checkpoint] objectives.”¹⁶⁹

The creation of Regional Targeting Teams (RTTs), an effort supported by NATO Special Operations Component Command-Afghanistan (NSOCC-A) advisors, is another development that has led to better ANDSF command-and-control capabilities at the regional level. RTTs now incorporate representatives from all regional ANDSF elements including the ANA, ANP, Afghan Special Security Forces (ASSF), and the National Directorate of Security. This has led to the ANDSF’s ability to coordinate and synchronize combat operations, increase the accuracy of operational reporting, and decrease decision-making times required to provide assets to an operation, improving their response to security crises across each region.¹⁷⁰

This quarter, NSOCC-A described the success of the Regional Targeting Team-Kabul (RTT-K), which became operational in December 2019. Like other RTTs, RTT-K synchronizes ASSF activities in Kabul and the surrounding provinces, while also working closely with Kabul Joint Command, which coordinates conventional forces’ units and missions. RTT-K delivers three key functions: (1) dynamic targeting (precision raids on high-value targets), (2) deliberate planning (large-scale security operational planning), and (3) crisis response (responding to high-profile attacks in the capital).

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

NSOCC-A said that in addition to ANA Special Operations Corps, the General Command of Police Special Units (GCPSU) have operational and intelligence staff embedded at RTT-K that get the necessary and timely support to the GCPSU'S critical National Mission Units so they can carry out their mission of responding to high-profile attacks in the capital.¹⁷¹

In terms of force-specific performance, Coalition force advisors assess that most ANA brigades demonstrated growth in “institutional viability” over the quarter, in (1) leadership development, (2) training, (3) personnel readiness, (4) attrition, and (5) sustainment. ANA brigades improved and are performing at or slightly above the “partially capable” rating in these categories. Through key leader engagements and **point-of-need advising**, USFOR-A says ANA corps leaders are implementing systems and processes to stem attrition rates, enhance personnel readiness, and improve force sustainment. The ANA's Regional Military Training Centers and the Kabul Military Training Center (KMTC) have also “played a pivotal role in leader development for young ANA officers and improving the training readiness of ANA Corps.” While these are positive developments, USFOR-A said the ANA corps are still working to fully develop their combined-arms capabilities, reduce static checkpoints, decrease response times to enemy activity, and protect areas of strategic value to the Afghan government.¹⁷²

In an example of point-of need advising, CSTC-A found issues with the methods and systems used by the ANA Recruiting Command (ANAREC) to determine recruiting goals and the number of people recruited. Analyzing the number of recruits being brought into the KMTC and the number being assigned to the ANA corps, CSTC-A found discrepancies in the figures. CSTC-A therefore identified the recruitment process, as well as some individual training centers, as a point of need for TAA.¹⁷³

Separate from the process, MOD's self-reported numbers showed the ANA had fewer recruits this quarter compared to the last one. CSTC-A identified several contributing factors, including transportation difficulties across the country during winter weather, in-processing delays at the ANAREC due to power shortages, and the suspension of the ANAREC commander and 11 of his staff following an ongoing MOD inspector-general investigation into corruption.¹⁷⁴

While Coalition advisors can provide the ANP with TAA at the provincial level, their ability to do so at lower levels remains limited. USFOR-A said the ANP continues to show increased capability. In particular, they said the ANP's Regional Training Centers “have been critical” to further professionalizing the police force and increasing the proficiency of patrolmen.¹⁷⁵

Afghan Special Security Forces

The Afghan Special Security Forces (ASSF) are the ANDSF's primary offensive forces. The ASSF include a number of elements, such as the ANA Special Operations Corps (ANASOC), the General Command Police Special

Point-of-need advising: Part of RS's mission design is to provide TAA to the “point of need,” which CSTC-A defined this quarter as “a person, place (unit), or process (or part of a process) across echelons where improvement will have an impact on the institutional viability of the ANDSF.”

Source: CSTC-A, response to SIGAR data call, 3/17/2020; CSTC-A, response to SIGAR vetting, 4/13/2020.



A commando serving in the Afghan National Army Special Operations Corps (ANASOC).

Units (GCPSU), and the Special Mission Wing (SMW). SIGAR tracks ASSF operations data because DOD has said growing the size and capabilities of the ASSF will improve the ANDSF's overall performance and allow the United States to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of its small-footprint military campaign in Afghanistan.¹⁷⁶ DOD reported in December 2019 that ASSF elements are on track to double in size by the end of 2020, a reform goal laid out for developing the force in 2016 in President Ashraf Ghani's four-year ANDSF Road Map.¹⁷⁷

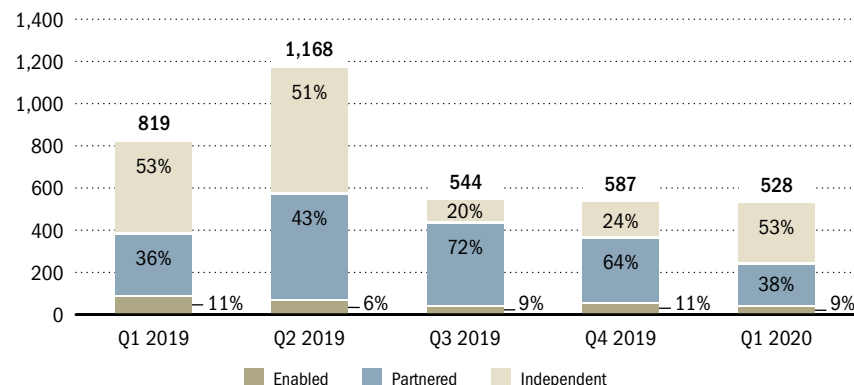
ASSF Ground Operations

This quarter, NSOCC-A reported that the ASSF conducted fewer ground operations due to decreased enemy activity during the February 22–29 reduction-in-violence period, the signing of the U.S.-Taliban agreement on February 29, and the subsequent order for MOD forces to retain a defensive posture against the Taliban (the ASSF are the primary offensive forces).¹⁷⁸ The 528 ASSF ground operations conducted this quarter (January 1–March 31, 2020) reflect a 10% decrease compared to last quarter (October 1 through December 31, 2019) and a 36% decrease compared to the same period last year. February and March saw a much lower number of operations (146 and 144 operations, respectively) than January (238).¹⁷⁹

Additionally, the number of reported Coalition-partnered or -enabled ASSF ground operations declined this quarter, and the number of operations ASSF conducted independently increased. NSOCC-A said this was at least in part because of U.S. commitments not to attack the Taliban during the RIV, and to conduct only defensive air strikes against the Taliban

FIGURE 3.36

ASSF GROUND OPERATIONS BY QUARTER



Note: Partnered = U.S. and Coalition forces partner with the ASSF during an operation; Enabled = U.S. or Coalition forces' enablers (air support, etc.) are used during an ASSF operation; Independent = ASSF conducts operation without U.S. or Coalition support.

Source: NSOCC-A, response to SIGAR data call, 4/7/2020; NSOCC-A, response to SIGAR vetting, 1/10/2020 and 1/18/2020; SIGAR, analysis of RS-provided data, 4/2020.

if they attack ANDSF units.¹⁸⁰ Figure 3.36. shows that 53% of this quarter's ASSF operations were conducted independently by the ASSF and 47% were Coalition-partnered or -enabled, compared to last quarter's 24% independent and 76% Coalition-partnered or -enabled operations.¹⁸¹ Prior to this quarter's increase in independent ASSF ground operations, NSOCC-A said independent operations had declined due to a shift in advisor focus last summer from increasing ASSF's independent operations to tackling issues with the misuse of the force.¹⁸²

ASSF Misuse

DOD reported this quarter that overall misuse of ASSF elements, which has been the main impediment to their ability to successfully carry out their missions, is declining. Misuse occurs when MOD or MOI orders the ASSF to conduct operations that are more appropriate for the conventional forces or assigns them other inappropriate tasks. Examples of misuse include using special forces to man checkpoints, hold terrain, or provide personal security for politicians or ANDSF leaders.¹⁸³

DOD said levels of misuse in the second half of 2019 were not nearly as high as the same period in 2018, and unlike other ASSF elements, the GCPSU that commands the special police, does not suffer from high levels of misuse.¹⁸⁴ Coalition advisors continue to encourage MOD and MOI to use ASSF "concepts of employment," documents that outline the intended roles, tasks, responsibilities, and relationships between the ASSF and the coordinating headquarters that make decisions about their deployment.¹⁸⁵

While misuse is generally declining, it remains an important problem. For example, NSOCC-A, the element that advises the ANASOC, told SIGAR this quarter that, in one type of misuse, about 1,200 (6%) of roughly 19,000 ANASOC commandos are currently manning checkpoints instead of conducting offensive operations. (In June 2019, about 3,000 commandos were on checkpoint duty.) An additional 2,500 commandos are currently serving in other inappropriate conventional roles, meaning that a total of at least 3,700 ANASOC commandos (around 20% of the force) are being misused.¹⁸⁶

Similarly, the NSOCC-A continues to report problems with the misuse of the Special Mission Wing (SMW), the special-operations aviation unit that supports counterterror and counternarcotics ASSF missions. Because the SMW is designed and trained to have more specialized skills than the AAF, Afghan leaders frequently task the SMW with general support missions that the AAF are meant to conduct.¹⁸⁷ The extent of the problem is apparent in the breakdown of mission sorties provided by NSOCC-A this quarter. In January and February 2020, the SMW conducted 321 sorties, nearly half of which (155, or 48%) were general support missions for ASSF and non-ASSF units outside the SMW's mission set, with the other 166 sorties were appropriate (145 counterterror, 12 counternarcotics, and nine counternexus missions, which have both a counterterror and counternarcotics purpose).¹⁸⁸

DOD said misuse or overuse persists for several reasons, including convenience, necessity, and politically motivated operational decisions. Because of misuse, the ANASOC has been unable to conduct an operational-readiness cycle (to train, refit, and rest), an important and necessary process usually undertaken during the winter to gear up for the higher operational tempo in the spring, according to ANASOC advisors.¹⁸⁹

Women in the ANDSF

According to CSTC-A, 5,270 female personnel, including 433 civilians, were enrolled in APPS as of January 26, 2020. This reported strength figure is a 16% increase compared to last quarter. CSTC-A said that as with other strength reporting, assigned-strength numbers sourced from APPS will continue to fluctuate due to ongoing enrollment and personnel-cleansing actions in the system. The majority of ANDSF women continue to serve in the MOI (3,535 personnel), with the other 1,735 in the MOD. CSTC-A also reported that in addition to the number of females reported in APPS, there are currently 29 female cadets enrolled at the National Military Academy and 15 students at Kabul Medical University.¹⁹⁰

This quarter, CSTC-A Gender Affairs reported that in recent months the GCPSU has seen advances in gender relations. A senior GCPSU officer and GCPSU Gender Director Colonel Nafisa Saba Sahar created a 90-minute documentary entitled "Special Women" highlighting leaders

SIGAR'S OVERSIGHT WORK ON FACILITIES FOR ANDSF WOMEN

From July 2015 through April 2019, DOD initiated 29 infrastructure projects to support women in the ANDSF. Since October 2018, SIGAR issued inspection reports discussing three of these projects and found that they were mostly or entirely unused. Given concerns that additional facilities built to support women in the ANDSF may also be unused, a SIGAR audit is assessing (1) the extent to which facilities DOD constructed to support women in the ANDSF are being used for their intended purposes, (2) how DOD selected its infrastructure projects to support women in the ANDSF, and (3) the extent to which DOD measured the success of its infrastructure projects to support women in the ANDSF.

and opportunities for women in the GCPSU. CSTC-A hosted the premiere of the film in February. Additionally, the Special Police Training Center concluded a noncommissioned officer course for 30 women and a female SWAT course. The GCPSU will also expand its facilities for women, approving construction of five facilities, at a cost of \$4.2 million, to be completed in 2022.¹⁹¹

Ministry Performance Assessments – Most Data Classified

USFOR-A continued to classify most information about MOD and MOI performance because it was classified by the Afghan government.¹⁹² SIGAR’s questions about the ministries’ performance can be found in Appendix E of this report. SIGAR will report on the MOI and MOD performance assessments in a future classified annex once public health measures related to the COVID-19 pandemic have been lifted.

This quarter, CSTC-A provided an update about its confidence in MOD and MOI leadership and improvements made in leaders’ personnel management and decision-making. In line with the “Top 10 Challenges and Opportunities,” CSTC-A has said leader development is the central tenet of RS efforts to create viable and sustainable ANDSF, and is crucial to success in other lines of effort.¹⁹³ This quarter, CSTC-A assessed that ministry performance remains centered on “a core group of ministerial leadership [that] provides reliable guidance and necessary influence across the ANDSF.” CSTC-A believes that if the political environment in Afghanistan settles, this group will be able to expand its cohort of reliable leaders while minimizing, replacing, and removing corrupt and non-productive ANDSF personnel.¹⁹⁴

CSTC-A reported that these ministerial leaders’ emphasis on improving soldier and police welfare, along with recent successes in election security, has led to their directing more independent actions by subordinate leaders.¹⁹⁵ RS advisors have noted that senior leaders within the MOD increasingly empower their assistant ministers of defense to plan strategically for the long-term structure of the force. Both the ministers of defense and interior are leading organizational improvements that have brought rapid and substantial changes in the leadership and staff. Advisors are also continuing to train and educate senior leaders on enforcing structural processes and procedures within the ANDSF to improve the operational readiness of the force.¹⁹⁶

With the implementation of critical reforms like APPS, mandatory retirements, and merit-based promotions, DOD assesses that ministerial-level focus on personnel development within the ANDSF has improved, but that more work by the ministries is required to ensure that young, educated, and qualified leaders are given opportunities to assume positions of influence.¹⁹⁷

AFGHAN NATIONAL ARMY

As of March 31, 2020, the United States had obligated roughly \$47.6 billion and disbursed about 47.6 billion of ASFF from FY 2005 through FY 2018 appropriations to build, train, equip, and sustain the ANA, AAF, and parts of the Afghan Special Security Forces (ASSF). These force elements constituted the ANA budget activity group (BAG) for reporting purposes through the FY 2018 appropriation.¹⁹⁸

ANA Sustainment Funding

As of March 31, 2020, the United States had obligated \$23.7 billion and disbursed \$23.5 billion from FY 2005 through FY 2018 ASFF appropriations for ANA, AAF, and some ASSF sustainment. These costs include salary and incentive pay, fuel, transportation services, and equipment maintenance costs, including aircraft, and other expenses.¹⁹⁹ For more details and the amount U.S. funds appropriated for ANA sustainment in FY 2019, see page 45 of this report.

During Afghan FY 1399 (December 2019–December 2020), CSTC-A plans to provide the Afghan government up to the equivalent of \$716 million to support the MOD, roughly the same amount reported the same time last year. Of this amount, approximately \$628.5 million (88%) is for salaries. As of February 21, 2020, CSTC-A had provided the Afghan government the equivalent of \$57.1 million to support the MOD thus far for FY 1399, roughly in line with the same period last year. Nearly all of these funds (98%) were to pay for salaries.²⁰⁰

ANA Equipment and Transportation

As of March 31, 2020, the United States had obligated and disbursed approximately \$13.7 billion from FY 2005 through FY 2018 ASFF appropriations for ANA, AAF, and some ASSF equipment and transportation costs.²⁰¹

Since 2018, CSTC-A has, with the exception of aircraft, stopped procuring major, high-cost equipment for the ANDSF—like high-mobility multipurpose wheeled vehicles (HMMWVs, commonly known as humvees) or entire communications systems. As a result, CSTC-A is focused on ensuring proper contractor maintenance of ANDSF equipment to increase its readiness, while building an organic ANDSF maintenance capability. CSTC-A bases equipment-replacement requirements on normal expected equipment life cycles, as determined by the acquisition process and taking into account factors such as combat losses, and replenishes consumables such as ammunition and individual equipment as needed by operational use.²⁰²

Although CSTC-A has moved away from procuring major equipment and systems, items procured in the past are still being delivered to the ANA.²⁰³ Table 3.7, lists the highest-cost items of equipment provided to the ANA this

TABLE 3.7

MAJOR EQUIPMENT ITEMS PROVIDED TO ANA				
Equipment Type	Equipment Description	Units Issued in Quarter	Unit Cost	Total Cost
Vehicle	M1151A1WB1 HMMWV (Utility Truck)	138	\$238,500	\$32,913,000
Accessory	Silvershield Electronic Vehicle Mount	9,472	1,700	16,102,400
Vehicle	M1152A1 HMMWV (Utility Truck)	15	186,729.00	2,800,935
Spare Parts	DATRON Radio Assorted Spare Parts	48	50,000	2,400,000
Accessory	Goodyear Tire	5,646	291.37	1,645,075
Accessory	Hull Armor Kit	11	145,603	1,601,633
Ammunition	Hand Grenade, Red Smoke	15,136	51.44	778,596
Accessory	Pneumatic Tire	402	1,654	664,908
OCIE	Men's Medium Shirt	10,539	38.85	409,440
Accessory	BB-LA6 Battery	1,440	277	398,880
Total			\$59,714,867	

Note: The above list reflects only the 10 highest-value equipment provided to the ANA this quarter (November 16, 2019–January 31, 2020). The “unit costs” listed reflect the average costs paid for items procured under multiple Foreign Military Sales cases. OCIE = Organizational Clothing and Individual Equipment.

Source: CSTC-A, response to SIGAR data call, 3/17/2020.

quarter (November 16, 2019, through January 31, 2020), which included 153 HMMWVs (valued at \$35.7 million).²⁰⁴

ANA Equipment Operational Readiness – Data Classified

This quarter, USFOR-A continued to classify data on ANA equipment readiness because the Afghan government classifies it.²⁰⁵ SIGAR’s questions about ANA equipment readiness can be found in Appendix E of this report. SIGAR will report on ANA equipment readiness in a future classified annex once public health measures related to the COVID-19 pandemic are lifted.

ANA Infrastructure

The United States had obligated and disbursed nearly \$6 billion of ASFF appropriations from FY 2005 through FY 2018 for ANA, AAF, and some ASSF infrastructure projects as of March 31, 2020.²⁰⁶

This quarter, CSTC-A reported that the estimated annual facilities-sustainment costs funded by the United States for all ANA facility sustainment requirements continues to be \$108.8 million. Of this, \$74.7 million is provided directly to the Afghan government and \$34.1 million is spent by CSTC-A for the Afghan government.²⁰⁷

As of February 26, 2020, the United States completed a total of 483 ANA, AAF, and ANASOC infrastructure projects in Afghanistan, costing roughly \$5.5 billion.²⁰⁸ The number of completed, ongoing, and awarded projects this quarter were in line with trends reported over the last year.²⁰⁹ CSTC-A reported that five projects were completed this quarter, costing about \$33.5 million. Most of this money (\$30.5 million) was spent on the

ONGOING SIGAR AUDIT

From FY 2002 through FY 2017—the most recent year for which there is publicly available data—the U.S. government provided more than \$28 billion in defense articles and services to Afghanistan. An ongoing SIGAR audit is focused on the extent to which DOD, since the beginning of FY 2017, (1) conducted required routine and enhanced post-delivery end-use monitoring of defense articles provided to the ANDSF, and (2) reported and investigated potential end-use violations in Afghanistan and took steps to ensure corrective actions occurred, when applicable.

joint NATO-ANA Trust Fund (NATF)-ASFF funded electrical grid connection between Camp Shaheen (the ANA's 209th Corps headquarters) and the Northern Electrical Interconnect.²¹⁰ While projects connecting ANDSF facilities to the electrical grid are costly, CSTC-A views them as a long-term investment in the ANDSF's sustainability with a good return, because donors (and eventually the Afghan government) will no longer have to pay for fuel or the operations and maintenance costs associated with onsite generator-produced electricity.²¹¹

Another 29 projects at a total cost of \$214.4 million were ongoing and one project was awarded (valued at \$14.1 million), as of February 26. The highest-cost ongoing projects include a joint NATF-ASFF funded operations and life-support area for the AAF in Mazar-e Sharif (\$40.8 million), ASFF-funded renovations and additions to the ANA Parwan Prison (\$26.8 million), and an ASFF-funded kitchen for Parwan Prison (\$15.2 million). The awarded project was a rehabilitation center for Kabul National Military Hospital.²¹²

ANA Training and Operations

As of March 31, 2020, the United States had obligated and disbursed approximately \$4.3 billion of ASFF appropriations from FY 2005 through FY 2018 for ANA, AAF, some ASSF, and MOD training and operations.²¹³

This quarter, DOD reported several improvements related to ANA training efforts. The first was that the **Unified Training, Education and Doctrine Command (UTEDC)** achieved “full operational capacity” in December 2019. Over the last year, DOD said the UTEDC commander and staff have gained proficiency in logistics, accounting, and assurance processes and procedures, and the command was given independent budgetary authority. DOD said these things will improve resourcing of critical components of foundational, branch-specific training, and specialized training.²¹⁴

In another change, MOD has merged its 13 branch schools into four “capability schools,” (which focus on combat arms, combat support, combat service support, and general service). Advisors are reporting a greater effort by MOD to bolster the training pipeline into the schools. During the second half of 2019, a third of each Basic Warrior Training course directly progressed into a follow-on school for advanced training. Advisors attribute this success to high-level engagement and interest from the Minister of Defense and the Chief of General Staff. However, despite the growing numbers of soldiers attending these schools, DOD says the ANA still needs to provide soldiers with more advanced training and expertise in order to reduce casualties.²¹⁵

Corruption at the Kabul Military Training Center Worse Than Previously Reported

This quarter, CSTC-A's Counter-Corruption Advisory Group (CCAG) found that previous reports in December 2019 that conditions were improving at

Unified Training, Education and Doctrine Command (UTEDC): the entity that provides “unity of command” and coordinates all efforts related to institutional training and education and provides the MOD with an organization responsible for developing doctrine and training programs to inform activity within branch schools and professional military education institutions.

Source: DOD, Enhancing Security and Stability in Afghanistan, 12/2019, p. 36.



Acting Minister of Defense Asadullah Khaled meets new ANA recruits while visiting the command at Kabul Military Training Center on March 5. (Ministry of Defense photo)

the Kabul Military Training Center (KMTC), MOD's troubled main training center, were based on inaccurate information provided to MAG-D by a corrupt senior MOD official.²¹⁶

This senior official was actively attempting to cover up problems, having directed a fraudulent MOD IG investigation to obfuscate true KMTC conditions. As the CCAG further investigated KMTC criminal activity and analyzed corruption schemes, they determined that the overall KMTC assessment was worse than originally believed and reported by MAG-D. Over the last year, DOD has highlighted several problems at the KMTC that often led to recruits departing the center for their units in an unhealthy condition and without sufficient training.²¹⁷

CSTC-A said KMTC conditions had improved somewhat by early 2020 since the original CSTC-A assessments were made in July 2019, "with much more work to be done." CSTC-A reported that "despite concerted CSTC-A efforts to have the responsible [MOD] senior leader administratively removed, fired, or formally investigated by MOD," the person remains in their position and continues to be protected by the most senior [Afghan government] political leaders, facilitated by MOD loyalists.²¹⁸ DOD reported that more Coalition advisors were provided to the KMTC in the latter half of 2019 and are now co-located there. They assist the center by reevaluating the center's training program based on lessons learned in the field. The UTEDC also has a role overseeing the improvement of the KMTC's leadership, facilities, and the training program.²¹⁹

ANA Territorial Force

The Afghan National Army Territorial Force (ANA-TF) is the newest ANDSF force element and is responsible for holding terrain in permissive security environments. Falling directly under the command of the regular ANA corps, the ANA-TF is designed to be a lightly armed local security force that is more accountable to the government than local forces like the ALP. DOD says that some of the ANA-TF companies may replace conventional ANA companies, where authorizations exist, in areas where conditions are appropriate for the units to thrive. Following a final intra-Afghan peace deal, DOD assesses that the ANA-TF or similar construct may serve as a vehicle to reintegrate insurgent fighters.²²⁰

The locations of the ANA-TF's operational and planned *tolays* (companies, with a strength of up to 121 soldiers) are intended to deny the Taliban freedom of maneuver, and keep the Taliban away from urban areas and key lines of communication and transportation.²²¹ These tolays are currently providing local security in their areas of responsibility, so that the regular ANA forces are freed up to conduct other operations.²²²

This quarter USFOR-A reported continued progress on recruiting and establishing the ANA-TF. As of February 25, there were 83 operational ANA-TF tolays, with 13 more being stood up provisionally or in training. This is an increase of 13 operational tolays since November 29, 2019. Nine additional tolays are currently being planned. The ANA-TF's expansion has been rapid: in July 2019, the ANA had only 26 operational companies across Afghanistan. The ANA-TF is currently authorized for 105 tolays, and the Afghan government has plans to grow the ANA-TF to 121 companies during a potential third phase of ANA-TF expansion.²²³

CSTC-A also reported this quarter that the ANA-TF tolays largely struggled to gain full integration and acceptance from the ANA because the ANA-TF is a relatively new force element that is reliant on the regular ANA corps for leadership and supplies. CSTC-A said many ANA leaders fail to fully integrate the ANA-TF into their organizational hierarchy, but that CSTC-A's TAA efforts and resultant focus on the growing ANA-TF by MOD leadership is beginning to yield increased integration and acceptance of the program. The recent reassignment of several ANA corps commanders has led to improved utilization and integration of the ANA-TF into ANA operations.²²⁴

Based on remaining integration concerns, RS recently placed a hold on the ANA-TF expansion to allow time and space for the ANA to focus on how integrating the ANA-TF impacts the ANA's institutional viability. CSTC-A said the expansion will resume once ANA senior leadership and subordinate corps commanders address some of the programmatic and sustainment shortfalls currently affecting the ANA-TF. As the ANA-TF relies on ANA sustainment systems, the ANA-TF generally experiences the same challenges as its assigned ANA corps.²²⁵



An AAF pilot conducts a C-208 training mission with TAAC-Air over Kabul. (AFCENT photo)

AFGHAN AIR FORCE

U.S. Funding

As of February 28, 2020, the United States had appropriated approximately \$8.5 billion to support and develop the AAF (including the SMW) from FY 2010 to FY 2020. The main change since last quarter was to the FY 2019 funds allocated for the AAF. The initial appropriation budget for FY 2019 was \$1.7 billion and is now \$986.8 million, the lowest level of funding authorized for the AAF since 2016. The reduction is primarily related to a \$191 million decrease for aircraft sustainment due to lower-than-projected costs of contractor logistics support (aircraft maintenance) contracts and a \$468 million decrease in equipment costs due largely to a reduction of the required number of UH-60 aircraft.²²⁶

As in previous years, sustainment remains the costliest funding category for the AAF (65% of FY 2020 authorized funds). AAF sustainment costs primarily include contractor-provided maintenance, major and minor repairs, and procurement of parts and supplies for the AAF's in-country inventory of seven air platforms: UH-60, MD-530, and Mi-17 helicopters; A-29, C-208, and AC-208 fixed-wing aircraft; and C-130 transport aircraft.²²⁷

The United States has obligated \$5.4 billion for the AAF (including the SMW) from FY 2010 to FY 2019, as of February 28, 2020. U.S. funds can be obligated for up to two years, and roughly \$517.8 million in FY 2019 funds have been obligated (of the 986.8 million authorized). CSTC-A said

ONGOING SIGAR AUDIT

The United States has spent billions of dollars to train and equip the Afghan Air Force (AAF) and Special Mission Wing (SMW). Given the significant investment, SIGAR is conducting an audit to assess the extent to which (1) the AAF and SMW developed and implemented vetting policies and procedures that help identify corruption and potentially corrupt individuals, and (2) DOD has taken steps to ensure that the AAF and SMW recruit, train, and retain qualified personnel intended to contribute to professional and sustainable Afghan air forces.

TABLE 3.8

AAF AVIATION SUMMARY AS OF MARCH 31, 2020			
AIRCRAFT	Total Inventory	Usable/ In-Country	Authorized
Fixed Wing			
A-29	25	15	25
AC-208	10	10	10
C-130	4	2	4
C-208	23	23	23
Rotary Wing			
Mi-17	22	19	0
MD-530	48	45	48
UH-60	45	40	43
Total	177	154	153

Note: These figures do not include the aircraft for the Special Mission Wing, which are classified. The number of authorized aircraft listed here reflect revised AAF aircraft authorizations in 2019 minus combat losses to date. The AAF is phasing out its Russian-made Mi-17s. FY 2022 is the last year DOD will seek sustainment funding for the Mi-17s. Some will remain in the fleet to provide operational capability until the UH-60 capability matures and the transition to CH-47s is completed.

Source: TAAC-Air, response to SIGAR vetting, 4/17/2020; OUSD-P response to SIGAR data call, 4/9/2020; SIGAR, analysis of TAAC-Air- and OUSD-P-provided data, 4/2020.

Available aircraft: Aircraft that are “available” are located in Afghanistan and are operational or in short-term maintenance.

Source: OUSD-P, response to SIGAR data call, 4/9/2020.

no FY 2020 funds have yet been obligated because it wants to use expiring FY 2019 funding first.²²⁸

Aircraft Inventory and Status

Seen in Table 3.8, as of March 31, 2020, the AAF currently has 154 available aircraft and 177 aircraft in its inventory. The table also shows the number of each aircraft type currently authorized for the AAF. These aircraft do not include those available or in the inventory of the SMW.²²⁹

TAAC-Air reported decrease of 12 **available aircraft** this quarter, and a decrease of seven aircraft in its total inventory. They said of the 12 aircraft to become unavailable for the AAF this quarter, one was a C-130 that went into depot-level maintenance; six Mi-17s became expired, were damaged, or were not returning from overhaul; one MD-530 was lost in combat; and four UH-60s were transferred to the SMW.²³⁰

AAF Operations and Readiness

The AAF decreased flight hours considerably (by almost 26%), while the readiness of four of seven of its airframes increased this quarter (January–March 2020), compared to last quarter (October–December 2019). TAAC-Air said AAF flight hours decreased this quarter due to the reduction-in-violence period, which led to a decrease in strike missions; winter weather impeding flight operations (not out of the norm); and new flight rules due to the COVID-19 pandemic, under which the AAF only conducts combat sorties, not training sorties.²³¹

All airframes except the C-208 and the MD-530 met their readiness benchmarks, a slight decline from last quarter, when only one airframe (C-208) failed to meet its readiness benchmark.²³² TAAC-Air explained that the C-208s had a large number of aircraft grounded this quarter due to a fuel-contamination issue at Kandahar Airfield at the end of January and the beginning of February, as well as long delays for repair parts, exacerbated by the pandemic conditions, which impacted several scheduled engine overhauls. The MD-530s had a safety issue that, until inspected and repaired, temporarily grounded the fleet.²³³

AFGHAN NATIONAL POLICE

As of March 31, 2020, the United States had obligated nearly \$21.7 billion and disbursed roughly \$21.5 billion of ASFF funds from FY 2005 through FY 2018 appropriations to build, train, equip, and sustain the ANP and the GCPSU. These force elements constituted the ANP budget activity group (BAG) for reporting purposes through FY 2018 appropriation.²³⁴ For more

information about what these costs include and the amount of U.S. funds appropriated for ANP sustainment in FY 2019, see page 45 of this report.

ANP Sustainment Funding

Unlike with the ANA, most ANP personnel costs (including ANP salaries) are paid by international donors through the United Nations Development Programme's multidonor Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan (LOTFA).²³⁵

To support the MOI, CSTC-A plans to provide up to \$142.5 million in FY 1399, roughly the same amount reported the same time last year. Of these funds, approximately \$54.7 million (38%) is for ALP salaries, with the remaining funds for purchase of goods, services, or assets. As of February 21, 2020, CSTC-A has not yet provided funds to support MOI sustainment expenses because the MOI is using available funds previously disbursed to their Ministry of Finance account for prior-year requirements that were not fully executed. Once these funds have been exhausted, CSTC-A will begin distributing FY 1399 funding to MOI.²³⁶

ANP Equipment and Transportation

As of March 31, 2020, the United States had obligated and disbursed approximately \$4.8 billion of ASFF from FY 2005 through FY 2018 appropriations for ANP equipment and transportation costs.²³⁷

Since 2018 CSTC-A has, with the exception of aircraft, stopped procuring major, high-cost equipment for the ANDSF—like high-mobility multipurpose wheeled vehicles (HMMWVs, commonly known as Humvees) or entire communications systems. As a result, they are focused on ensuring proper contractor maintenance of ANDSF equipment to increase its readiness, while building an organic ANDSF maintenance capability. CSTC-A bases equipment-replacement requirements on normal expected equipment life cycles, as determined by the acquisition process and taking into account factors such as combat losses, and replenishes consumables such as ammunition and individual equipment as needed by operational use.²³⁸

Although CSTC-A has moved away from new procurements of major equipment and systems, items that have been procured in the past are still being delivered to the ANP.²³⁹ As seen on the following page, Table 3.9 lists the highest-cost items of equipment provided to the ANP this quarter (November 16, 2019, through January 31, 2020). Of these items, the costliest was the delivery of 388 HMMWVs (\$83.4 million).²⁴⁰

TABLE 3.9

MAJOR EQUIPMENT PROVIDED TO THE ANP, NOVEMBER 16–JANUARY 31, 2020				
Equipment Type	Equipment Description	Units Issued in Quarter	Unit Cost	Total Cost
Vehicle	M1151A1WB1 HMMWV (Utility Truck)	211	\$238,500	\$50,323,500
Vehicle	M1152A1 HMMWV (Truck Utility)	177	186,729	33,051,033
Accessory	Silvershield Electronic Vehicle Mount	15,232	1,700	25,894,400
Accessory	Goodyear Tire	6,033	306.50	1,849,115
Accessory	Hull Armor Kit	11	145,603	1,601,633
Accessory	20W High Frequency Transceiver System, Vehicle	106	12,027	1,274,862
Ammunition	Cartridge, .50 cal 4 Ball-1 TR linked	384,000	3.20	1,228,800
Ammunition	Cartridge, 40mm High-Explosive Dual- Purpose M430 50 Belt	72,000	15.63	1,125,360
Ammunition	Cartridge, 5.56mm Ball M855	2,782,080	0.35	973,728
Parts	150W High Frequency Transceiver System, Vehicle, Parts	19	50,000	950,000
Total Cost of Equipment				\$118,272,431

Note: The above list reflects only the 10 highest-value equipment provided to the ANP this quarter (November 16, 2019–January 31, 2020). The “unit costs” listed reflect the average costs paid for items procured under multiple Foreign Military Sales cases.

Source: CSTC-A, response to SIGAR data call, 3/17/2020.

ANP Infrastructure

The United States had obligated and disbursed approximately \$3.2 billion of ASFF appropriations from FY 2005 through FY 2018 for ANP and some GCPSU infrastructure projects as of March 31, 2020.²⁴¹

This quarter, CSTC-A reported that the estimated annual facilities-sustainment costs funded by the United States for all ANP facility and electrical-generator requirements continue to be \$68.8 million. Of this, \$42.4 million is provided directly to the Afghan government and \$26.4 million is spent by CSTC-A for the Afghan government.²⁴²

As of March 9, 2020, the United States had completed 783 ANP infrastructure projects in Afghanistan valued at roughly \$3 billion. CSTC-A reported that one project was completed this quarter, costing \$148,000. Another six projects (valued at \$82.4 million) were ongoing and one project was awarded (valued at \$2.5 million). The number of completed and ongoing projects this quarter continued to decline compared to reporting over the last year.²⁴³ Last quarter, CSTC-A said ANP facilities needs have mostly been met, or are currently under construction, so the construction program will continue to slow, with fewer new projects reported each quarter.²⁴⁴

The highest-cost ongoing ANP infrastructure projects include a joint NATF- and ASSF-funded CCTV surveillance system in Kabul (\$33 million), an ASFF-funded GCPSU facility in Laghman Province (\$648,000), and the newly awarded GCPSU facility in Kabul (\$2.5 million).²⁴⁵

This quarter, CSTC-A reported that the MOI Facilities Directorate (MOI-FD), the entity responsible for overseeing MOI facilities, has increased its managerial capacity. MOI-FD leaders, supported by Coalition advisors, developed three training courses on the Afghan Infrastructure Database Integration System (AIDIS). AIDIS is an online database that is the system of record for MOI real property.²⁴⁶

ANP Training and Operations

As of March 31, 2020, the United States had obligated and disbursed approximately \$4 billion of ASFF appropriations from FY 2005 through FY 2018 for ANP and some GCPSU training and operations.²⁴⁷

According to DOD, the ANP are currently focused on transitioning from a semi-paramilitary security force to a more traditional police force that focuses on “community policing” and the rule of law. Over time, the Coalition has refocused its efforts away from combat training for the ANP towards community policing. As part of this transition, between June and December 2019, MOI replaced 27 out of 34 provincial chiefs of police. CSTC-A believes that while MOI has the institutional training capability to create professional police officers, “the combination of corrupt leadership within the ANP training pipeline and the ongoing conflict throughout the country hinders the MOI’s ability to transition from a paramilitary to a community policing force.”²⁴⁸

DOD also reported that Coalition advisors continue to focus at the ministerial level and that MOI has improved its strategic planning and coordination of operations across its different elements, such as the Afghan Uniform Police, Public Security Police, and Afghan Border Police.²⁴⁹

REMOVING UNEXPLODED ORDNANCE

Afghanistan is riddled with landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) such as live shells and bombs, according to the United Nations (UN).²⁵⁰ Although contamination includes legacy mines laid before 2001, most casualties today are caused by mines and other ERW following the arrival of international forces.²⁵¹ In recent years, casualties have been reported from ordnance exploding in areas formerly used as firing ranges by Coalition forces and UNAMA has documented a direct correlation between civilian casualties and ERW in areas following heavy fighting.²⁵² According to UN reporting from March 2020, approximately 2.5 million Afghans live within one kilometer of areas contaminated with explosive hazards that are in need of immediate clearance.²⁵³

State’s Bureau of Political-Military Affairs’ Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement (PM/WRA) manages the conventional-weapons destruction program in Afghanistan. Since FY 2002, State has allocated \$408.2 million in weapons-destruction and humanitarian mine-action assistance to

SECURITY

TABLE 3.10

DEMINE PROGRAM PERFORMANCE METRICS, FISCAL YEARS 2010–2020						
Fiscal Year	Minefields Cleared (m ²)	AT/AP Destroyed	UXO Destroyed	SAA Destroyed	Fragments Cleared	Estimated Contaminated Area Remaining (m ²) ^a
2010	39,337,557	13,879	663,162	1,602,267	4,339,235	650,662,000
2011	31,644,360	10,504	345,029	2,393,725	21,966,347	602,000,000
2012	46,783,527	11,830	344,363	1,058,760	22,912,702	550,000,000
2013	25,059,918	6,431	203,024	275,697	10,148,683	521,000,000
2014	22,071,212	12,397	287,331	346,484	9,415,712	511,600,000
2015	12,101,386	2,134	33,078	88,798	4,062,478	570,800,000
2016	27,856,346	6,493	6,289	91,563	9,616,485	607,600,000
2017	31,897,313	6,646	37,632	88,261	1,158,886	547,000,000
2018	25,233,844	5,299	30,924	158,850	N/A	558,700,000
2019	13,104,094	3,102	26,791	162,727	N/A	657,693,033
2020 ^b	6,218,078	978	2,482	28,519	N/A	663,120,000
Total	281,307,635	79,693	1,980,105	6,295,651	83,620,528	

Note: AT/AP = antitank/antipersonnel ordnance. UXO = unexploded ordnance. SAA = small-arms ammunition. N/A = not applicable.

Fragments are reported because clearing them requires the same care as other objects until their nature is determined. There are about 4,047 square meters (m²) to an acre.

^a Total area of contaminated land fluctuates as clearance activities reduce hazardous areas while ongoing survey work identifies and adds new contaminated land in the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) database.

^b FY 2020 data covers October 1 through December 31, 2019.

Source: PM/WRA, response to SIGAR data call, 3/18/2020.

Afghanistan (an additional \$11.6 million was obligated between 1997 and 2001 before the start of the U.S. reconstruction effort). As of December 31, 2019, PM/WRA has allocated \$8.2 million in FY 2019 funds.²⁵⁴

State directly funds six Afghan nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), six international NGOs, and one Afghan government organization to help clear areas in Afghanistan contaminated by ERW and conventional weapons (e.g., unexploded mortar rounds), which insurgents can use to construct roadside bombs and other improvised explosive devices (IEDs).²⁵⁵

From 1997 through December 31, 2019, State-funded implementing partners have cleared more than 281.3 million square meters of land (108 square miles) and removed or destroyed over eight million landmines and other ERW such as unexploded ordnance (UXO), abandoned ordnance (AO), stockpiled munitions, and homemade explosives. Table 3.10 shows conventional-weapons destruction figures, FY 2010–2019.²⁵⁶

The estimated total area of contaminated land continues to fluctuate: clearance activities reduce the extent of hazardous areas, but ongoing surveys find new contaminated land. At the beginning of calendar year 2019, there were 619.3 square kilometers (239.1 square miles) of contaminated minefields and battlefields. As of December 31, 2019, the total known contaminated area was 663.1 square kilometers (253.9 square miles) in 3,974 hazard areas. PM/WRA defines a minefield as the area contaminated

by landmines; a contaminated area can include both landmines and other ERW.²⁵⁷

In 2012, the Afghan government was granted an extension until 2023 to fulfill its obligations under the Ottawa Treaty to achieve mine-free status. Given the magnitude of the problem and inadequate financial support, the country is not expected to achieve this objective.²⁵⁸ According to State, the drawdown of Coalition forces in 2014 coincided with a reduction in international donor funds to the Mine Action Programme for Afghanistan (MAPA).

From a peak of \$113 million in 2010, MAPA's budget decreased to \$51 million in 2018. The Afghan government is expected to request another 10-year extension to meet its treaty obligations. However, according to the State Department, the extension request cannot be initiated or acknowledged sooner than 18 months before April 2023—the end date of the current extension.²⁵⁹

CONFLICT MITIGATION ASSISTANCE FOR CIVILIANS

USAID's Conflict Mitigation Assistance for Civilians (COMAC) is a \$40 million, five-year, nationwide program that began in March 2018. It supports Afghan civilians and their families who have suffered losses from military operations against the Taliban or from insurgent attacks. COMAC provides assistance to Afghan civilians and their dependent family members who have experienced loss due to:²⁶⁰

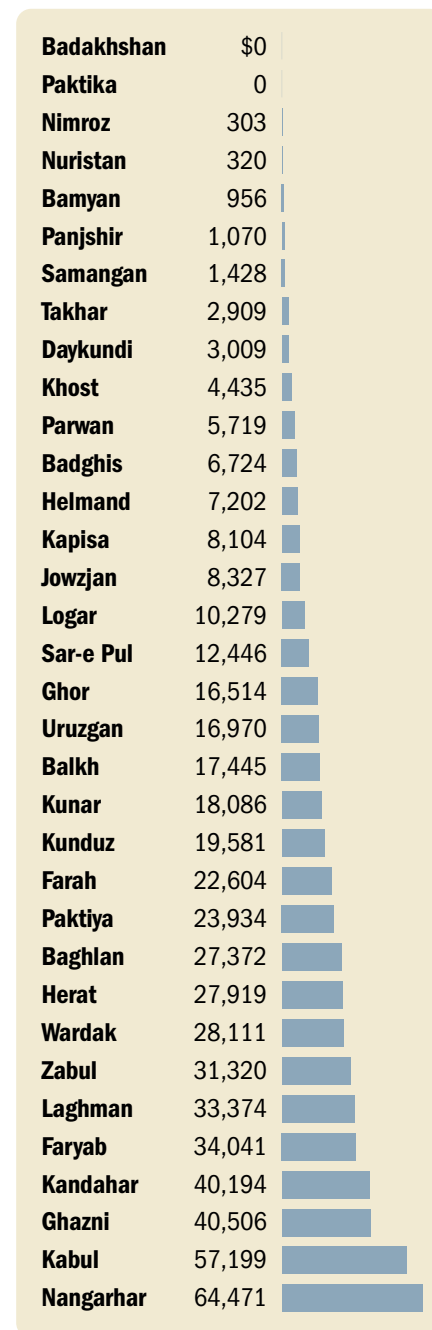
- military operations involving the U.S., Coalition, or ANDSF against insurgents, criminals, terrorists, or illegal armed groups
- landmines, improvised explosive devices (IED), unexploded ordnance, suicide attacks, public mass shootings, or other insurgent or terrorist actions
- cross-border shelling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

COMAC provides in-kind goods sufficient to support families affected by conflict for 60 days. Additional assistance includes referrals for health care and livelihood service providers, and economic reintegration for families impacted by loss or injury.²⁶¹ From October 1 through December 31, 2019, COMAC provided over 3,000 immediate assistance packages, nearly 400 tailored assistance packages, and over 100 medical assistance packages, for a total program expense of \$593,000.²⁶² As seen in Figure 3.37, the provinces receiving the most assistance included Nangarhar (\$64,471), Kabul (\$57,199), and Ghazni (\$40,506) while the provinces receiving the least assistance included Bamyan (\$956), Nuristan (\$320) and Nimroz (\$303).²⁶³

As of December 31, 2019, USAID has disbursed \$11.87 million for this program.²⁶⁴

FIGURE 3.37

USAID'S CONFLICT-MITIGATION ASSISTANCE FOR CIVILIANS BY PROVINCE, FY 2020



Note: Total dollar amounts may vary slightly from actual packages delivered since some aid packages were still pending payment at the time the financial report was generated. Total assistance rounded to the nearest dollar. "Total Assistance" includes immediate assistance, tailored assistance, and medical assistance. Reporting period covers October 1, through December 31, 2019.

Source: USAID, response to SIGAR data call, 3/18/2020.